STUDIA PATRISTICA

VOL. XXXIII

Augustine and his opponents, Jerome, other Latin
Fathers after Nicaea, Orientalia

Edited by
ELIZABETH A. LIVINGSTONE

with
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The Biographical Significance of Augustine's *De musica*

David C. Alexander, Edinburgh

The biographical significance of Augustine's *De musica* as a whole has not been ignored but it has not been fully tapped. As the only certain and complete remainder of Augustine's project on the liberal arts which he began in 387 while at Milan awaiting baptism, *De musica* received attention in Marrou's classic study and, more recently, in O'Donnell's excursus on the liberal disciplines in his commentary on the *Confessions* and Carol Harrison's *Beauty and Revelation in the Thought of St. Augustine*. Both of these latter treatments place the educational and philosophical emphases of the work into Augustine's historical context and his emerging theology. They focus rightly on the project of the liberal disciplines, of which *De musica* was a part, primarily as a product of Cassiciacum and Milan, and thus one could say that the biographical significance of the early work on *De musica* has been dealt with, if not exhausted. This paper does not intend to comment on this aspect or attempt to add to these treatments of it here. Rather, it will focus on the completion of *De musica* and specifically the last book, book 6. First, it will consider when and why this book and the work as a whole was completed and thereafter will consider two examples of insight which book six affords into developments in Augustine's Christian thinking at Thagaste; specifically: an advancement in his understanding of the religious ascetic life and a shift in his view of Christian community.

De musica was initially conceived in 387 when Augustine returned from Cassiciacum to Milan at the beginning of the Lenten season. It was to be part of a series of volumes on the liberal arts which he intended to write from his new-found position as a Christian philosopher inquiring after the understanding of truth[1]. Augustine commented on these facts of the project in his *Retractationes* (1.6)[2]. The various times and method of composition of *De musica* are

[1] *cf.* also *retr.* 1.11.1 and *conf.* 9.6.14. In fact, these six books were just the first part of a proposed two-part work (*quantum attinet ad eam partem quae rithmus uocatur* (*retr.* 1.6), *CCL* 57. 17); to be complemented by a second section on harmony which was never written (*cf. ep.* 101.1, 3). The section on music, in turn, would have comprised only one work along with others on the subjects of grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, geometry, arithmetic, and philosophy.

[2] See *CCL* 57. 17. In short, he began all the works on the liberal disciplines at Milan but completed only *gramm.* there. In Africa, *mus.* was also finished. Augustine's primary reference to *On Music* in his *Review* lies between *On Genesis against the Manichaeans* and *The Teacher* (*i.e.* in *retr.* 1.11).

not clear from the *Retractationes*, however, save that its completion was in North Africa[3]. Probably, books 1-5 were composed or noted down from discussions into draft form at Milan and during the return journey to Africa in 387 and 388[4]. Book six appears to have been written entirely in Africa and the whole work finished in late 389 or early 390[5].

The internal evidence does suggest that book six was written later than books 1-5 and a comparison of its terminology with other works written/completed at Thagaste demonstrates complete compatibility in vocabulary with them[6]. Moreover, within book six, discussions of the 'sacrament' of Christ's incarnation and death[7], the origin and nature of sin[8], and the resolution and culmination of the human virtues in the Christian concept of love[9], all reflect a more mature Christian (philosophical) perspective than the early books. Thus, this paper will assume that *De musica* book six was written principally in late 389/early 390 after a revision and collation of books 1-5, and that it was

[3] H.-I. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (1938), pp. 580-583, questioned whether the first chapter of book six was added later (indeed suggesting that the difference in character between book six and the first five books may imply a substantial later revision of the last book, *cf.* C. Harrison, *Beauty and Revelation in ... Augustine* (1992), p. 28 n. 153). Augustine probably revised book six to some extent before sending it to bishop Antonius (*cf. ep.* 101.4), but it is not at all clear that this means that chapter 6.1.1 was a totally new addition (or was even 'revised') or that the revision was significant. I will provisionally treat chapter one of book six as existing in an unrevised form in 390 when the work was first completed (see J.J. O'Donnell, *Confessions v.* 2 (1993), p. 275).

[4] Preliminary work which might have been as detailed as that found in *On the Immortality of the Soul*, which Augustine described as a sketchy and unrevised work (*cf. retr.* 1.5.1).

[5] R.C. Taliaferro, the work's only English translator, feels *mus.* was completed 'in Africa after *De magistro* in 391' (see his introduction in *FC* 4 (1947), p. 153); J. Quasten (*Patrology v.* 4 (1986), p. 360) states that it was finished between 388 and 391; E. TeSelle (*Augustine the Theologian* (1970), p. 11) assigns bk. 1-5 to 387 and bk. 6 to 389, though p. 120 implies that the completion of mus. was 'toward 390'; G. Finaert (*BA* 7 (1947), 8) places it in 389; and most recently J. Rist (*Augustine* (1994), xvii) places *mus.* after *mag.* (which he assigns to 389) and says it was 'completed' 'c. 390'. Some discussion, esp. pertaining to material in the sixth book, may have happened earlier on at Thagaste, but the actual composing and finishing work on the book probably occurred in late 389 and/or the first half of 390.

[6] The earlier books contain explicitly Christian phrases primarily in representatives of Christian verse (*e.g. mus.* 4.4.5), but in book six Augustine himself employed a more extended Christian vocabulary, using words not found in the first five books, such as: *sanctus* (and derivatives, eight times), *seruus/seruire* in conjunction with *deus* (four times), *christianus* (twice), *christus* (3 times), *pietas* (once), *charitas* (4 times), *apostolus* (4 times), *haeretici* (twice). Such observations certainly suggest that book six was later than the first five books and, in its entirety, was from Thagaste (probably the latter portion of the stay there). The distinctiveness of book six reflects the natural spiritual culmination of the preceding study of the details of rhythm (often pertaining to the senses). Thus, one need not consider book six to be a later addition or product of significant later revision *outside* 387-391 — as Marrou suggested; *cf.* J.J. O'Donnell, *Confession v.* 2 (1992), p. 278 and 275 n. 15.

[7] *mus.* 6.4.7.

[8] *e.g. mus.* 6.4.7; 6.5.13; 6.11.30; continued in *uera rel.* (*cf.* 20.38).

[9] *mus.* 6.15.49-6.16.55.

one of Augustine's later Thagaste works, closer in time to *De uera religione* than to *De Genesi aduersus Manicheos* or *De Moribus*.

The question remains, however, of why *De musica* was completed at all? Given the number of works which Augustine planned, began, but left undone throughout his career this question should be commented upon, although only briefly here. Most simply, there must have been good reasons that it was completed since Augustine was certainly not idle at Thagaste, although he was to a degree 'at leisure'. In fact, his epistolary activity, his obvious personal study of scripture (witness his first exegetical attempts on Genesis), his interaction with his fellows in community at Thagaste, and his production and/or completion of six or seven works bespeak a concentrated effort to begin sifting and consolidating the many stimulating ideas and activities which he had encountered in Italy following his conversion. The completion of *De musica* was part of this process.

At the very least, the work should be seen as important to Augustine *and* as important in his communal context at Thagaste. Several times Augustine tells us that the objective of *De musica* was to stimulate the movement from corporeal subjects of consideration to incorporeal understanding by means of contemplative reason[10]. This practice was clearly important to Augustine himself and the amount of time he spent engaged in this type of contemplation on 'liberal' subjects at Thagaste has perhaps been undervalued. In addition, the implication of *De musica*'s completion is that this practice of moving from corporeal to incorporeal (which was the point of the work) was important for others in the Thagaste community, and in *De musica* book 6 such study is portrayed as part of the spiritual life before God[11].

It is probably fair to say that recent discussions on Thagaste have focused primarily on what to call the community, and in that connection on what happened in it. It is possible that these discussions, centered as they have been on whether the Thagaste community was or was not a 'monastery', have led to a de-emphasis on the liberal and philosophical works which were completed only once Augustine has returned to his rural hometown in North Africa. The point here is not to focus upon liberal studies and an academic lifestyle in contrast to focusing upon ascetic and possibly 'monastic' aspects of living. Rather, both of these areas of activity (and others!) need to be appreciated apart from arbitrary labels as part of what appears to be a more subtle and more broad concept of what it meant 'to serve God': *seruire deo* (*seruiens deum*) than has been attributed to Thagaste. For regardless of whether the

[10] See *retr.* 1.11.1 (*CCL* 57. 33); *retr.* 1.6; where the goal of the discussion according to *mus.* 6.2.2 is 'that we may pass from corporeal things to those incorporeal' (*PL* 32. 1163); *cf.* also *mus.* 5.13.23, 6.1.1, and C. Harrison, *Beauty and Revelation in ... Augustine* (1992), p. 27.

[11] *cf.* also the first 25 or so questions of *De diuersis quaestionibus* as well as *De magistro*.

community there came to be a 'monastery'[12], it is clear that living in the service of God, and that as a 'spiritual', was the dominant concept for life at Thagaste. The fact is, of course, that *De musica* was completed and the following sections briefly consider two developments from earlier ideas at Cassiciacum, Rome, and Thagaste which books six reveals.

The Spiritual Framework of the Religious Life

First, *De musica* book six reveals for the first time in Augustine's writings an intellectual framework for the Christian religious life, that is, an integrated understanding of the religious ascetic life with the spiritual life. The guiding principle for Augustine's ideal practice of life was the great commandment (a fact present from *mor. ecc.* onwards). *De musica* 6.14.43 begins with an interchange between master and disciple which describes this paradigm for the religious life: 'that action which is divinely commanded whereby the soul, purified and unburdened, may fly back to rest, and enter into the joy of its Lord'[13]. After quoting Mt. 22.37-39, he says, 'There is no doubt that we will be cleansed if we refer all those motions and numbers of human action to this end'. That is to say that spiritual (in a neo-Platonic sense) cleansing and achievement is to be found in a life governed by the love of God. This is not entirely new in Augustine with *De musica* book 6. But what is new is that in book six Augustine sets out a framework for spiritual living in ascetic principles derived from the contrast of the love of God with the dangerous worldly loves of pride. In chapter 6.11.33, he explains how humanity naturally suffers in a state given over to temporal things, but that God in his mercy has made a way of escape with the happy result that one's whole life may turn its focus to God. To keep this focus requires action against those things which would avert it. Thus, Augustine proceeded to list four things which 'turn the soul away from the contemplation of eternal things' (*mus.* 6.12.39):

1. 'the love of acting on (orienting towards) the successive passions of the body';
2. 'the love of operating on bodies' — this turns the soul away and 'makes it restless';
3. '*phantasiai* and phantasms' (figments of imagination or fantasy); and
4. 'the love of vain knowledge'.

In the discussion, these four dangerous loves create a framework against which one's spiritual/religious life must be developed. Combined with Augustine's citations of scripture concerning love in book 6 from Matthew and 1 John respectively, the implication is that to achieve the love of God one must

[12] By whatever name, and it does not seem clear to me that it did while Augustine was in Thagaste nor that such an indirect designation helps in understanding the community.

[13] *PL* 32. 1186.

live in a way consciously directed against competing lesser loves. A simple listing of the logical possible antitheses to the four dangerous loves makes it clear than an ascetic framework for living has been arrived at from an intellectual contemplation. These antitheses might read as follows:

1. the bad love of responding to bodily passion urges control or restraint of the body;
2. focusing on or delighting in material things urges moderation and possibly sharing things in community;
3. the elevation of material objects into the mind in memory urges contemplation on the scriptures and on God; and finally,
4. the antithesis of vain knowledge is spiritual understanding (in humility) whose goal is God.

Thus, by the ascetic kind of life, especially by the act of contemplating God,

> the soul, with its God and Lord helping, extricates itself from the love of an inferior beauty, making war on and killing its own habit which fights against the self. With victory about to be celebrated within itself over the powers of this air, from whose envying and longing to shackle, it escapes to its own stability and fixity — God ... (*mus.* 6.15.50)[14].

Augustine explained this process of 'escape to God' in the world in terms of each of the virtues — temperance (*mus.* 15.50; 16.54), fortitude (15.50; 16.54), justice (15.50; 16.53), and prudence (16.51-52). Each of the virtues is linked with the aversion of the world and/or the right focus of the love of God. The virtues therefore afford a mental construct in book six by which Augustine understood the principles of the religious spiritual life (*cf. mus.* 6.16.51). When a summary of the soul's proper action is given, Augustine says, 'it fixes its love in God and lives most temperately and chastely and securely away from all filth'[15]. It is 'in this contemplation, sanctification, impassability, and ordering (of the soul)', he writes, that 'those four virtues are consummated and perfected' (*mus.* 6.16.55)[16]; *i.e.* the virtues find their fulfillment in ascetic terms. They represent the means by which one pursues perfect sanctification and vivification of soul and body out of love for God[17].

A Shift in Augustine's View of Christian Community

A second example of biographical insight in *De musica* book six is the illustration at the end of *De musica* of a shift in Augustine's understanding of Christian community. In the years immediately following his conversion, Augustine held an elitist view of humanity and the Christian communion.

[14] *PL* 32. 1189.

[15] *PL* 32. 1190.

[16] The pursuit of which leads to 'eternal life' (*PL* 32. 1191).

[17] *mus.* 6.16.51.

There were those able to reach true understanding through philosophical consideration and contemplation, and there were others in much greater numbers who had to rely on authority, by belief, for access to truth which they could not find or grasp by understanding[18]. This dichotomy is present in *De musica* book one (1.4.5, *cf.* 1.4.9) where Augustine speaks of the few great and wise men of understanding in contrast with the masses of the ignorant, common people (who he says 'are not very different from cattle')[19]. Although in his early works Augustine granted that such common folk could access truth (by coming to the authority of Christ in the church, *i.e.* belief)[20], and was often challenged by their successful pursuit of the religious life[21], he still saw himself as superior, being one able and eager to grasp incorporeal things[22]. Hence, he did not associate regularly with such simple, seemingly contentedly ignorant people lest it distract his pursuit of understanding by reason[23].

In the closing paragraph of *De musica*, however, an interesting view of 'ignorant Christians' is encountered which is in marked contrast to the view illustrated earlier in the work (and in Augustine's earlier writings). Here, the earlier hierarchical view is tempered and then almost reversed. He states in chapter 6.17.59:

I have discussed with you what little I was able on such great things. And if any read this discourse of ours once written down, they should know that these things have been written by[24] those much more infirm than those who, following the authority of the two Testaments, venerate the consubstantial and immutable Trinity of the one supreme God, from whom, through whom, and in whom are all things; *i.e.* those who adore and worship (the Trinity) by believing, hoping, and loving. For they (*i.e.* the latter) are cleansed not with flashing of human reasoning, but with the vigorous bright blazing fire of charity. As for us, moreover, so long as we judge that we should not neglect those whom the heretics deceive with false promises of reason and knowledge, we proceed more slowly, through paying attention to the actual

[18] *cf. ord.* 2.9.26, 27; 2.11.30; and *mor. ecc.* 1.10.17; at least in this life — Augustine seems to have held the opinion in these writings that such ones could gain understanding after death.

[19] *PL* 32. 1086.

[20] *cf. Acad.* 3.20.43 and n. 18, above.

[21] As he struggled unsuccessfully with his own flesh, *conf.* 8.6.14-8.7.16 and 8.8.19.

[22] In fact, he found their contented ignorance baffling, not understanding how such could be happy (*ord.* 2.9.26), and even embarrassing as a Catholic Christian (*e.g. mor. ecc.* 10.17; 34.75).

[23] See D.C. Alexander, *The Emergence of Augustine's Early Ecclesiology (386-391)* (1995, Diss. Edinburgh) ch. 1, p. 22-24; ch. 3, p. 82-83; and ch. 4, p. 149-150.

[24] Or 'for'. Taliaferro (*FC* 4 (1947), 378) and Harrison (*Beauty and Revelation in ... Augustine* (1992), p. 45) take '*infirmioribus*' with the ablative 'by' (which seems supported by the contrast later in the passage between the two ways of traversing the 'path' to God). Yet, the reading could equally be the dative 'for'. Either way the whole exercise of both Augustine and his primary readers coming to spiritual understanding, while seen as good and necessary, is now not the exclusive nor even most direct means of coming to God in this life.

paths, than those holy men who by flying (over them) do not deign to notice them. We would not venture to do this unless we saw that many pious sons of the best of mothers, the Catholic church, who in youthful studies had acquired sufficiently the skill of speaking and arguing, had also done so out of the same necessity of refuting the heretics (*mus.* 6.17.59)[25].

Here again *De musica* is presented as deriving from those who understand spiritually. Yet, since such 'spirituals in understanding' have to search out their understanding by reason, Augustine says that they do not reach God so quickly or experience him spiritually so fully on earth as those who cannot, or do not (choose to), understand spiritual things with the mind but live close to God and come into his presence the more quickly by devotion undelayed by spiritual rational meditation. An alternative route to the spiritual experience of God than pious understanding of authority by reason is now visible for the first time in Augustine. The same terrain of ascent is passed by two groups of spirituals, those who follow the more arduous road and those who fly over the road of understanding straight to the spiritual God.

Only a couple of implications of this development in Augustine's view of the various constituents of the Christian communion can be mentioned here. First, since Augustine now understood that being uneducated or incapable of spiritual understanding by reason did not necessarily imply that one was a lower level believer, two categories of spirituals now appeared in his writings: those who understood incorporeal reality and ascended to God by reason, we might say 'intellectual spirituals', and those who were raised into the spiritual presence of God by complete devotion, we might say 'devoted spirituals'[26]. In the religious life of complete devotion to God, the Christian faith held the potential of spiritual equality, in experience, for all regardless of ability or background. This conception of spiritual potential marks a definite shift, if not a reversal, in the way Augustine viewed those who, either by choice or due to a lack of skill or ability, did not pursue by reason the understanding of the authority they have accepted. The passage communicates a strong recognition of the value of those who lack this ability or inclination and their potential value in the larger body of Christians. This is surely a fact with implications for Augustine's thoughts about local communities and groupings. His statement at the end of book six shows a softening of earlier biases that had probably formed one part of his hesitation to found an open ascetic community.

In summary, a careful consideration of the text of *De musica* book six reveals several examples of biographically significant data about Augustine

[25] *PL* 32. 1193-1194; *cf. uera rel.* 24.45.

[26] Both of these were, of course, 'devoted'. Nevertheless, these designations must suffice here. See also the discussion of the parable of the talents in *uera rel.* 54.106.

and his community at Thagaste. It was a work important to Augustine and indicative of some strong interests and activities which he held in the later Thagaste period. Developments in book six of earlier thoughts indicate that the personal pursuit of the religious life may have been the single greatest factor in moving Augustine along the road towards eventual monastic activity[27]. That these indications come from a somewhat surprising source among Augustine's early writings may suggest that there are yet considerable and significant surprises to be found in the life of the Augustine who existed before Augustine of Hippo.

[27] His recognition that true spirituality could be achieved by all in a life lived in devotion to God suggests the possibility of a more open (non-elite) community where all would live this devoted life with acknowledgment of proper efforts towards spiritual understanding (and obligation of communication of such).

The Goths in St. Augustine's *De Correctione Donatistarum* (= *Ep.* 185)

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Near the beginning of his treatise *On the Correction of the Donatists*, composed in about the year 417, Augustine refers to opportunist dealings between Donatists and Goths. He reports that although most Donatists are, like their founder Donatus, essentially orthodox in Trinitarian doctrine, some of their number have on occasion been known to profess a view identical to that of Arian heretics in order to win the support of influential Goths[1].

If we follow Peter Heather's reconstruction of events, a substantial number of Goths, hard-pressed by Huns, were in 376 encouraged to settle within the Danube frontier in the Balkan region as allies of Rome. Encouraged also to embrace the religion of the Roman state, it was to Christianity in an Arian form favoured by the emperor Valens that these Goths, under their leaders, turned, in an official act of 'mass conversion'[2]. From then on it seems generally to have suited Gothic allies in the imperial service to adhere to an Arian form of belief even after 381, when Nicene orthodoxy finally triumphed. It may have been that the Goths wished to uphold the faith they had first received, partly because that faith, now heterodox, helped them retain a distinctive identity within the imperial structure[3]. As allied or federate units attached to the Roman army they were of course entitled to provision and pay, but they were also allowed to adhere to a form of Christianity which, in terms of Nicene orthodoxy, was judged heretical and which for other imperial subjects could carry stringent penalties such as heavy fines, as in the law of 15th June 392[4].

These were the penalties Augustine and his African colleagues in the years 404 and 405 succeeded in getting the imperial government to apply to the Donatists, despite the fact they were not strictly heretics[5]. Thus, *On the Cor-*

[1] 'aliquando autem, sicut audiuimus, nonnulli ex ipsis (sc. Donatistis) uolentes sibi Gothos conciliare, quando eos uident aliquid posse, dicunt hoc se credere, quod et illi (sc. Arriani) credunt', *Ep.* 185,1.

[2] P. Heather, 'The Crossing of the Danube and the Gothic Conversion', *GRBS* 27 (1986), pp. 289-318.

[3] J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops, Army, Church, and State in the Age of Arcadius and Chrysostom* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 49-50.

[4] *Cod. Theod.* 16,5,21, ed. Mommsen-Meyer, Berlin, 1905, vol. II, p. 862-3.

[5] 'legem piissimae memoriae Theodosii', *Ep.* 185,25; cf. *Reg. Eccl. Carth. Exc.* 93, CCL 149, p. 212; *Cod. Theod.* 16,5,39, Mommsen, p. 867.

rection of the Donatists, Augustine's most elaborate justification of legal coercion, begins with a pertinent question about the difference between Donatists and Arians[6]. For if, as the Donatists themselves repeatedly pointed out, they were not deviant in doctrine, with what possible justification could the anti-heresy laws be applied to them[7]? This question about the difference between Donatists and Arians had been referred to the bishop of Hippo by Boniface, then in command of allied troops posted along the frontier in southern Numidia, where Donatists were numerous and the enforcement of anti-Donatist measures problematic. Some Donatists, it seems, had already died in protest[8]. On the question of coercion Boniface had doubts[9]. Augustine assumes throughout the treatise he had already been briefed by the other side[10]. *On the Correction of the Donatists* is, therefore, addressed to Boniface with a view to putting such doubts to rest by answering Donatist objections to religious coercion.

Who, then, are the Goths Augustine claims Donatists had dealings with? Some time ago Peter Brown put forward the suggestion that these Goths were allied troops in Boniface's Numidian force. This is described by Augustine as a small force of allied or federate units, although it is not clear it included Goths[11]. Thirteen years or so later, in 430, when Boniface, by then chief military commander of Roman Africa, found himself beseiged by the invading Vandals in the coastal city of Hippo, the forces resisting the seige are described by Possidius as allied Goths[12]. So some Gothic units may have remained in Africa throughout this long period or Boniface may have commanded different units of Gothic federates at different times in his military career. Brown, then, suggests it was with Gothic soldiers or their leaders on the Numidian frontier in 417 that the Donatists entered into intrigue[13].

It is of course possible that Gothic soldiers directly involved in the suppression of Donatism may have regarded fellow-dissidents with a certain sympathy the Donatists were somehow able to exploit. But is it likely that professional

[6] 'ut ergo breuiter insinuem dilectioni tuae, inter Arrianorum et Donatistarum quid intersit errorem…', *Ep.* 185,1.

[7] 'Donatistas, qui se negabant haereticos', *Ep.* 185,25; Petilian at the Carthage Colloquy challenged his opponents: 'qui (sc. catholici) saepius apud imperatoris aures … in crimen nos invidiamque deducunt, ut haereticos nominent, ut schismaticos quoque appelent, hoc doceant, hoc diluo…', *Gesta Conl. Carthag.* 3,193; cf. 3,177.

[8] 'illa funesta', *Ep.* 185, 14; cf. 32-36.

[9] 'scripsi … propter eos qui nolebant illos (sc. Donatistas) legibus imperialibus corrigi', *Retract.* 2,48.

[10] 'ut decipiant (sc. Donatisti) imperitos (sc. Bonifatium?)', *Ep.* 185,6; et passim.

[11] 'cum paucis foederatis', *Ep.* 220,7.

[12] 'cum Gothorum foederatorum exercitu', *Vita Aug.* 28,12.

[13] 'Boniface was in command of German *foederati* — probably Arian Goths who had been approached by their "fellow-heretics", the Donatists', P.R.L. Brown, 'Religious Coercion in the Later Roman Empire: The Case of North Africa', *History* 48 (1963) 297 (= *Religion and Society* (London, 1972), p. 320); cf. ibid., *Augustine of Hippo* (London, 1967), pp. 421-2.

soldiers, such as allied Goths, would have put themselves about for the sake of local schismatics of whom they probably knew little? Of course it would have added considerable weight to Donatist protests against religious coercion if Boniface could have been reminded that he himself had under his command units made up of Arian Goths who enjoyed the religious freedom Donatists were denied. But did he? Barbarians other than Goths were regularly enlisted in similar fashion as Roman allies, so Boniface's federates in 417 could just as easily have been any of these[14]. The seige of Hippo in 430, where Goths are mentioned, happened somewhere else, at another time, in other circumstances.

Who then were the Arian Goths capable of influence Augustine claims some Donatists tried to curry favour with by playing down doctrinal differences? My suggestion comes in three parts.

Firstly, the general charge that Donatists had entered into some kind of conspiracy with Arian heretics was nothing new. It was already a stock theme of Augustine's anti-Donatist polemic[15]. Behind it lay a letter from the synod of Serdica of 343 addressed, so it would appear, to Donatus as bishop of Carthage and head of the African church. This letter later enabled the Donatists to contest Augustine's often-repeated claim that their sect was confined to a corner of Africa while African Catholics enjoyed official recognition from the rest of the Christian world. Augustine's response was to point out, correctly, it seems, that the letter in question came from but one of two factions into which the synod of Serdica was divided, and that the Arian faction[16]. At the time it was issued in 343 this letter quite possibly had political implications, with tension mounting between imperial co-rulers Constans in the west and Constantius in the east. In attempting to put an end to the African schism in the mid-340s, through the infamous agents Paul and Macarius, did the emperor Constans perhaps fear Donatist overtures towards an increasingly powerful Arian party under Constantius in the east? Yet there is no real evidence of Donatist doctrinal compromise. True, Augustine liked to exploit the fact that Donatus himself, in a treatise now lost *On the Holy Spirit*, had described the Trinity in traditional, subordinationist language similar to that used, for example, by Tertullian and Novatian: the Son is less than the Father, the Holy Spirit less than the Son, but all three are of one substance[17]. Even

[14] See Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops* (n. 3 supra), pp. 11-31.

[15] 'illa conspiratio haereticorum orientalium cum Afris haereticis', *C. Crescon.* 3,38.

[16] See A.C. de Veer, 'Le concile de Serdique et Donat de Carthage', BA 31 (1968), pp. 805-809.

[17] 'et si aliqui ipsorum (sc. Donatistarum) minorem filium esse dixerunt, quam pater est, eiusdem tamen substantiae non negarunt; plurimi uero in eis hoc se dicunt omnino credere de patre et filio et spiritu sancto, quod catholica credit ecclesia', *Ep.* 185,1; 'extant scripta eius (sc. Donati), ubi apparet eum etiam non catholicam de trinitate habiuisse sententiam, sed quamuis eiusdem substantiae, minorem tamen patre filium, et minorem filio putasse spiritum sanctum', *Haer.* 69,8; cf. Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* 9; Novatian, *Trin.* 27,12.

Augustine had to admit that this last phrase strictly absolved the Donatists of the charge of Arianism, though he still liked to poke fun at the rather old-fashioned, not-quite-orthodox, subordinationist language they had sometimes used.

What is new in Augustine's claim in the treatise *On the Correction of the Donatists* is that some Donatists apparently professed a more distinctly Arian formula in an effort to conciliate influential Goths.

Secondly, when Augustine wrote his treatise *On the Correction of the Donatists* in about 417 he was also at work on his lengthy exposition *On the City of God*, the occasion for which had been provided by Alaric's sack of Rome. He comments that although the catastrophe of 410 happened after the empire had abandoned its traditional cults in favour of the Christian religion, human suffering was less than it might have been because the Goths were Arian Christians who at least respected rights of sanctuary in the capital city's churches[18]. It seems Alaric's Goths had earlier been enrolled in the usual way as barbarian allies in the service of the empire. They formed a large and unruly army which seems to have had a genuine grievance over inadequate provision, while Alaric himself, thwarted in his ambition for high military command within the imperial structure, simply took matters into his own hands[19]. Once he had gained control of Italy, Africa, the richest source of provision in the western empire, probably came high on his list. From Augustine we learn that, among the refugees who fled for safety from Italy to Africa, Pinianus and Melania regarded a Gothic invasion of Africa as a possibility — at least that was one of the reasons given for Pinianus not wanting to reside permanently at Hippo as a priest[20]. The Goths soon moved into Gaul, then Spain. It may not be irrelevant that earlier in his career, in 413, Boniface had been wounded defending Massilia (Marseilles) from Gothic attack[21]. Towards the end of his *History against the Pagans*, completed in 417/18, Orosius, who had himself come to Africa as a refugee from Spain, tells us that when Wallia eventually succeeded as 'king' of the Goths, a large-scale invasion of Africa in 416, from Spain across the straits of Gibraltar, was only prevented by bad weather[22]. The later successful crossing from Spain by the Vandals in 429 and their subsequent conquest of Roman Africa illustrates precisely the danger earlier posed by Wallia's Goths.

All this seems to me pertinent to the reference to Goths at the beginning of Augustine's *On the Correction of the Donatists*. By the time this was written in about 417 the Goths, whose role had always been somewhat

[18] *De Civ. Dei* 1,1.

[19] On Alaric's ambitions see Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops* (n. 3 supra), p. 59 ff.; P. Heather, *Goths and Romans 332-489* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 193-224.

[20] 'hostilis incursus', *Ep.* 126,4.

[21] Olymp. *Hist.* frg. 21, ed. Müller (FGH 4, p. 62).

[22] Orosius, *Adv. pagan.* 7,43,11; see P. Heather, *Goths and Romans* (n. 19 supra), pp. 220-221.

ambiguous, could be perceived as more of a threat than an aid to the empire's security.

Thirdly, I think the way Augustine introduces his reference to Donatist dealings with Goths deserves attention: 'But on occasion, so we (Catholics) have heard, some (Donatists), wishing to conciliate the Goths when they see they have some power, say they believe exactly what they (Arians) do....'[23]. Mere hearsay, of doubtful provenance and unsubstantiated authority, was of course a standard polemical device in undermining an opponent's position. We need not, I think, infer from Augustine's statement any actual collusion between Donatists and Goths[24]. For the purpose of his argument it is the innuendo that counts. Augustine is engaged in what today we should perhaps call an exercise in 'damage limitation'. He is concerned to limit the damage done to his own case in favour of the coercion of the Donatists under the anti-heresy laws by the rather important concession he has been obliged to make right at the start of *On the Correction of the Donatists*, namely, that the Donatists, if not wholly consistent in the articulation of their belief, nevertheless remain essentially orthodox. So he immediately qualifies this damaging admission with the suggestion that even such orthodoxy as the Donatists profess does not rule out opportunist compromise with heretics in power. If in the past Donatists could be believed to have sacrificed strict orthodoxy to gain some advantage from politically ascendant Arians, could they really be trusted now not to exploit the power of the Goths? As I see it, the opening statements of *On the Correction of the Donatists* are aimed, for Boniface's benefit, at the wider implications of the African schism. Augustine's point is that Boniface should not hesitate to take appropriate action to end the schism since the danger of religious division is all the more serious with Africa under external threat. And the abortive Gothic invasion of Africa in 416 gave substance to that threat perhaps less than a year before Augustine's treatise was written.

[23] *Ep.* 185,1 (see n. 1 supra).

[24] Contra W.H.C. Frend, *The Donatist Church* (Oxford, 1952), p. 297.

Le cercle herméneutique dans le *De doctrina christiana* d'Augustin

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L'ordre adopté dans les trois premiers livres du *De doctrina christiana*[1] pose un problème: comment justifier qu'Augustin paraisse déterminer le contenu de l'Écriture, les *res* qui font l'objet du livre I, avant de se confronter au texte, c'est-à-dire aux *signa* qui le constituent et dont l'étude n'est entreprise que dans les livres II et III? La théorie augustinienne de la connaissance permet une première réponse: si nul ne peut comprendre un signe sans connaître d'abord la *res* à laquelle il renvoie, il est logique d'exposer les *res* avant d'en venir aux *signa*. C. P. Mayer[2] voit, de ce fait, dans le livre I le fondement des autres livres et suggère qu'on pourrait représenter le *De doctrina christiana* par trois cercles concentriques: le cercle extérieur serait la présentation (livre IV), le cercle médian, l'explication des signes (livres II-III), le cercle intérieur la connaissance de la chose même (livre I).

Ainsi présenté, l'ordre choisi par Augustin continue à poser question. Faut-il en conclure, avec T. Todorov[3], que l'exégèse patristique est 'une interprétation finaliste' où l'"on connaît par avance le point d'arrivée"? L'approche herméneutique nuance déjà cette thèse, car elle montre la structure circulaire de la compréhension et légitime donc cette démarche. Elle laisse dans l'ombre, néanmoins, les justifications proprement théologiques de l'ordre adopté par Augustin.

1. 'Une interprétation finaliste'

T. Todorov choisit le *De doctrina christiana* comme texte de référence pour caractériser 'la stratégie patristique': l'interprétation naît de la distance entre deux sens, le sens immédiat du texte biblique et celui d'un autre texte que T. Todorov appelle la 'doctrine chrétienne'; elle consiste à relier ces deux sens et

[1] Une nouvelle édition du *De doctrina christiana* est en préparation dans la collection de la *Bibliothèque Augustinienne* (*BA* 11/2); on y trouvera une analyse plus développée de cette question et une bibliographie.

[2] *Die Zeichen in der geistige Entwicklung und in der Theologie des junges Augustinus*, t. II (Würzburg, 1974), pp. 93-95.

[3] *Symbolisme et interprétation* (Paris, 1978), pp. 91-124.

à les identifier l'un à l'autre. L'auteur relève alors les indices qui 'enclenchent' l'interprétation: invraisemblances doctrinales ou matérielles, superfluités[4]. Selon lui, 'l'exégète de la Bible n'a aucun doute quant au sens auquel il aboutira; c'est même là le point le plus solidement établi de sa stratégie: la Bible énonce la doctrine chrétienne. Ce n'est pas le travail d'interprétation qui permet d'établir le sens nouveau, bien au contraire, c'est la certitude concernant le sens nouveau qui guide l'interprétation'[5].

Cette approche critique du *De doctrina christiana* suscite des questions: qu'en est-il de ce texte de la doctrine chrétienne qui sert de contrepoint interprétatif à la lecture de l'Écriture? T. Todorov semble y voir un corps de propositions, donné d'avance, que l'interprète imposerait comme 'sens final' au texte biblique: faut-il comprendre ainsi le contenu du livre I? T. Todorov suppose, en outre, une contradiction implicite entre le texte biblique et la doctrine chrétienne à laquelle l'exégète entend le ramener: est-ce le cas? l'exégèse patristique est-elle vraiment une 'stratégie', une technique de maîtrise du texte biblique?

Le contenu du livre I et les indications de méthode données par Augustin obligent à mettre en cause les affirmations de T. Todorov. Le contenu est clair: les deux grandes parties du livre I exposent le symbole des apôtres et le double commandement de l'amour; la conclusion récapitule le tout à l'aide de la triade: foi — espérance — charité[6]. De nombreuses allusions scripturaires étayent l'argumentation et jouent un rôle décisif dans l'organisation de la synthèse[7]. La méthode suivie fait l'objet d'indications explicites: en III, 2, 2[8], Augustin invite le lecteur, en cas de difficultés de ponctuation ou de prononciation du texte biblique, à consulter 'la règle de foi que l'on a tirée de passages plus clairs des Écritures et de l'autorité de l'Église'; en II, 9, 14[9], il décrit les étapes à suivre pour qui veut étudier l'Écriture: d'abord, lire l'ensemble des livres canoniques; puis 'y chercher avec plus de pénétration et de soin ce qui y a été présenté clairement, préceptes moraux ou règles de foi (*uel praecepta uiuendi uel regulae credendi*)' — on note ici l'allusion au livre I; enfin, s'efforcer d'élucider les passages obscurs, en s'aidant des textes plus clairs — ce qui correspond aux livres II et III. Ce texte donne la clé de l'ordre choisi par Augustin; il indique en outre que la 'doctrine chrétienne' provient

[4] Cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 91-94, qui renvoie à *De doctr. christ.*, III, 12, 18, *BA* 11, p. 364; III, 29, 41, p. 394; cf. *En. in Ps.* 77, 26-27, *CCL* 39, pp. 1086-1088; *De Gen. ad litt.*, IX, 12, 22, *BA* 49, pp. 120-122.

[5] *Op. cit.*, p. 104.

[6] Deux textes: *De doctr. christ.*II, 7, 10, *BA* 11, p. 248 et III, 10, 14, p. 358 confirment que tel est bien l'essentiel du livre I selon Augustin.

[7] G. Istace en dénombre près de 80: 'Le livre Ier du "De doctrina christiana" de saint Augustin. Organisation synthétique et méthode mise en œuvre', *ETL* 32 (1956), pp. 292-322 et 330.

[8] *BA* 11, p. 340.

[9] *BA* 11, p. 256.

du texte biblique, loin d'être un texte étranger auquel celui-ci serait référé arbitrairement. Ainsi l'Écriture s'explique par l'Écriture. La mention de 'l'autorité de l'Église' importe aussi: l'Écriture n'est pas lue d'un point de vue quelconque, mais selon 'la voie de l'enseignement catholique qui a coulé du Christ en personne jusqu'à nous, en passant par les apôtres, et qui, de là, doit couler à la postérité'[10]; la continuité de cette tradition de lecture de l'Écriture en garantit la conformité aux intentions de son auteur.

2. Le cercle herméneutique

L'analyse précédente a mis en évidence le caractère circulaire de la démarche suivie dans le *De doctrina christiana*: des passages clairs de l'Écriture et de l'autorité de l'Église, se dégagent la *regula credendi* et les *praecepta uiuendi* qui servent ensuite de norme dans l'interprétation des passages obscurs de l'Écriture.

L'approche herméneutique montre la légitimité d'un tel cercle: toute lecture s'opère sur la base d'une précompréhension, de 'préjugés' qui dépendent de l'inscription dans une tradition déterminée[11]. Heidegger, dans son cours de 1923[12], caractérise le *De doctrina christiana* comme 'la première "herméneutique" de grand style': la citation du livre III (1, 1) qui suit cette affirmation laisse penser, selon J. Grondin[13], que Heidegger a été 'frappé par la relation étroite qu'établit Augustin (...) entre ce qui doit être compris et l'attitude de celui qui comprend, animé par le seul souci de chercher une vérité qui le concerne existentiellement'. De façon analogue, P. Ricœur[14] note: '"Il faut comprendre pour croire, mais il faut croire pour comprendre". Ce cercle n'est pas un cercle vicieux, encore moins mortel; c'est un cercle bien vivant et stimulant. Il faut croire pour comprendre: jamais en effet l'interprète ne s'approchera de ce que dit son texte s'il ne vit dans l'*aura* du sens interrogé. Et pourtant ce n'est qu'en comprenant que nous pouvons croire'. Un croire, entendu au sens d'une 'relation d'appartenance', est donc requis pour comprendre.

Dans cette perspective, les textes qui se présentent comme des 'théories de la lecture' s'expliquent par la prise de conscience d'un écart, d'une 'distance': la tradition qui rendait le texte compréhensible est 'devenue problématique', ce qui rend nécessaire 'la tâche herméneutique'. H.G. Gadamer 'discerne déjà une

[10] *De ut. cred.*, 8, 20, *BA* 8, p. 254: 'sequere viam catholicae disciplinae, quae ab ipso Christo per apostolos ad nos usque manavit, et ab hinc ad posteros manatura est'.

[11] Cf. H.G. Gadamer, *Vérité et méthode. Les grandes lignes d'une herméneutique philosophique* (Paris, 1976), pp. 103-124.

[12] *Ontologie. Hermeneutik der Faktizität* (Frankfurt am Main, 1988), p. 12.

[13] *L'universalité de l'herméneutique* (Paris, 1993), pp. 30-31.

[14] *Le conflit des interprétations. Essais d'herméneutique* (Paris, 1969), p. 294.

conscience de ce type chez saint Augustin à l'égard de l'Ancien Testament'[15]. Cette suggestion est reprise par J.-P. Schobinger[16], qui en fait l'application au *De doctrina christiana*, dans lequel il voit 'le premier texte systématique digne du nom de théorie de la lecture'. Selon lui, c'est une 'crise de la lecture', traduisant elle-même une 'crise d'autorité' qui motive la rédaction de l'ouvrage; sa réussite serait d'avoir su 'révéler le rapport intime qui existe entre l'autorité du texte et les principes exégétiques' énoncés et d'avoir ainsi légitimé l'actualisation proposée[17].

Une telle analyse rend justice au cercle constaté à la lecture du traité d'Augustin. Mais elle en fait une théorie de la lecture parmi d'autres, sans prendre en compte sa dimension théologique. Ce qui pose deux questions: n'y a-t-il pas, du moins pour le croyant, une spécificité du texte biblique, qui légitime, de façon plus radicale, la priorité du croire sur le comprendre et qui en transforme quelque peu le sens? D'autre part, la raison première qui a donné naissance au *De doctrina christiana* est-elle vraiment une 'crise de la lecture'? La *Lettre* 41[18] montre plutôt que le projet d'Augustin était avant tout de rédiger un ouvrage destiné à la formation des prédicateurs. La controverse manichéenne est certes la toile de fond du traité; elle explique l'insistance sur la nécessité d'une lecture croyante. Mais, plus fondamentalement, le souci de la prédication obligeait à mettre en relief un aspect constitutif de la religion chrétienne: le Christ est la clé herméneutique de toute l'Écriture.

3. Justification théologique

La citation d'*Is.* 7, 9 (selon LXX): 'Si vous ne croyez pas, vous ne comprendrez pas' paraît occasionnelle en II, 12, 17[19], mais la récurrence de ce verset dans l'œuvre augustinienne manifeste qu'il s'agit d'un texte-clé pour penser les rapports de la foi et de l'intelligence[20]. Comme l'expose la *Lettre* 120 à Consentius, il faut croire pour comprendre: la foi est certes précédée par un acte de la raison qui en reconnaît le caractère raisonnable, mais elle est à son tour la condition de l'intelligence[21]. La foi ici requise ne consiste pas simplement à 'vivre dans l'*aura* du sens interrogé'[22]; car elle n'est pas seulement

[15] *Op. cit.*, p. 14.

[16] 'La portée historique des théories de la lecture (Réflexions à la lumière du *De doctrina christiana* de saint Augustin)', *Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie* 112 (1980), p. 46.

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

[18] *CSEL* 34, pp. 81-83.

[19] *BA* 11, p. 262.

[20] Cf. *De lib. arb.* I, 2, 4, *BA* 6, p. 196; II, 2, 6, pp. 272-274; *De mag.* 11, 37, p. 134; *Tr. in Ioh. Eu.* 15, 24, *BA* 71, p. 796; *Tr. in Ioh. Eu.* 27, 7, *BA* 72, pp. 546-548; *Tr. in Ioh. Eu.* 29, 6, p. 606; *S.* 43, *CCL* 41, pp. 508-512, *etc.*

[21] Cf. *Epist.* 120,1, 3, *CSEL* 34, pp. 706-707; 2, 8, p. 711.

[22] P. Ricœur, *op. cit.*, p. 294.

adhésion de l'intelligence à la vérité révélée, elle est aussi abandon de la volonté à la grâce dans l'amour[23]. De même, sa nécessité ne tient pas à une simple distance culturelle motivée par un écart temporel, mais, plus radicalement, à l'attitude du sujet, car le péché a obscurci l'intelligence. La foi est ici une transformation intérieure du sujet, une purification: elle fait passer de l'auto-suffisance à la soumission à l'autorité divine qui se manifeste à travers l'autorité de l'Écriture et de l'Église[24]. On est donc aux antipodes de la 'stratégie' de maîtrise du texte biblique que décrit T. Todorov. La lecture de l'Écriture n'a pas pour but la réduction de prétendues contradictions que le sujet serait à même de surmonter; elle suppose, au contraire, un 'renoncement à la maîtrise' par lequel le sujet consent à se laisser mettre en cause et transformer par le texte qu'il lit[25].

L'articulation du livre I aux livres II et III du *De doctrina christiana* est à examiner de nouveau dans cette perspective. Le symbole de foi et le double commandement de l'amour — qui sont l'objet du livre I — sont la base de l'initiation chrétienne, comme le montre la comparaison avec l'*Enchiridion*, qui est construit selon la triade foi, espérance, charité et qui commente le Symbole et la Prière du Seigneur. S'il en est ainsi, l'ordre suivi dans le *De doctrina christiana* est un ordre 'existentiel': il reflète l'itinéraire du croyant qui, de l'acte de foi initial, est appelé à passer progressivement à l'intelligence de la foi, et donc à l'intelligence des Écritures — dont les moyens sont exposés aux livres II et III. A cette hypothèse de lecture, on objectera peut-être le caractère systématique du livre I qui diffère d'un simple exposé de la *regula fidei* et des *praecepta uiuendi*. Mais l'effort de justification rationnelle déployé dans le livre I est une manière d'amener le lecteur à reconnaître combien il est raisonnable de croire: Augustin veut, d'une part, montrer comment l'Incarnation est la 'voie' qui mène au *telos* que les philosophes ont entrevu sans pouvoir donner les moyens d'y conduire, d'autre part, justifier la forme du *telos* biblique dont il trouve l'expression dans le double commandement de l'amour tel qu'il est formulé en *Matt.* 22, 37-40. La dialectique de la foi et de l'intelligence que décrit la *Lettre* 120 s'applique donc parfaitement au *De doctrina christiana*.

Dire que l'autorité doit précéder la raison revient à dire que la charité doit précéder la 'science', comme le précise le *De moribus*[26]. La priorité de la charité tient à ce qu'elle est le principe majeur de l'herméneutique scripturaire d'après l'Écriture elle-même: pour le prouver, Augustin cite, dans le livre I du *De doctrina christiana*, *Rom.* 13, 10 et *I Tim.* 1, 5, selon lesquels l'amour est

[23] Cf. *Tr. in Ioh. Eu.* 29, 6, *BA* 72, pp. 606-609.

[24] Cf. *De doctr. christ.*, II, 7, 9-10, *BA* 11, pp. 246-248.

[25] *Ibid.*; cf. A.-M. Pelletier, *Lectures du Cantique des cantiques. De l'énigme du sens aux figures du lecteur* (Rome, 1989), pp. 294-297 et 314-321.

[26] I, 25, 47, *BA* 1, pp. 208-209: 'Quid ergo agendum est, quid, quaeso, nisi ut eum ipsum, quem cognoscere volumus, prius plena caritate diligamus? Unde illud exoritur, quod ab initio satagimus, nihil in Ecclesia catholica salubrius fieri, quam ut rationem praecedat auctoritas.'

'la plénitude et la fin de la Loi', et met au centre de son argumentation *Matt.* 22, 37-40, où le double commandement de l'amour est dit 'contenir toute la Loi et les Prophètes'[27]. Le rappel de ce principe herméneutique est très fréquent. La *Lettre* 55[28] précise qu'il est pour Augustin expérience quotidienne. Le *Sermo* 350 affirme: 'Si (...) tu manques de temps pour scruter les pages saintes, pour dérouler tous les rouleaux de leurs discours, pour pénétrer tous les secrets des Écritures, tiens la charité où tout est résumé; tu tiendras ainsi ce que tu y as appris; tu tiendras aussi ce que tu n'as pas encore appris. (...) Ce que tu comprends dans les Écritures, c'est la charité à découvert; ce que tu n'y comprends pas, c'est la charité à couvert'[29].

La charité récapitule toute l'Écriture, parce qu'elle en est la visée; c'est pourquoi l'Incarnation du Christ, qui est par excellence le dévoilement de l'amour de Dieu pour l'homme, fait du Nouveau Testament la manifestation de l'Ancien, comme l'explique le *De catechizandis rudibus*[30]. Le *Sermo de dilectione Dei et proximi* établit, pour sa part, une analogie significative entre l'Incarnation du Verbe et la récapitulation de toute la Loi dans le double commandement de l'amour: '... le Seigneur Christ, plein de miséricorde, tout comme il se montra grand dans un corps de petites dimensions, a de même enfermé l'amplitude de la Loi dans un précepte bref. Dans la petitesse de son corps, nous avons tout le Fils de Dieu, dans la brièveté de ces commandements, nous avons toute la Loi de Dieu'[31]. Faire de la charité le principe de l'herméneutique scripturaire est équivalemment reconnaître dans le Christ la clé de toute l'Écriture: le mystère central de la foi chrétienne est ainsi la justification dernière de l'ordre adopté par Augustin dans le *De doctrina christiana*.

[27] I, 35, 39, *BA* 11, p. 230 et I, 26, 27, p. 212.

[28] 21, 38 (*CSEL* 34, p. 212): '... etiam expertus sum experiorque cotidie, quando quidem nullum mihi sacramentum aut aliquis sermo admodum obscurior de sacris litteris aperitur, ubi non eadem praecepta reperiam: 'Finis enim praecepti est caritas de corde puro et conscientia bona et fide non ficta'(*ITim.* 1, 5), et: 'Plenitudo legis caritas'(*Rom.* 13, 10)'.

[29] 2, 2, *PL* 39, 1534; cf. G. Madec, 'Le principe Charité', *BA* 11/1, pp. 239-241.

[30] 4, 8, *BA* 11/1, pp. 68-70.

[31] 2, *RBen* 102, p. 66; ce sermon est probablement contemporain de la première rédaction du *De doctrina christiana*.

The Figure of Eve in Augustine's Theology

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One's first impression on looking at Augustine's references to Eve is that she is so overshadowed by his treatment of her husband as to leave her as a figure of little significance in his theology. To a great degree their careers intersect, though the intersection does not mean that they are identical. There is, indeed, a great divergence; but the divergence hardly enhances Eve's status, when compared to that of Adam. She may be his equal as his partner in crime, but in other respects she appears in every respect to be his inferior. Perhaps the most famous — or most notorious — of Augustine's references to Eve is his suggestion, in *De Genesi ad Litteram* IX, v, 9, that her primary function as an aid to Adam was procreation, since for any other purpose — work in the Garden of Eden, which had not yet become laborious, or for social companionship — a man would obviously have been a more suitable companion: *Quanto enim congruentius ad conuiuendum et colloquendum duo amici pariter quam uir et mulier habitarent!*[1] A woman scholar of my acquaintance once remarked that, as a passionate gardener, she took exception to the reflection on Eve's horticultural ability[2], and one does not have to be a convinced feminist, or a feminist of any persuasion, to feel that the assumption of the inferiority of

[1] Eve's relation to Adam as a model of the relations between the sexes, of human sexuality, and the position of women in the Christian Church, have in recent years inspired a considerable number of studies, including Kari Elisabeth Børresen, *Subordination et équivalence. Nature et rôle de la femme d'après Augustin et Thomas d'Aquin* (Oslo/Paris, 1967); *'Imago Dei*, privilège masculin? Interprétation augustinienne et pseudo-augustinienne de Gen. 1:27 et I Cor. 11:7', *Augustinianum* 25 (1985), pp. 213-34; Elizabeth A. Clark, *Women in the Early Church* (Message of the Fathers; Wilmington 1983); 'Heresy, asceticism, Adam and Eve', *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith* (Studies of Women and Religion 20; Leviston/Queenstown 1986); '"Adam's only companion": Augustine and the Early Christian debate on marriage', *Recherches augustiniennes* 21 (1986), pp. 139-62; J.J. O'Meara, *The creation of man in* De Genesi ad Litteram (Villanova, PA., 1980); Elaine Hiesey Pagels, 'Adam and Eve and the serpent in Genesis 1-3', *Images of the Feminine in Gnosticism* (Philadelphia, 1985); *Adam, Eve and the serpent* (New York, 1988); Eugene TeSelle, 'Serpent, Eve and Adam: Augustine and the Exegetical Tradition' in *Augustine*: Presbyter factus sum, edd. J.T. Lienhard, E.C. Muller and R.J. Teske (Collectanea Augustiniana; New York 1993), pp. 341-61.

[2] Anna M. Wilson, 'Augustine and the status of women' in *Milltown Studies* (Dublin) 19/20 (1987), pp. 87-109. (Dr Wilson does not, alas! repeat in the printed text of her lecture the aside uttered when she delivered it). I have found Børresen (1967), Wilson and TeSelle (1993), particularly helpful to my understanding of Augustine's treatment of Eve as a model for woman's relation to man.

the opposite sex as a companion represents a strange lack of sensibility in Augustine, who had once praised his mother for her mastery of philosophy; declared that he and her other hearers, 'entirely forgetting her sex, thought that we had some great man in our midst[3]; and assured her that there were women among the ancient philosophers and that her philosophy — a true love of wisdom — pleased him greatly[4]. This is, perhaps, the difficulty in assessing Augustine at the end of the twentieth century. So often, in reading him, one comes to think of him as a contemporary, only to be reminded, sharply and unexpectedly, that he was a Christian thinker of the later Roman Empire, who embodied and retained opinions which are today not merely discarded but deemed generally to be wholly unacceptable.

Since however we seek to understand Augustine's thought, it is necessary to recognise and make allowance for these opinions. Augustine's attitude to women was fundamentally that of his contemporaries, with regard to their place and rôle in society, and was derived from a hierarchical view of the cosmos and of human society therein, which extends from his remark in the *De Ordine* of 386 that the executioner, the prostitute and the pimp, are necessary in the well-ordered city, the one to maintain order and the others to provide an outlet for passions which would otherwise be directed against respectable women[5], to the eulogy of the peaceful ordering of the universe by Divine Providence in Chapter 12 of Book XIX of the *De Civitate Dei* of 427. It is this notion of the need for right ordering which underlies Augustine's repeated assertion, which appears as early as A.D. 389 in *De Genesi aduersus Manicheos*[6], that the wife's submission to her husband is an outward and visible sign that the lower, appetitive part of the soul should be subordinated to the virile reason. We have here an example of Augustine's willingness to find a sacramental meaning in the mundane and the ordinary. It would be dishonest to try to use this fact to spiritualise Augustine's ideal of wifely subordination. On the contrary, he asserts that 'the man ought to rule the woman and not allow her to dominate the man which, when it happens, makes for a wretched and perverted home'[7]. Was Augustine here remembering his mother's docile submission to her hot-tempered spouse at Thagaste and her rather smug advice to some of her women friends that they had, by marriage, become slaves of their husbands and ought to bear themselves accordingly and not proudly to resist their lords and masters?[8] Whether he remembered this or not, Augustine's philosophical understanding of Eve's relationship with Adam and its analogical

[3] *De Beata Vita* 3,10. *CCSL* 29,70-71.
[4] *De Ordine* 1,11,31-32. *CCSL* 29,105-06.
[5] Ibid., 2,4,12. *CCSL* 29,114.
[6] *De Genesi aduersus Manicheos* 2,11,15. *PL* 34,204.
[7] Ibid.: 'uir debet feminam regere, nec eam permittere dominari in uirum, quod ubi contingit, peruersa et misera domus est'. *PL* 34,204-05.
[8] *Confessionum Libri XIII*, 3,9,19. *CCSL* 27,145.

significance did not exclude a very Roman and, to many readers today, a very distasteful understanding of the relationship of a wife to her husband.

However, Augustine's tendency to take the incidents of the Bible as symbols was a perfectly sincere exegetical method and reflected a characteristic principle of his scriptural interpretation: an historical event may be, and indeed often should be, understood figuratively rather than literally[9], and may have a prophetic significance. This notion of the prophetic quality of many of the events in Genesis has a dominating rôle in Augustine's exegesis of the relationship of Adam and Eve. 'What was fulfilled historically in Adam, by prophecy signifies Christ', he declares in *De Genesi aduersus Manicheos*, commenting on Genesis 2:24: *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall be one flesh*, in the light of Ephesians 5:32: *This is a great mystery and I take it to mean Christ and the Church*[10]. Augustine frequently uses this image of Christ as Adam and Eve as the Church as one of a number of images of Eve which become archetypical and to be applied — not necessarily to Eve's advantage — to other biblical personalities in Augustine's exposition of the history of human salvation.

This prophetic understanding of the Genesis narrative was of obvious value in defending the Old Testament against the crude literalism which the Manichees sought to impose, in order to contrast it with the New Testament, and Augustine's anti-Manichaean polemic inevitably conditioned his earlier treatment of the figure of Eve, in which he sought to oppose the Manichaean view. For the Manichees, Adam and Eve were the offspring of Saclas, the Prince of Darkness, and his consort Nebrōel, who begot them with the intention of confining particles of the divine light in matter by sexual reproduction[11]. Adam, having been warned by Christ to avoid this evil by practising continence, eventually gave way and begot children on Eve, as a result of which the liberation of light was delayed. It may be that Augustine had this legend in mind, when he suggested in the *De Genesi aduersus Manicheos* that Eve was given to Adam in paradise to bring forth spiritual offspring and that carnal generation only took place after the Fall[12] — an opinion which he subsequently modified in the *Retractations*, in case it should be understood to mean that physical reproduction was a consequence of sin[13]. However, it was essential for Augustine to maintain against the Manichees, for whom Eve was

[9] *De Doctrina Christiana* 3,10,14; 3,24,34-25,35. *CCSL* 32,86; 97-8.

[10] *Gn adu. Man.* 2,24,37: 'Ergo quod per historiam impletum est in Adam, per prophetiam significat Christum, qui reliquit patrem, cum dixit: *Ego a patre exiui, et ueni in hunc mundum*'. *PL* 34,215.

[11] *De Moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum libri duo* 2,19,73. *PL* 32,1375-6; *De natura boni* 46. *CSEL* 25 (2), 884-6; *De haeresibus ad Quoduultdeum* 46,14. *CCSL* 46,317.

[12] *Gn. adu. Man.* 1,19,30. *PL* 34,187.

[13] *Retractationum libri duo* 1,10[9],2. *CCSL* 57,30-31.

a being of lower order than Adam, with more darkness and less light in her nature, that while in the order of creation (*rerum ordo*) she was lower than Adam and was subject to his jurisdiction[14], in the spiritual order she was his equal, being made, like him, in the image of God. This Augustine urged against Faustus the Manichee in the lengthy apologia he produced in 397-398:

> For what individual who has been instructed in catholic truth, does not know that human beings are male and female in bodily structure but not according to the *spirit of the mind* (Eph. 4:23), in which we are renewed *according to the image* of God (Col. 3:10)? Nevertheless the same apostle again testifies that God made both sexes when he says: *Woman is not independent of man nor man of woman in the Lord, for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman; and all things are from God* (I Cor. 11:11-12)[15].

This distinction: differentiation of the sexes in the body, identity in the soul, is reaffirmed by Augustine in *De Genesi ad Litteram*, Book VII (before 410?):

> We do not rightly understand the saying: *in his image*, except as regards the soul, nor the saying *male and female*, except as regards the body[16].

Eve was, then, made in the image of God no less than Adam, but a difficulty was posed for Augustine, when he came to discuss the matter in the *De Trinitate*, by St Paul's injunction that a man should not pray or prophesy with his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God, but a woman should cover her head, because she is the glory of man (I Cor. 11:7). Augustine's attempt to resolve this apparent contradiction seems a rather laboured one; but unlike more recent biblical critics, he did not feel able to dismiss the apostle's injunction as being no more than a reflection of the prejudices of his time. Augustine therefore suggests that while man and women *together* are the image of God, presumably because they are one flesh, woman considered *by herself*, simply as an aid (*adiutorium*) to man, is not the divine image:

> (St Paul) says that human nature, considered in itself, is truly the image of God and is realized in both sexes, nor does he exclude the female sex from being understood as the image of God; for having said that God made *Adam in the image of God, He made him*, says Scripture, *male and female* (or, in another reading, *Male and female he made them*). How then have we heard from the apostle that man is the image of God, and on that account is forbidden to veil his head, but that woman is not, and must therefore veil hers (I Cor. 11:5)? — unless it be, I think, for the reason that I gave when I was discussing the human mind (12,4,4), namely, that woman with her husband is the

[14] *Gn. adu. Man.* 2,11,15: 'Ad huius rei exemplum femina facta est, quam rerum ordo subiugit uiro'. *PL* 34,204.

[15] *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* 24,2. *CSEL* 25 (1), 723-4. Translation here and elsewhere my own.

[16] *De Genesi ad litteram* 7,24,35: 'nam neque illud, quod dictum est, *ad imaginem suam*, nisi in anima, neque illud, quod dictum est, *masculum et feminam*, nisi in corpore recte intelligimus'. *CSEL* 28 (1), 222-3.

image of God, so that the whole human substance constitutes a single image, but that when woman is assigned as an aid to man, her femininity, which is pecular to herself, is not the image of God, while what pertains to masculinity is God's image, as full and complete as when woman is joined to him in one whole[17].

Augustine's language must inevitably offend the sexual egalitarian by implying that the female, as such, is not made in the image of God while the male, in all its totality, is; but I would suggest that what he is saying should not necessarily be understood as deliberate disparagement but, paradoxically, as an attempt to defend the spiritual equality of the sexes in the face of St Paul's language and of the preconceptions of his own age, for he goes on to quote Galatians 3:6: *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female*; *for you are all one in Christ Jesus*[18]. His point is that the renewal in the spirit of the mind (Eph. 4:23) *according to the image of* God *who created* humanity (Col. 3:10), does not involve any physical change: women will retain their sex in the General Resurrection, for the female sex is not a vice, but of nature[19]. Nevertheless, in the present world the female may be understood symbolically, to represent that part of the reason which is concerned with temporal matters[20], and in that, according to Augustine, it must be distinguished from the higher part of the mind, which is able to contemplate eternal verities, and which women share with men[21].

If we accept this understanding of the distinction between the sexes in Augustine's thought, his treatment of the figure of Eve in his writings falls into shape. Considered as an aid to Adam, as an *adiutorium*, Eve is subordinated to him within the temporal order, an order which existed from the creation, and was not brought about by, but became harsher, as a result of sin[22]. Eve was created capable of bearing children, although Augustine never seems to have definitely decided whether procreation actually took place in paradise[23]. Between Adam and Eve there was fidelity and the association of pure love: *inter se coniugum fide ex honesto amore societas*[24]. This mutual love was based upon the creation of Eve from Adam's rib, taken from his side as he lay in slumber[25], a formation which signified how dear the affection between man and wife ought to be[26], since Eve was made from Adam's interior flesh, and *no*

[17] *De Trinitate* 12,7,10. *CCSL* 50, 364.
[18] Ibid., 12,7,12. *CCSL* 50, 367.
[19] *De Ciuitate Dei* 22,17: 'Non est autem uitium sexus femineus, sed natura'. *CSEL* 40 (2), 625.
[20] *De opere monachorum* 32,40. *CSEL* 41,593-4.
[21] *Gn. Litt.* 7,24,35. *CSEL* 28 (1), 222-3; *c. Faust.* 24,2. *CSEL* 25 (1), 723-4.
[22] *Gn. Litt.* 11,37,50. *CSEL* 28 (1), 372.
[23] *ciu.* 14,23. *CSEL* 40 (2), 47-8.
[24] Ibid., 14,26. *CSEL* 40 (2), 53.
[25] *De bono coniugali* 1,1. *CSEL* 41,187-8.
[26] *ciu.* 12,28: 'Quod uero femina illi ex eius latere facta est, etiam hic satis significatum est quam cara mariti et uxoris debeat esse coniunctio'. *CSEL* 40 (1), 614.

man ever hates his own flesh, so that *he who loves his wife loves himself* (Eph. 6:29, 28)[27].

It is worth remarking that Augustine's ideal of a husband's rule over his wife and his consequent understanding of the relation of Adam to Eve in paradise is based upon mutual love. Although Eve might, in her person, signify the lower part of the human mind, the appetite which should be ruled by the virile reason, her creation from the body of Adam indicated the strength of the bond of their union, since they were one flesh[28]. In the *De Ciuitate Dei*, Book XV, Augustine was to point out that although Eve had a personal name, that of Adam was common to both, since *male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created* (Gn 5:2)[29].

Of the terrible significance of the Fall in Augustine's theology there is no question, and the ultimate responsibility rests with Adam: 'We were all in that one man who fell into sin through the woman who was made from him before the first sin'[30]. Adam was not seduced like Eve (I Tim. 2:14) but sinned knowingly, and must therefore bear the primary responsibility for the ruin of mankind. Indeed, Augustine holds that if Eve alone had eaten the forbidden fruit, she alone would have been punished[31]. He is aware of the text in Ecclesiasticus 25:33: *A muliere initium factum est peccati*, citing it in *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* I, xvi, 21 (A.D. 411)[32] and Sermon 318,2 (425)[33]; but he does not dwell upon it. Again, in Sermon 362, xiv, 16, preached in 410-411, he speaks of the concupiscence through which human beings are born, which as clearly applies to both Adam and Eve after the Fall as to their descendants[34]; but the primary responsibility still rests with Adam, *in quo omnes peccauerunt*. However, Eve's guilt remains, and it is necessary to consider why she sinned.

The devil approached Eve through the serpent, and his suggestion, her approbation, and Adam's consent, represent the three elements in any subsequent sin: *suggestio*; *delectatio*; and *consensio*. Eve appropriately represents the

[27] *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 48, *s.* 1, 6. *CCSL* 38,556.
[28] *Gn. Litt.* 9,13,23. *CSEL* 28 (1), 284.
[29] *ciu.* 15,17: 'Et ipsum enim nomen homo interpretatur, sed commune perhibetur esse in illa lingua, id est Hebrea, masculo et feminae .... Unde non ambigitur sic appellatam fuisse feminam Euam proprio nomine, ut tamen Adam, quod interpretatur homo, nomen esset amborum'. *CSEL* 40 (2), 96.
[30] Ibid., 13,14. *CSEL* 40 (1), 632.
[31] *trin.* 12,12,18. *CCSL* 50,372.
[32] *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* 1,16,21. *CSEL* 60,21.
[33] *Sermo* 318,2. *PL* 38,1439. Other references: *s.* 299,8; *s.* 336,5; *c. Iul.* 6,24,78; *c. Iul. imp.* 2,56; 2,66; 6,25; 6,27.
[34] *s.* 362,14,16: 'Si quis autem quaerit cur hominem secundum non in caelo dixerit (I Cor. 15:47) sed de caelo, cum et ipse dominus de terra corpus acceperit, quia utique Maria ex Adam et Eua erat progenita, intelligat terrenum hominem secundum terrenam concupiscentiam dictum: et quoniam affectus ille terrenus est, quo per concubitum maris et feminae nascuntur homines, trahentes etiam ex parentibus originale peccatum, corpus autem domini nullo tali affectu ex utero uirginali creatum est, quamuis de terra Christus assumpserit carnem'. *PL* 39, 1621.

lower, appetitive part of the mind, 'for our reason cannot be brought to consent to sin except when pleasure has been aroused in that part of the soul which ought to obey the reason as though it were its ruling husband'[35]. This does not, however, mean that Eve's surrender to the serpent's promptings was outside her control. On the contrary, her sin, no less than that of Adam, was pride. Why did Eve believe the words of the serpent that God had forbidden her something good and useful? Augustine asks in *De Genesi ad Litteram* and answers himself: *nisi iam inesset menti amor ille propriae potestatis et quaedam de se superba praesumptio* — 'unless there was already in her mind a love of her own power and a proud confidence about herself'[36]. Augustine had already in 393, in the *De Fide et Symbolo*, drawn his hearers' attention to the fact that 'we could not return (to God) except by humility, we who fell by pride, when it was said to our first mother: "Taste, *and you will be as gods*" (Gn. 3:5)'[37]. There was, however, another element in Eve's sin: *audax curiositas*, that lust to investigate things unknown and irrelevant to our eternal well-being, which is so characteristic of her fallen descendants and so destructive of true piety[38]. Hence, Eve's sin was inexcusable[39]. She had not forgotten the divine command to abstain from the forbidden fruit, but disregarded it — in the very presence of God, as it were[40]. But her pride went further, for when called to account, she did not beg for mercy or ask for a cure, but simply declared: *The serpent beguiled me and I ate* (Gn 3:13)[41]. Such a defence could only increase her guilt[42].

The penalty for their disobedience, for both Adam and Eve, was death, both physical and spiritual[43]; but there were more immediate consequences. There was, first, the disobedience of their members and the sense of shame which it induced, which caused them to make aprons of fig-leaves[44], so that these fig-leaves are to be understood as symbolising sin[45]. For Adam there was also

[35] *De sermone Domini in monte* 1,12,34. *CCSL* 35,36; *Gn. c. Man.* 2,14,20: 'non enim ratio nostra deduci ad consensionem peccati potest, nisi cum delectatio mota fuerit in illa parte animi, quae debet obtemperare rationi tanquam rectori uiro'. *PL* 34, 207; cf. *en. Ps.* 48, *s.* 1,6: 'Quando incipit (serpens) mala suggerere, tunc repelle antequam surgat delectatio et sequatur consensio'. *CCSL* 38,556.

[36] *Gn. litt.* 11,30,39. *CSEL* 28 (1), 363.

[37] *De fide et symbolo* 4,6: 'non enim redire potuimus nisi humilitate, qui superbia lapsi sumus, sicut dictum est primae nostrae creaturae: gustate, *et eritis tamquam dii*'. *CSEL* 41,9.

[38] *Gn. litt.* 11,31,41. *CSEL* 38 (1), 365.

[39] Ibid., 11,30,38. *CSEL* 38 (1), 362.

[40] Ibid., 11,30,38: 'tamquam in illo deus adsistens praesensque contemnitur'. *CSEL* 38 (1), 363; *s.* 224,2: 'dimissa est iussio dei et audita est persuasio diaboli'. *PL* 38,1094.

[41] *ciu.* 14,14. *CSEL* 40 (2), 34.

[42] Ibid.: 'Nusquam hic sonat petitio ueniae, nusquam imploratio medicinae .... Sed accusatio potius quam excusatio uera est, ubi mandati diuini est aperta transgressio'.

[43] *pecc. mer.* 2,21,35. *CSEL* 60,106.

[44] *s.* 110,1; 174,4. *PL* 38,638; 942.

[45] *Io.eu.tr.* 7,21. *CCSL* 36,79.

the disobedience of the soil — he must hereafter labour *in the sweat of his face*. For Eve there was the multiplication of pain in child-bearing; not only the physical which, Augustine observes, sometimes occurs among the lower animals, who have not sinned, but also in the knowledge that human beings have come to their present mortality by sin and, allegorically, by the struggle which now accompanies the effort to bring good resolutions to effect[46]. And there was another consequence: *Your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you* (Gn 3:16). Even in paradise, as we have seen, Augustine held that the wife should be obedient to her husband; but this servitude had been based upon mutual affection — as the apostle had counselled: *Through love be servants of one another* (Gal. 5:13). After the Fall, the lordship (*dominium*) of the husband came about, not by nature but as a further punishment of Eve's sin[47] (did Augustine remember the bruised faces of the battered wives of Thagaste in his youth?)[48]. At the end of his life, in his debate with Julian of Eclanum, Augustine still maintained that the husband's rule (*dominatio*), proclaimed in Genesis 3:16, was a punishment for the primal sin, and was not in the original and natural order of creation[49].

It was only after the Fall, Augustine is concerned to point out, and after God's sentence of condemnation to death, that Adam bestowed upon Eve her name — Life — because she was *the mother of the living* (Gn 3:20): 'for she is *the mother of the living* in this way, that a sinful life is commonly called death in the Scriptures'[50] '... and thus all the children of the woman who believed the serpent, with the result that they were corrupted by lust, are not set free *from the body of this death* (Rom. 7:24) except by the Son of the Virgin, who believed the angel and so conceived without lust'[51]. In the *Confessions* Augustine speaks of the 'river of human custom' and demands rhetorically for how long will it continue to sweep the Sons of Eve into that great and fearful sea — the present world — which even those who sail upon the wood of the cross find hard to go over[52]; and when describing his mother's grief, after he had deserted her at Carthage in 383, he remarks that there was still within her

[46] *Gn. adu. Man.* 2,19,29. *PL* 34,210-11.

[47] *Gn. litt.* 11,37,50. *CSEL* 28 (1), 372.

[48] *conf.* 9,9,19. *CCSL* 27,145.

[49] *Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* 6,26: 'Quid opus est ut tecum inde confligam, utrum ista dominatio uiri poena sit feminae an ordo naturae? quem tamen ordinem non commemorauit Deus quando condidit, sed quando puniuit'. *PL* 45,1566.

[50] *Gn. adu. Man.* 2,22,31: 'Sic enim est illa uita materque uiuorum. Nam uita quae in peccatis est mors appellari in Scripturis solet, sicut Apostolus dicit mortuam esse uiduam quae in deliciis uiuit' (1 Tim. 5:6). *PL* 34,212.

[51] *pecc. mer.* 1,28,56: 'ac sic omnes filios mulieris, quae serpenti credidit, ut libidine corrumperetur, non liberari a corpore mortis huius nisi per filium uirginis, quae angelo credidit, ut sine libidine fetaretur'. *CSEL* 60,55.

[52] *conf.* 1,16,25. *CCSL* 27,14.

'a remnant of Eve' (*reliquarium Eve*)[53]. If, however, Eve's name is understood in a prophetic fashion, the description *mother of the living* may be applied to the Church which, as the spouse of Christ, bears sons, and as she bears them may be said to bring forth[54]. 'In the figure of the Church', Augustine declares in a sermon, 'Eve was also called *the mother of the living*'[55].

The image of Eve as foreshadowing the Church, an image which had already been employed by Tertullian[56], is one which greatly appealed to Augustine. It runs through his writing and preaching from the *Contra Faustum* of 397-398 to Book XXII of the *De Ciuitate Dei* of 425. The parallel between Eve being taken from the sleeping Adam to be formed into a woman, and the Church formed from the sacraments of blood and water flowing from the side of Christ, sleeping on the cross in death, powerfully inspired him. So Augustine could say to Faustus:

A wife was made for the sleeping Adam from his (living) side; the Church was made for the dying Christ from the sacrament of blood which flowed from His dead side. Eve, who was made from the side of her husband, was called *life* and *mother of the living*, and the Lord says in the Gospel: *If anyone does not eat my flesh and drink my blood, he has no life in him* (John 6:23). And everything which is treated there in plain detail, prophesies Christ and the Church, whether with regard to good Christians or bad ones. Nor does the apostle speak irrelevantly about Adam, *who is a form of the future* (Rom. 5:15) and say that *a man leaves his father and mother and will cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. This*, he says, *is a great mystery, but I take it to mean Christ and the Church* (Eph. 5:31,32)[57].

Augustine will develop this notion of Eve being taken from Adam's side in order to be formed into his wife as a symbol of Christ and His Church to very considerable lengths. He sees Adam and Eve as parents who begot us to death, Christ and the Church as parents who begot us to life. Accordingly, he will tell his hearers, in the ninth tractate on the Gospel of John:

In their very beginning Adam and Eve were the parents of all peoples and not only of the Jews; and whatever image in Adam applies to Christ, applies to all peoples, whose salvation is in Christ ... Now the apostle says: *And they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great mystery* (Eph. 5:31,32). And lest anyone should suppose that the greatness of this mystery is in individual men who have wives, he says: *But I take it to mean Christ and the Church* (Eph. 5:32). What is this great mystery: *they shall be two in one flesh*? (Answer:) When the book of Genesis came to these words: *On this account a man leaves his father and mother and will cleave to his wife and they shall be two in one flesh* (Gn. 2:24). If, therefore, Christ clave to the Church, so that they were *two in one flesh*, how did he leave father or mother? He left the Father because, when he was in the form of God, *he did not think equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave* (Phil. 2:6) ... How did He leave a mother? By leaving the Synagogue of the Jews, from which He was born according to the flesh, and by cleaving to the Church, which He gathered together from all peoples[58].

A singularly bold piece of exegesis, undoubtedly; but indicative of the power which the interpretation of Genesis 2:24 by the author of the Epistle to the Ephesians exercised over Augustine's mind.

Because of Eve's guilt as the first sinner — *a muliere initium est peccati* — Augustine did not feel constrained to use her only as an image of what was good — she might be an image of the Church, but she might also be recapitulated as another temptress, and was so in the case of Job's wife (Job 2:7). But in this instance she chanced upon a stronger Adam, in the person of her husband, who answered: *You have spoken as one of the foolish women. Shall we receive good things at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?*

Putrid Adam repulsed Eve, as if saying: 'Let it suffice that I was made mortal because of you'. You were strong in Eden, Eve, but you were vanquished on a dunghill! Oh the great grace of God![59]

Augustine was to employ this theme in his sermon on the sack of Rome, preached in 410-411:

O great spectacle and glorious beauty of virtue in that foulness of corruption! The (diabolical) enemy ravages, lying hidden, the female enemy urges evil, an agent of the devil and not of her spouse. She was the new Eve, but he was not the old Adam. '*Curse God*', she said, '*and die!* Extort by blasphemy what you could not obtain by prayer'. '*You have spoken*', said he, '*as one of the foolish women. If we receive good things at the hand of God, why should we not endure evil?*'[60].

Augustine does not, however, limit his understanding of Eve the temptress to the figure of Job's wife. She may be any woman, wife or mother, who seeks to dissuade a man from following the call of God, as in Letter 243[61].

[53] Ibid., 5,8,15. *CCSL* 27,65.

[54] *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* 2,4,12. *CSEL* 42,263.

[55] *en. Ps.* 126,8: 'Parit enim ecclesia filios coniux Christi; et si parit, parturit. In cuius figura Eua *mater uiuorum* appellata est'. *CCSL* 40,1863.

[56] Tertullian, *De Anima* 43: 'Si enim Adam de Christo figuram dabat, somnus Adam mors erat Christi dormituri in mortem, ut de iniuria perinde lateris eius uera *mater uiuentium* figuraretur ecclesia'. *CCSL* 2,847.

[57] *c. Faust.* 12,8. *CSEL* 25 (1), 336-7.

[58] *Io. eu. tr.* 9,10. *CCSL* 36,96; cf. *Gn. adu. Man.* 2,24,37. *PL* 34,215; *s.* 22, 10. *CCSL* 41,300-01.

[59] *en. Ps.* 133,2: 'Adam putris repulit Euam, tamquam dicens: "Sufficiat quod propter te mortalis effectus sum. Valueras in paradiso, sed uinceris in stercore". Magna gratia Dei!' *CCSL* 40,1937.

[60] *De excidio urbis Romae* 3,3. *CCSL* 46,253-4. Here, and in the other translations of the sermons, I have greatly benefitted from the ten-volume translation of Edmund Hill in the series, *The Works of St Augustine. A translation for the Twenty-first century: Sermons* (New York: New City Press 1990-1995), though I have always made my own.

[61] *Epistula* 243,10: 'Haec ergo interrumpuntur uocibus matris tuae et inter haec locum inuenit commemoratio praegnantis atque lactantis, ut de Adam et Eua alius Adam nasceris et nutrieris? respice potius, respice Adam de caelo et porta iam caelestis imaginem, sicut terreni portasti .... quid interest utrum in uxore an in matre, dum tamen Eua in qualibet muliere caueatur?' *CSEL* 57,577.

It was almost inevitable that if Augustine saw Christ as the Second Adam, who came to restore lost humanity, he would see the Virgin Mary as a second Eve, who did not yield to temptation, as did the first, but showed in her own person that God did not despise the female sex, since He was prepared to take flesh of a woman:

If, in coming forth as a man — as indeed he had to (in order to be a man) — Christ had not been born of a woman, women would despair of themselves, remembering their first sin, because the first man was deceived by a woman, and so they would think that they had no hope at all in Christ. Christ therefore came as a man to favour the male sex and was born of a woman to reassure (*consolari*) the female[62].

If this passage from a sermon preached in 417-418, seems to treat the Virgin Birth as a kind of consolation prize for women, because Christ was born as a man, the words of the *De Agone Christiano* of A.D. 396 are far more positive:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who came to set humanity free, in which men and women alike are called to salvation, despised neither the males, because he assumed the male sex, nor the females, because he was born of a woman. Here arises a great mystery, in that death befell us through a woman and life was born for us from a woman, so that the devil, being conquered, should be tormented by both sexes, male and female, since he had gloated over their common ruin[63].

More pithily, in Sermon 369, perhaps to be dated to A.D. 412, Augustine declared:

The devil crept in to deceive us, when a woman's mind had been corrupted. Christ came forth by the uncorrupt flesh of a woman to set us free[64].

In view of the rôle which concupiscence plays in Augustine's doctrine of the transmission of Original Sin, it should cause no surprise that he emphasises Mary's virginity both in the conception and birth of her Son and afterwards, while recognising that she herself was descended from Adam and Eve, by whose primal sin concupiscence entered fallen human nature. Accordingly, in Sermon 362, to be assigned to A.D. 410-411, Augustine declares:

If anyone asks why (St Paul) says that *the Second Man is from heaven* and not in heaven (I Cor. 15:47) (whereas the first Adam is from the earth, earthy), when the Lord Himself assumed a body from the earth, since Mary was descended from Adam and Eve, he should understand that the earthly man is so called on account of earthly concupiscence, and that this passion, by which human beings are born through the sexual union of man and woman, thereby contracting Original Sin from their parents, is of the

[62] *s.* 51,2,3. *PL* 38,334-5.

[63] *De agone christiano* 22,24. *CSEL* 41,124-5.

[64] *s.* 369,3: 'Diabolus ad nos decipiendos corrupta feminea mente subrepsit; Christus ad nos liberandos incorrupta feminea etiam carne processit'. *PL* 39,1657. The authenticity of this sermon has been challenged. See Hill, Vol. III, p. 306 note 1.

earth. But the body of the Lord was made without any such passion, out of a virginal womb, even though Christ assumed flesh from the earth[65].

Augustine asserts Mary's perpetual virginity with reference to Eve in the tenth tractate on the Gospel of John. In order to understand his argument, in which he was once again anticipated by Tertullian[66], it has to be remembered that the word *mulier* has, on occasion, a specialised meaning of 'married woman', as distinct from a maiden. In this sermon, Augustine discusses the text of John 2:12: *He went down to Capernaum with his mother and his brothers and his disciples; and there they stayed for a few days.*

Scripture has its own language. Those who don't understand it are worried and say: 'Who are these brothers of the Lord? Surely Mary didn't have another child?' Certainly not — she is the source of the dignity which now attaches to virginity. This woman (*femina*) was able to be a mother, but not to be a woman (*mulier*) (with sexual experience). She is called *mulier* because of her sex, and not because of any corruption of her virginity, and this by Scripture itself. You know that Eve is also called *mulier*, after she had been made fully grown from the side of her husband, but having had, as yet, no dealings with him. *And God formed the rib into a woman* (*mulier*) (Gn. 2:22)[67].

It was, of course, inevitable that if Eve should symbolize the Church, the second Eve should do the same. More appropriately, indeed; since death came to us through the first Eve, life was born to us by the second. In giving birth to Christ, Mary also became the mother of the faithful. So Augustine says, in a sermon preached on Christmas Day, some time after 412:

How can you too not belong to the Virgin's child-bearing (he asks his congregation) when you are members of Christ? Mary gave birth to your Head, the Church gave birth to you. For the Church too is both mother and virgin, a mother by her charity, a virgin by her faith and piety. She gives birth to nations, but they are members of the One, whose body and bride she herself is, and in this she resembles the Virgin Mary, because she is the mother of unity in the midst of all that multiplicity[68].

[65] *s.* 362,14,16. *PL* 39,1621.

[66] Tertullian, *De Oratione* 22,1: 'Nam inueniunt sexus esse nomen, non gradus sexus; siquidem Euam nondum uirum expertam Deus mulierem et feminam cognominauit (feminam, qua sexus generaliter, mulierem, qua gradus sexus specialiter). Ita qua iam tunc innupta adhuc Eua mulieris uocabulo fuit, commune id uocabulum et uirgini factum est'. *CCSL* 1,268-9.

[67] *Io.eu.tr.* 10,2: 'Habet linguam suam (Scriptura); quicumque hanc linguam nescit, turbatur, et dixit: Unde fratres Domino? Num enim Maria iterum peperit? Absit. Inde coepit dignitas uirginum. Illa femina mater esse potuit, mulier esse non potuit. Dicta est autem mulier secundum femineum sexum, non secundum corruptionem integritatis, et hoc ex lingua ipsius scripturae. Nam et Eua statim facta de latere uiri sui, nondum contacta a uiro suo, nostis quia mulier appellata est: *Et formauit eam in mulierem* (Gn. 2:22)'. *CCSL* 36, 101. On this see John W. Rettig, *St Augustine: Tractates on the Gospel of John 1-10* (The Fathers of the Church 78; Washington, D.C., 1988), p. 212, note 9.

[68] *s.* 192, 2. *PL* 38,1012-3.

There were, however, other Marys to whom Augustine compared Eve — Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James — who, with the other women, Salome and Joanna, went to the sepulchre on the first Easter Day and announced to the disbelieving disciples the news of Christ's resurrection:

And these words appeared to them like madness (Luke 24:11). How wretched is the human condition! When Eve repeated what the serpent had said, she was quickly believed. A lying woman was believed and so we died, but a woman speaking the truth that we might have life was not believed. If women are not trustworthy, why did Adam believe Eve? If women are trustworthy, why did the disciples not believe these holy women? In this, then, we must see the hand of our Lord. For this is what our Lord Jesus did, in decreeing that the female sex should be the first to announce that He had risen. Because humanity fell through the female sex, humanity was restored by the female sex, when a woman gave birth to Christ and another woman announced His resurrection. By a woman came death, by a woman came life. But the disciples *did not believe* what the woman had said. They thought that they were raving when in fact they were speaking the truth[69].

And again:

Our Head rose again and was seen to rise again. He was first seen by women and announced by women to men. Women were the first to see the Lord rising, and the Gospel was announced to the apostles, the future Evangelists, by women. By women, too, Christ was announced, for 'Gospel' means 'good news'. … What better news can we say, than that our Saviour has risen? Or what greater thing will the apostles proclaim, than what women announced to them? But why did a woman announce the good news? It was through a woman that death was put right[70], because a woman, by announcing life, consoled the woman who announced death, since a woman died by coming near to death (the serpent?). Adam was seduced by a woman and fell into death. Christ, when He rose never again to die, was proclaimed by a women[71].

Whatever subordinationist views of women Augustine may have held, I would see in these last two passages an *amende*, and perhaps an *amende honorable*, for any disparagement of the female sex that he may have uttered in his writing and preaching.

[69] *s.* 232, 2. *PL* 38,1108.

[70] *quia per feminam mors emendata est.* 'It is not easy', as Hill observes (*Sermons* II, 261 note 18), 'to see what this phrase means. *Emendata est* would normally mean "was put right", but this is not in fact true — or at least Augustine would not have thought so'. While in the obvious sense: that we are redeemed by Christ and not by His mother — Hill is correct, one might understand Mary's obedience as cancelling Eve's disobedience, and so making possible the Incarnation while preserving Mary's freedom of choice.

[71] *s.* 45, 5. *CCSL* 41,520.

The Functions of the Family and of Civil Society in Augustine's *City of God*

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The primary notion of society in the *City of God* is of civil society, that being the ordinary meaning of *civitas*. Verbally, then, at least, that is Augustine's starting-point, and is the main concern of this paper. It is not, however, obvious what he thought civil society was — how he conceived of its principles and its place in human life.

There is an indication of his reticence on this subject, and of why the family has to be brought into the discussion, in the contrast between two passages from widely separate parts of the *City of God*. Both make connections between the family and civil society, but very different, even opposite kinds of connection.

Early in the work, in book three, Augustine deplores the war Rome once fought against her mother-city, Alba Longa[1]. That that war was immoral Augustine argues by comparing it with a fight between individual members of the same family. Even a fight between two gladiators, he says, would be stopped if it were discovered that they were father and son. Yet supposedly the gods had sat by and allowed that horrible historic fight between close national relatives to proceed. In this passage, then, social principles appear to radiate outwards from the family; the precepts of family life provide a basis for public morals.

By contrast in a much later passage (from book nineteen) Augustine says that because the household is a component part of civil society the *paterfamilias* should take his precepts from the law of the city[2]. Here the moral rules are conceived as working inward from the outside, from the public to the private.

One way of explaining the disparity between these passages is to suggest that in the ten years between book three and book nineteen there has been some change of view or at least of viewpoint. That explanation would not be adequate in this case, because in a third passage, from book four, a similar (not identical) disparity occurs within a few sentences[3]. When assessing the moral significance of Rome's imperial greatness Augustine wants to do so without the distraction of her public pomposity. He finds the basis of things by coming down to the private level. Take two hypothetical individuals, he says: one is

[1] *City of God* – from now on cited as *CD* – 3.14.

[2] *CD* 19.16.

[3] *CD* 4.3.

too rich, driven by inhuman ambition, never at peace, surrounded by rivals; the other, content with a modest fortune, has an affectionate relationship with his family and friends, peace of mind, and the leisure to develop virtues. But the same contrast, he says, applies to families, and, beyond families, to public life, even to entire kingdoms. Thus the principles of simplicity and modest expectation appear to radiate from the individual to wider society, in particular civil society. But then Augustine enthymematically concludes not that a civil society of modest means and limited power is a sound one, but that as long as a society has true religion and proper morals 'it is useful that good men should reign far and wide for a long time' — a striking indication that civil power, even in imperial form, is not necessarily based on the lust for domination, despite the contemporary scholarly opinion that Augustine thought it was[4]. The problem is that here the moral principles in their journey from private to public have without explanation become transformed from anti-imperial to imperial. Their main point has thus arguably been erased. The relevance of that to this discussion is that in this passage at one moment one has some reason to think that the principles of civil life are really those of individual, private, or family life, and the next moment one finds that they are not. Some other, unspecified principle has intervened, even supervened.

One can partially explain this by pointing out that the contrast here is between two kinds of motive rather than two kinds of behaviour. That explanation is only in part justified. Augustine does indeed contrast someone who wants power for its own sake with someone who seeks virtue and peace of mind. But he is also contrasting someone who makes a point of exercising wide power ('increasing his estate to an immense size') with someone who does not ('self-sufficient with his small and limited household property'). The passage, then, despite that partial solution, remains difficult, and difficult in the same way as the other two, widely separated passages, if taken together, are difficult.

Where, as here, different kinds of society are to be compared, a crucially important point is that in this work Augustine is concerned principally with the final causes of human societies[5]. Hence the relationship of each with the City of God must be the decisive matter in any such discussion as this.

That City's form has a certain neatness for Augustine, in its Old Testament manifestation. The ancient Jews not only as an entire people symbolized the City of God, but in their holy personages they also were the City of God on earth: they constituted the reality that they also symbolized. This is repeatedly made clear in books sixteen and seventeen[6].

[4] See e.g., J.M. Rist, *Augustine. Ancient Thought Baptized* (Cambridge, 1994) – from now on referred to as 'Rist, *Augustine*' – p. 219.
[5] E.g. *CD* 1.1, 15.4.
[6] E.g. *CD* 16.3, 17.16.

Also there came a point where the Jews were co-extensively a family, a religious community, and a civil society. Yet Augustine does not emphasize at all, as the Bible does, the momentousness of the decision by the ancient Jews to become a civil society — to be ruled by kings 'like the other nations'[7]; for in the *City of God* he hardly mentions the transition[8]. He does, however, emphasize the prophetic shaking of the familial blood-line that had under the Old Covenant legitimated the City of God on earth. Even from the inception of that line the strict adherence to its rules had been somewhat abandoned; and Augustine makes much of the fact that on that occasion Isaac was unexpectedly not angry, not inclined to change his blessing to a curse, when he found that Jacob had upset the normal practice of family inheritance[9]. Augustine's emphasis on this point already blurs the neat coincidence of social species that normally characterizes the antique Jewish City of God on earth in this part of the work.

In Augustine's account of society under the New Covenant the matter is considerably less neat again. The Church is now the City of God on earth (excepting again the enemies hidden within it), as Augustine, without showing any sense of needing to prove the point, routinely says. It is a protrusion of that eternal reality into history[10]. Now, however, that City of God on earth completely ceases to be a civil society. The question is whether it ceases to be so in as decisive and final a sense as it ceases to be a family: whether there is a plain and simple double divergence.

Without question Augustine admits, even early in the work, in a well known passage, that the Church can exist and increase without having an active civil dimension to it:

> 'As for this mortal life that lasts a limited number of days, what difference does it make under whose rule one lives (since one is going to die anyway), provided that the rulers were not to force one into impiety and injustice?'[11]

It would not be correct, however, to find Augustine here, as he has been found, to be theologically cavalier about civil society[12]. He does not say 'what difference does it make under what kind of rule one lives', but 'under whose rule'. The Romans, he says, did not fundamentally harm the peoples they conquered, for they ruled them equitably, though it would have been better still if there had not been the attendant violence. What does not matter is that the Romans conquered and the other peoples were conquered. But there is no suggestion here

[7] 1 Sam 8.5.
[8] *CD* 17.2-3.
[9] *CD* 16.37.
[10] *CD* 8.24, 13.16, 15.26, 16.2, 17.4, 20.11.
[11] *CD* 5.17.
[12] For the view contested here see R.A. Markus, *Saeculum* (Cambridge, 1970) – from now on referred to as 'Markus, *Saeculum*' – p. 70.

that spiritual good of harm is independent of the quality of civil institutions[13]. Furthermore the contrast here is between the temporal and the eternal effects of civil rule. Temporal effects do not in the end matter. Any eternal effects there may be do. The reasonable presumption is that there may well be such eternal effects. This, however, gives no positive information about what they might be: that is, about the relationship between civil society and the City of God under the New Covenant.

Here, as always, our concern must follow Augustine's: it must be with final causes. Although, of course, an earthly peace is one of civil society's concerns, it is not its characteristic end. We can be certain of this because Augustine sharply distinguishes in principle between civil society and the earthly city which is constituted by having earthly peace as its end. He does so by saying that there may have been other *civitates*, founded before Cain founded the *civitas terrena*[14]. Much of what one associates with civil society (war, imperialism, litigation, coercion) is, Augustine has pointed out four chapters earlier, characteristic of the *civitas terrena*. But those hypothetical other *civitates* would not have been manifestations of the Earthly City. They would, *ex hypothesi*, have been founded before it existed, albeit after the Fall. They would, therefore, have lacked the horrifically distorted social basis of Cain's city. Thus there is no reason to believe that, as asserted in some recent scholarship, coercion and the other, related characteristic of the *civitas terrena* are for Augustine intrinsic to civil life (indeed the text just mentioned gives some reason to believe that they are not)[15].

What end, therefore, has civil society when earthly peace is merely its means, not its end? Here a further widely accepted view must be reconsidered: that in Augustine's most mature thought civil society has no theologically significant final principles specific to it — an opinion purportedly developed during the composition of the *City of God* and fully expressed in book eighteen and nineteen, its mark being repudiation of his earlier belief that the Christian Roman empire had been foretold by the prophets[16].

But as late as book seventeen Augustine takes it as established that Roman Christendom is the fulfilment of a prophecy in the Psalms[17]. The purported change of mind would have to have taken place very sharply after that, therefore. Moreover a disquisition in book nineteen (the crucial book for his mature

[13] For a more extended discussion of this particular point see already P.J. Burnell, 'The Status of Politics in St. Augustine's *City of God*', *History of Political Thought* Vol. XIII, no. 1 (Spring, 1992), pp. 19-20.

[14] *CD* 15.8.

[15] For the view disputed here see most recently M. Ruokanen, *Theology of Social Life in Augustine's De Civitate Dei* (Göttingen, 1993), p. 106; Markus, *Saeculum*, pp. 91-95.

[16] For this view see Markus, *Saeculum*, pp. 54-56, recently echoed by Mary T. Clark, *Augustine* (London, 1994), pp. 101-103.

[17] *CD* 17.17.

views on this subject) both by itself takes a significantly theological view of civil society and is closely related to a passage in book fifteen, on a point directly relevant to the principles of civil society. When he says in book nineteen that the family derives its precepts from the law of civil society the context is an argument, begun two chapters earlier, about the existence and progress of the City of God in this imperfect world[18]. Since the family is the form of society most immediate to the individual, argues Augustine, the family is where one must begin one's contribution to the earthly manifestation of that City. But in analysing the underlying precepts of the family, so employed, he reveals, in the crucial passage already mentioned, that they are derived from those of civil society. (Thus the family is experientially prior to civil society, but civil society is metaphysically prior to the family). Taken in context, then, that passage means that the City of God, where it progresses and is manifested in the world, does so by way of civil society's provision of rules for families. This supplies a theoretical framework for the notion that Christian Rome was a temporal and also temporary and imperfect manifestation of the City of God on earth. And this passage's more explicit theoretical notion has already arisen in historical form in book fifteen. There Augustine gives an instance of such pious provision of rules by civil society (by Christian Rome)[19]: although, he says, marriage of brother and sister was universally forbidden long ago, the question of marriage between cousins was not covered by the Divine law, and the practice had continued until the recent ban (that of Theodosius)[20]. In other words, it had taken civil law to end that practice. The conceptual continuity between these two passages, regarding the significance of civil society and its relationship with the family, indicates that between the composition of books fifteen and nineteen Augustine did not change his mind about civil society as he is said to have done.

Moreover these two passages provide positive information on civil society's specific principles. Taken together with the numerous passages earlier in the work, urging upon civil society the duty of using legal measures to supervise piety and to ban blasphemy and idolatry, they show that although as he grew old he grew increasingly pessimistic about civil society, Augustine persisted in thinking that it had a nature proper to itself[21]: though battered into serious distortion, in principle civil society is the City of God on earth in the sense of embodying in human law the piety or morality intended for human beings by God, whether that piety or morality is already embodied in Divine law or not.

[18] *CD* 19.14.

[19] *CD* 15.16.

[20] Cf. Ambrose, *Epistle* 60.8 (PL 16.1185).

[21] For examples of the earlier passages mentioned see *CD* 1.31, 2.5, 2.9, 2.12-14.

Transfiguration: Christology and the Roots of Figurative Exegesis in St. Augustine

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A number of studies have traced Augustine's understanding of christology since T.J. van Bavel's work of the 1950's[1]; the character of Augustine's figurative exegesis of Scripture has not received the same attention. In this paper I will develop elements from the first theme as they converge upon the second in Augustine's fascinating use of the word *transfiguro*, which plays rhetorically on the resonance between the word's nuances and the larger vision of the redemption in ways which illumine the development of his thought[2].

Lexically *transfiguro* denotes the act of changing the appearance of a thing by a transformation of substance; this sense appears when Augustine quotes the account of Jesus' transfiguration before the disciples in Matt. 17:2ff. and its parallels[3], and Paul's reference to Satan's self-transformation into an angel of light in 2 Cor. 11:14[4]. Together the references to these two texts make up about 30% of the 104 total uses of the word[5]. His first independent use of the concept occurs in the mid-390's with reference to the incarnation, which Augustine says occurred not by the Word transforming his deity into humanity (*non transfiguratione in hominem*) but by wearing humanity as a garment[6]. Similarly he used the idea in speaking of the various permutations in Manichaean myths[7].

[1] *Recherches sur la christologie de saint Augustin* (Fribourg, 1954), which contains a brief discussion of the verb *transfigurare*, pp. 116-18. For a review of the issues with an extensive bibliography, see Joanne McWilliam, 'The Study of Augustine's Christology in the Twentieth Century', in *Augustine: From Rhetor to Theologian*, ed. Joanne McWilliam and others (Waterloo, Ontario, 1992), pp. 183-205. A significant addition to be made to the bibliography is Gerard Remy, *Le Christ mediateur dans l'œuvre de saint Augustin*, 2 vols. (Lille, 1979).

[2] Cf. M.-J. Rondeau, *Les commentaires patristique du psautier*, vol. 2, *Exégèse prosopologique et théologie* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 220; Rome, 1985), pp. 380-88. Rondeau rightly regards Augustine's use of *transfiguro* as key to his 'prosopological' exegesis of the Psalms. By surprising contrast, the word group is barely noticed by H.R. Drobner, *Person-Exegese und Christologie bei Augustinus* (Leiden, 1986).

[3] In twenty-three passages, e.g., *Epistula* 53.3, *Enarratio in Psalmum* 134.20, *De trinitate* 4.10.13, *De ciuitate Dei* 10.10.

[4] *Ep.* 149.3, *In Iohannis euangelium tractatus* 52.4, *Sermo* 79A.1, *Contra Adimantum* 28.

[5] *CETEDOC Library of Christian Latin Texts* (*CLCLT-2*; Turnhout, 1994), s.v. 'transfigur'*.

[6] *De diuersis quaestionibus LXXXIII*, qu. 73.2.

[7] *De naturi boni* 44, *Contra Felicem* 2.22.

However the word also had a metaphorical dimension which recurred throughout Augustine's works, a representational sense which 'carried over' the figure of something into some other person or thing for the sake of instruction. So when Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 4:6, 'I have transfigured these things in myself and Apollos for your sake' (*haec transfiguraui in me et Apollo propter nos*), he was using himself pedagogically to project the Corinthians' attitudes onto a larger screen[8]. The transition from the reality to the figure was emphasized by appending the phrase *in me*, or *in se*, so that understanding was conveyed to the observer by transposition of the subject into the type. Thus Paul's references in Romans 7 to being 'under the law' were not literally autobiographical; the 'wretched man that I am' (7:24) was self-referential only to the extent Paul had made himself rhetorically typical of every person enslaved to the letter of the law[9]. In 1 Thess. 4:16ff. Paul projected himself and the other apostles as representatives of everyone who would be alive at the time of the Lord's coming to meet him in the air[10]. Similarly writers of the psalms, the prophet Habakkuk, and even St. Cyprian for pedagogical purposes temporarily assumed the *personae* of those for whom they were writing[11]. In each of these instances representative incorporation into the type did not involve actual transformation of the subject.

But the most striking and critical of Augustine's uses of the word appears in reference to the Lord's passion, which Augustine says showed his assumption, not only of human finitude, but also of sinful human self-absorption. He 'transfigured us in himself' (*transfigurauit in se*), or more pointedly he 'transfigured our weakness', or 'our voice', in such a way that representatively the head acted and spoke on behalf of the body, and transformatively the body was suffused with the life of the head. The classic moments in this regard were the agony in the garden (Matt. 26:38-39) and the final cry from the cross (Matt. 27:46). In the former the Lord confesses, 'My soul is sorrowful even unto death', and prays 'May this cup pass from me'. According to Augustine, Jesus spoke not from himself but from the weakness and fear which his incarnation had 'carried over' into him from every person's mortal desperation[12]. In the latter, the Lord's quotation of the first verse invoked the entirety of Psalm 21, whose reference to the *totus Christus* was signaled by the inconceivability of the sinless Jesus praying verse 4, 'Far from my salvation are the words of my offenses' (*uerba delictorum meorum*)[13]. At first glance these two passages fall

[8] *Contra litteras Petiliani* 3.2.3.

[9] *De diuersis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum* 1.1.1.

[10] *De ciu. Dei* 20.20.

[11] On Ps. 78:1, see *Enarr. in Ps.* 78:1; on Ps. 88:50, *De ciu. Dei* 17.12; on Hab. 3:2, see *De ciu. Dei* 18.32; on Cyprian with reference to his *Ep.* 11, *De baptismo* 4.2.3 and 6.31.60.

[12] *Enarr. in Ps.* 89.7.

[13] *Enarr. in Ps.* 37.6.

under the representational use of *transfiguro*, but further study suggests a conflation with the transformative sense. In commenting on the scene in the garden of Gethsemane, Augustine quotes Jesus' words of both desperation and surrender to God's will. Together they portray both dimensions of transfiguration:

> Wherefore Christ, carrying the human and laying down a rule for us, teaching us to live and granting us to live (*docens nos uiuere et praestans nobis uiuere*), displays as it were a private human will ... But because he willed the human to be upright in heart, so that whatever in the human that was somewhat crooked he should bend (*dirigeret*) toward the One who is always upright, he says, 'nevertheless not what I will, but what you will, Father' ... In the person of the human whom he assumed, transfiguring his own in himself, he displayed as it were humanity's own will. He showed you, and he rectified you (*ostendit te et correxit te*). Look, he says, see yourself in me[14].

Augustine contends that Christ not only *demonstrated* change to the human will, as in the representational sense of the word, but also *effected* change within it, as in the transformative sense. He understands the incarnation to have collected chaotic human striving into a single entity and remarkably united it to the will of Jesus, whose passion displayed characteristic human self-concern in the agonized words, 'Let this cup pass from me'. But his passion not only revealed the human will; it 'bent' that will to be flush with God's rectitude. Christ taught *and* gave, he showed *and* rectified. The mediator's humanity so embraced divinity that the sign of his deed disclosed the infirmity of all, while divinity so inhabited his humanity that the same sign bestowed God's strength upon all. Indications are that Augustine conflated the two senses of *transfiguro* especially to address the problem of Christ's weakness and mortality.

The word *transfiguro* does not appear in Latin translations of either Matthew 26 or Psalm 21. From Augustine's pattern of rooting his reflections in the language of Scripture one would expect to find some central text from which the term derived and his ideas flowed, and perhaps a pauline text at that. This expectation is not disappointed. The third 'transformative representation' category springs from an intriguingly creative use of Philippians 3:21, where Paul speaks of the future day when Christ 'will transform our base body (*transfigurabit corpus humilitatis nostrae*) to conform to his glorious body'[15]. The apostle's use of *transfiguro* is emphatically eschatological, and sits squarely under the heading of the transformative sense. The majority of witnesses of the *Vetus Latina* read the text with a future; Augustine himself knows and quotes the text three times in this form[16]. However an ambiguity exists among allusions

[14] *Enarr. 2 in Ps.* 32, sermo 1.2.

[15] *Vetus Latina* 24/2, *Epistulae ad Philippenses et ad Colossenses*, hg. H.J. Frede (Freiburg; 1966-71), pp. 225-30. Some witnesses read *transformabit*; the Vulgate has *reformabit*.

[16] *Sermo* 79A.1, usually dated after 411; *Sermo* 277.12, of uncertain date; and *Collatio cum Maximino* 2.8, from shortly before his death.

to Phil. 3:21 in Latin authors who persistently quote the verb with the perfect tense (*transfigurauit*) rather than the future. Many instances are textual variants which might be explained by accommodation to other witnesses, though the range is very wide[17]. But clear allusions in Marius Victorinus and Ambrose attest to the currency of the perfect tense in the minds of fourth century authorities, which may reflect an assimilation of the text to the story of Jesus' transfiguration on the mount[18].

They also suggest likely sources for Augustine, who becomes the strongest witness of all. The majority of his references link the transformations of Phil. 3:21 with a past rather than a future moment in salvation history by repeatedly quoting the verb with a perfect tense or with some form conveying completed action[19]. In so doing he reads the transformation envisioned by Phil. 3:21 christo-ecclesially rather than eschatologically, as referring primarily to the exertion of Christ's power upon himself in the past and upon the Church in the present rather than upon collective believing humanity in the future. For Augustine transfiguration was not an isolable event of either Jesus' earthly ministry or eschatological judgment; it was rather a defining aspect of the office of mediator which our Lord assumed at the incarnation and continues to fill. The bishop was able to trace its ongoing transformative effect upon believers by exploring particular moments of vulnerability to weakness in Jesus' life. For instance, the temptation stories show Jesus fully clothed in the weakness of humanity, yet conquering evil; by transfiguration he was victorious

[17] E.g., Tertullian, *Aduersus Marcionem* 5.20.7; Cyprian, *De mortalitate* 22; Hilary, *Tractatus in Psalmum* 124.4.

[18] *In epistulam Pauli ad Philippenses liber unicus* (PL 8: 1225-6), and *De fide* 5.15.184, respectively. The use of the perfect in these two authors is all the more notable because both could read the original Greek.

[19] Rondeau, *Les patristiques commentaire*, vol. 2, p. 381. The manuscript evidence for the perfect is indisputable in most but not all cases. While the majority of witnesses read *transfigurauit* in *De trinitate* 1.8.15 and 4.3.6, some manuscripts have *transfigurabit*. The Maurist editors chose the future in the former instance and the perfect in the latter; *Corpus Christianorum* has *transfigurauit* in both cases. That the perfect offers the more difficult reading undoubtedly argues for its correctness. But Edmund Hill contends that not only does the easy and common confusion between *b* and *u* makes a copyist's error possible, we are forced to read it as a future because of the 'nonsense' which the past tense makes of Augustine's argument about the eschatological resurrection of the body, particularly in 4.3.6 (*The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill, O.P., *The Works of Saint Augustine*, I/5 (Brooklyn, 1991), p. 178, n. 21). That may be stated too strongly, since it is at least possible that the future resurrection is being rooted in the past 'pre-enactment' (*praecessit*) in Jesus' body. That is the probable framework for understanding the present indicative in *Ep.* 147.21.50, where Augustine makes explicit the past root of the future subjection of all things by subtly reconstructing Phil. 3:21 with a purpose clause: *transfigurat corpus humilitatis nostrae conforme corpori gloriae suae ut possit sibi subiicere omnia*. But Fr. Hill's reading may yet make the better sense; in terms of the argument from theological sense, Augustine's use of the perfect elsewhere seems tied more to explaining Jesus' experience of weakness and mortality rather than describing the power exerted at his resurrection.

not for himself but for us[20]. Again, noting that Matthew says Jesus 'ascended' a mountain to pray after feeding the five thousand (Matt. 14:23), while John says he 'fled' the crowd because they wanted to make him a king (John 6:15), Augustine reconciled the two accounts by using Phil. 3:21 and commenting that Jesus transfigured us in himself in order to show that causes for flight are also causes for prayer[21].

But the strongest conjunction with past salvation history occurs in five texts which explicitly associate the transfiguration of Phil. 3:21 with Jesus' passion. In making a link between *transfigurauit* and John 13:21, 'Jesus was shaken in spirit', Augustine is able to read Jesus' experience of sorrow as a redemptive act[22]. Further, Augustine's homily on Ps. 142 explicitly invokes Phil. 3:21 to interpret the agony in the garden, associating transfiguration with comments on verse 4, 'My spirit within me has suffered weakness'.

> See the one voice. Does not the passage (*transitus*) from head to members, from members to head, appear clearly? We recognize it in the words, 'My soul is sorrowful even to death'. But we were there too. He transfigured into himself our base body, conforming it to his glorious body; and our old nature (*uetus homo*) was crucified with him. 'My heart is shaken within me' — 'in me', he says, not in others[23].

This passage also frames the pauline text within the passion by referring to the co-crucifixion of Christ and the believer in Rom. 6:6. The same feature appears in the homily on Ps. 144 where he joins transfiguration to Col. 2:14 and its image of the written bond of accusation (*chirographum*) canceled by the cross[24]. The literal commentary on Genesis joins Phil. 3:21 to Augustine's habitual exegesis of the cry of dereliction in Ps. 21:2 and Matt. 27:46 with reference to Christ and the Church, where the Lord spoke not in his own person but in the person of the old human nature[25]. Finally, memorably imaging human finitude and mortality as forms of poverty which Christ assumed for the sake of salvation, Augustine uses transfiguration as a lens through which to survey the whole sweep of divine condescension from incarnation to crucifixion: 'Let him add poverty to poverty, let him transfigure (*transfiguret*) into himself our base body; may he be our head, we his body, two in one flesh'[26].

This overview of Augustine's use of Phil. 3:21 suggests a conscious use of the past tense of *transfiguro* in order to fuse the eschatological and earthly

[20] *Enarr. in Ps.* 60.3.
[21] *De cons. euang.* 2.47.100.
[22] *In Iohann. euang. tract.* 60.2. This despite the unsupported change to the future tense in the nineteenth century translation, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (First Series, vol. 7, *Homilies on the Gospel of St. John*, p. 309, n. 5); cf. *Homélies sur l'évangile de saint Jean LV-LXXIX*, tr. M.-F. Berrouard (*Bibliothèque augustinienne 74A*; Paris, 1993), p. 130, note 11.
[23] *Enarr. in Ps.* 142.9.
[24] *Enarr. in Ps.* 144.19.
[25] *De genesi ad litteram* 10.18.32.
[26] *Enarr. in Ps.* 101, sermo 1.2.

moments of Christ's saving work. Aside from the legitimacy conferred by the authority of his sources, what understanding offered Augustine the license to do this? I suggest a possible answer lies along the misty border where rhetoric and religion meet, where the pressure to express the inexpressible forces theology into creative paths.

On the theological side, the root of Augustine's vision was christological. About the year 394, in studying Paul's letter to the Galatians, Augustine had arrived at a fuller understanding of the powerful double agency of the mediator and the exhange which his incarnation effected; this is suggested by, among other things, his first use of 1 Tim. 2:5[27]. In turn Augustine conflated the literal and transferred senses of *transfiguro* in order to more fully convey the impact of the one who exchanged divine for earthly and eternal for mortal, and in so doing transformed the earthly and mortal. Augustine's rhetorical challenge was both to convey this vision and to quicken his hearers' sense of inclusion in it. For this his writings and especially his homilies show constant recourse to a host of rhetorical methods, from among which I suggest one possible source for his treatment of Phil. 3:21. Centuries before, Quintilian had written about catachresis, the practice of deliberately misusing a word for rhetorical effect. His authorized Latin translation for the Greek term was *abusio*, which he prescribed as necessary and appropriate when no other coherent descriptive term was available; in such cases the speaker was allowed to adapt the term nearest to hand[28]. The phrase 'to build a horse' may be jarring, he says, but *abusio* makes its point with such appealing oddity that poets employed its freshness even when other technically correct expressions were available. Augustine defined *abusio* more broadly and positively in his discussion of the origins of words in *De dialectica* 6 (386)[29]. Words have often come into being, he says, by connection between a signifying sound and the thing signified, either through attractive similarity (as *crux* captured the harshness of the cross), or perhaps even ironic dissimilarity (as *bella* was heightened by contrast with the ugliness of *bellum*). But many other words have arisen from a proximity of sense which does not depend on necessary connection and which he expressed by the word *uicinitas*; e.g., a *piscina* neither contains fish nor was made for fish, but attracted the name because typically it held enough water for fish[30]. He goes on to say that *uicinitas* was a broad term with several aspects, of which he lists seven. The fourth of these is pertinent here, since it says that the requisite closeness for a transfer of expression may be established by the

[27] *Expositio epistolae ad Galatas* 24; cf. *Confessiones* 7.18.24. For the full argument see my paper 'Development of the Christological Substructure of Augustine's Figurative Exegesis', in *Augustine and the Bible*, ed. Pamela Bright (Notre Dame, forthcoming).
[28] *Institutio Oratoria* 8.6.34: *quae non habentibus nomen suum accommodat quod in proximo.*
[29] *De dialectica* 6.11.6f.
[30] Forty years later in completing *De doctrina christiana* Augustine used the same example to define catachresis (3.29.40).

change of a single letter (*littera mutata*); e.g., 'granary', *horreum*, takes its name from 'barley', *hordeo*. Conceptual closeness allowed the figurative accommodation of the one word to the other. Clearly Augustine was approaching here the idea of metonymy, which became an important working component of both his theory of signs and practice of figurative exegesis[31]. But the point for immediate rhetorical purposes was that this trope was, as it was for Quintilian's poet, available for use at the speaker's discretion.

An analogous proximity of sense enabled Augustine in the remarkable passage of *De doctrina christiana* 2.12.16-17 to accredit the sometimes competing Latin translations which were available to the interpreter. Confronted by the discrepancy between an older, more familiar translation and a newer, more accurate one based on the original languages, he affirms the primacy of the latter but uses a both/and approach which uncovers hidden depths of meaning in their juxtaposition. The ancient Latin of Isaiah 7:9 had yielded his beloved dictum 'Unless you believe you will not understand', but Jerome's new rendition from the Hebrew read 'Unless you believe you will not continue'. The older translation was to be retained however, he says, because standing together the two hint at something powerful (*magnum aliquid*) for the interpreter who knows how to discern it: i.e., faith brings understanding, which in turn cleanses the mind for continuing in the truth. The term for the relationship between the two translations is *uicinitas*, which he says is difficult for two translators to misconstrue to the extent that their meanings do not converge in some way.

I suggest that through *uicinitas* and the traditional use of the perfect tense of *transfiguro*, Augustine intentionally 'abused' Phil. 3:21 as part of a rhetorical strategy to express the massive reality of the suffering incarnate God and the *totus Christus*, as well as to shape that reality into a hermeneutical frame which awakened his hearers to themselves as the subject of the paschal mystery. Though fully aware of the future tense in the text, Augustine used the perfect in order to bring to light the kinship of the earthly and eschatological moments of Christ's work; it gave the uninstructed a beginning framework in which to place both faith and hope in the scheme of redemption, and supplied the advanced with exactly the pleasurable incongruity which quickened the mind to seek new understanding. However eschatological Phil. 3:21 was in Paul's mind, Augustine unearthed and exploited its presupposition in the passion by shifting the tense of the verb. This play on words enabled him to frame that text and his hearers within the great sweep of salvation history; retrojecting the future transformation into the depths of the Savior's past suffering opened his hearers to the dynamism of transformation in the present.

[31] For an early text (388), see *De genesi contra Manichaeos* 1.22.34, and Roland Teske's comments in the introduction to his translation of the work, *St. Augustine on Genesis* (The Fathers of the Church, vol. 84; Washington D.C., 1991), p. 21. For a late text (419) which speaks of the container which is named for what it contains, see *Quaestionum in heptateuchum* 3.57.

The strategy was less a technique than the product of a cast of mind which justified the liberty to alter a given text because, theologically, it explicated one of its underlying aspects, and rhetorically, far from tampering with the inspired word, it both presumed and played off that very givenness. Such prospecting for latent meaning is not surprising from a man who coined the word *coaptatio* to express the congruity between God, creation and redemption[32], or stretched the meaning of *excludo* to name the process by which heresy presses into prominence ('excludes') teachers who would otherwise remain hidden in the church[33], or changed the sentence of John 1:14, *et habitauit in nobis*, into a purpose clause, *ut habitaret in nobis*, in order to emphasize the volition of the Son in obeying the Father's plan to heal humanity[34].

Quintilian had said, 'It is, after all, novelty and change that please in the art of speaking and the unexpected things give the greater delight'[35]. Augustine's use of *transfiguro* shows that, despite his meticulous loyalty and reverence toward the given language of the tradition — or perhaps because of it — he played with echoes, nuances and even spelling and grammar in order to outrun the stultifying effects of repetition[36]. This was both a rationale and a driving impulse behind his rich and strange practice of figurative exegesis; ultimately it was a potent creative force in his theology. The necessity and the freedom of the rhetorician to adapt language to fit the urgent realities which pressed upon consciousness was at the root of his work as a theologian. He was ready to reshape words, even canonical words, in order better to be able to delight his hearers into loving, and therefore knowing, the God who accommodated himself for our salvation.

[32] *De trinitate* 4.2.4.

[33] *Enarr. in Ps.* 54.22, with reference to 1 Cor. 11:19.

[34] E.g., *De doc. chr.* 1.13.12, 1.34.38, *De cons. euang.* 4.10.11, *In Iohann. euang. tract.* 18.2, though he usually quotes the text properly, as in *Conf.* 7.9.14.

[35] *Est enim grata in eloquendo nouitas et emutatio, et magis inopinata delectant*; 8.6.51.

[36] Cf. Augustine's comment in *Enarr. in Ps.* 138.31, repeated in endless ways through his works: '(God) makes his sayings marvelous, so that when we tell you things you already know, just because we dug them out of places which seemed obscure, your recognition of them as it were became brand new ... what you knew has been renewed' (*innouatum est quod noueratis*).

St. Augustine's Vocabulary of the Common Good and the Place of Love for Neighbour

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Augustine's thought on the common good has in recent years been invoked by social ethicists as opening up 'the possibility of a form of politics that seeks communitarian purposes'[1]. The expression, 'the common good', in these discussions is generally used to translate the terms *res publica* or *salus reipublicae*[2], *res communis universi populi suae civitatis*[3], *utilitatis communione*[4], and *concordi communione*[5], all of which are instanced mainly in Augustine's politically-oriented texts. As I. Th. Eschmann pointed out in 1943, however, 'St. Augustine's doctrine of the state and of society is mainly a continuation of his theology of charity and of his cosmology'[6]. According to Eschmann, Augustinian *caritas* re-defines the Roman understanding of the principle of the common good — a principle which had been enunciated in its characteristic form by Cicero and Seneca[7]. *Caritas*, which is enjoined upon all Christians,

[1] See D. Hollenbach S.J., 'The common good revisited', *TS* 50 (March 1988), p. 85.

[2] See, for example, *Epistola* 151,14 (CSEL 44,392) to Caecilianus. R. Markus, *Saeculum: History and society in the theology of St Augustine* (Cambridge, 1970) p. 64, n. 1, notes the wide range of applications of *res publica* in Augustine's vocabulary: either of the two cities, the Church, the Roman state etc.

[3] See *De opere monachorum* 25,32 (CSEL 41,579): '... quod rem communem universi populi suae civitatis privatis suis rebus hic anteponebant...'.

[4] See *De civitate Dei* 2,21,2 (CCL 47,53), citing Cicero's *De republica* 1,25,39. English translation of Cicero from C.W. Keyes (The Loeb Classical Library; 1928), p. 64. Keyes' translation of *utilitatis communione* as 'a partnership for the common good' is used by Hollenbach, *art. cit.*, p. 80. R. Markus, *op. cit.*, p. 64 translates *iuris consensu et utilitatis communione* from Cicero's definition as 'by one consent of law and their common good'. Henry Bettenson, *Concerning the City of God against the pagans* (Harmondsworth, 1972), p. 890, has 'by a common sense of right and by a community of interest'.

[5] *De civitate Dei* 19,24 (CCL 48,695). Hollenbach, *art. cit.*, p. 83, translates *concordi communione* as common agreement.

[6] I.Th. Eschmann, O.P., 'A Thomistic glossary on the principle of the pre-eminence of the common good', in *Mediaeval Studies* 5 (Toronto, 1943), p. 134.

[7] For example, see Cicero, *De finibus bonorum et malorum* III,19,64: 'Mundum autem censent (Stoici) regi numine deorum, eumque esse quasi communem urbem et civitatem hominum et deorum, et unum quemque nostrum eius mundi esse partem; ex quo illud natura consequi, ut communem utilitatem nostrae anteponamus. Ut enim leges omnium salutem singulorum saluti anteponunt, sic vir bonus et sapiens et legibus parens et civilis officii non ignarus utilitati omnium plus quam unius alicuius aut suae consulit. Nec magis est vituperandum proditor patriae quam communis utilitatis aut salutis desertor propter suam utilitatem aut salutem'. Text as quoted by Eschmann, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

requires people to 'seek not their own' (1 Cor. 13:5); this admonition Augustine interprets in the Platonic sense of not seeking happiness in what is transitory and changeable. *Caritas* prefers the immutable to the mutable, the universal to the particular, the whole to the part[8]. Augustinian cosmology too, following the Stoics in particular, subordinates the parts to the whole, each part having its own beauty only in relation to the totality[9]. For Augustine, however, contrary to the Stoics, the Creator is superior to the whole universe, just as in the political sphere the *civitas aeterna* is pre-eminent over the *civitas terrena*. It is true that the *civitas terrena* has its own goods, and these are undoubtedly gifts of God; but the goods of the eternal city, whose peace is supreme and secure, are more worthy of love[10].

Eschmann's general schema of Augustine's teaching on the common good remains helpful, but his Augustinian lexicon of the common good is far from complete. Authors such as Cranz[11], MacQueen[12], Torchia[13], TeSelle[14], O'Donovan[15], Verheijen[16], Markus[17], and Burt[18] have in various respects developed our appreciation of the meanings Augustine gave to the principle. However, there exists no contemporary comprehensive work on his vocabulary of the common good. The exploration of the following three important elements could help to structure such an investigation:

[8] Eschmann, *op. cit.*, p. 132, cites *De Trinitate* 12,9,14 (CCL 50,368) as a classic text in this regard: 'Potestatem quippe suam diligens anima, a communi universo ad privatam partem prolabitur, et apostatica illa *superbia*, quod *initium peccati* (Ecclus. 10:15) dicitur, cum in universitate creaturae Deum rectorem secuta, legibus eius optime gubernari potuisset, plus aliquid universo appetens, atque id sua lege gubernare molita, quia nihil est amplius universitate, in curam partilem truditur, et sic aliquid amplius concupiscendo minuitur, unde et *avaritia* dicitur *radix omnium malorum* (1 Tim. 6:10)...'.

[9] See *De ordine* 2,19,51 (CCL 29,135): '...intellegatur tamen multo esse melius totum, cuius illa pars est...'.

[10] *De civitate Dei* 15,4 (CCL 48,456-457).

[11] F. Edward Cranz, 'The development of Augustine's ideas on society before the Donatist controversy', *HThR* 47 (1954), pp. 255-316.

[12] D.J. MacQueen, 'The origins and dynamics of society and the state according to St. Augustine (Part 1)', *Augustinian Studies* 4 (1973), pp. 73-101. See also 'St Augustine's concept of property ownership', *RAug* 8 (1972), pp. 187-229; especially Appendix B.

[13] N. Joseph Torchia, 'The *Commune/Proprium* distinction in St. Augustine's early moral theology', Elizabeth A. Livingstone (ed.), *Studia Patristica* 22 (Louvain, 1989), pp. 356-363.

[14] E. TeSelle, 'The civic vision in Augustine's *City of God*', *Thought* 62 (1987), pp. 268-280, and 'Toward an Augustinian politics', *Journal of Religious Ethics* 16 (1988), pp. 87-108.

[15] O. O'Donovan, 'Augustine's *City of God* XIX and Western political thought', *Dionysius* 11 (December 1987), pp. 89-110.

[16] L. Verheijen, 'La charité ne cherche pas ses propres intérêts', in *Nouvelle approche de la Règle de saint Augustin* 2: *Chemin vers la vie heureuse* (Louvain, 1988), pp. 220-289.

[17] R.A. Markus, '*De ciuitate dei*: Pride and the common good', in J.C. Schnaubelt, OSA, and F. Van Fleteren (eds.), *Collectanea Augustiniana. Augustine*: '*Second Founder of the Faith*' (New York, Frankfurt am Main, Paris, 1990), pp. 245-259.

[18] D. Burt, 'Friendship and subordination in earthly societies', *Augustinian Studies* 22 (1991), pp. 83-123.

(i) the connection between the young Augustine's thinking on the common good in works as early as the *Soliloquia* and his mature reflection around the time of the final books of the *De civitate Dei*; (ii) the deployment of the distinction between *proprium* and *privatum* on the one hand, and *commune* and *publicum* on the other; (iii) the identification of the common good with the highest good, viz. God.

The idea of the common good in Augustine occurs first in the *Soliloquia*, in the well-known context of the love of wisdom for its own sake.

> Wisdom alone I love for her own sake (*propter se*). All else — life, leisure, friends — I wish to have or fear to lose solely on her account. What bounds can be set to love of so great a beauty, in which not only do I not envy others but also wish to have as many as possible along with me seeking her, panting after her, holding and enjoying her, in the belief that they will be my friends all the more (*amiciores*) because love for her is shared by us in common[19].

Already in this very early text, from 386, Augustine touches upon certain themes which will orchestrate the evolution of his thought on the common good. Firstly, the terms *propter se* and *perfruantur* evoke the much debated Augustinian discussion of the distinction between *uti* and *frui*. Forty years after the *Soliloquia*, in *De civitate Dei* 19,13,2, this *frui* aspect of the earlier text re-appears, now in the context of the renowned discussion of peace. Augustine first describes temporal peace in terms of bodily health, physical safety, and companionship with other people (*societate sui generis*), along with everything that is necessary to safeguard or recover such peace. He then comments:

> ... every mortal who uses aright (*recte usus*) such goods, goods designed to serve the peace of mortal men, shall receive goods greater in degree and superior in kind, namely the peace of immortality, and the glory and honour appropriate to it in a life which is eternal for the enjoyment of God and of one's neighbour in God (*ad fruendum Deo et proximo in Deo*)...[20].

Of interest here is not so much the move to a *frui proximo in Deo*, along with a *frui Deo* — something that is already attested in *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, *De Doctrina Christiana*, and elsewhere — as the suggestion that companionship with other people (*societas sui generis*) is to be an object of right use (*recte usus*). This late instance of *usus* in relation to the relative and temporal common good of human companionship conflicts with Oliver O'Donovan's assertion that, after

[19] *Soliloquia* 1,13,22 (PL 32,881): 'Ego autem solam propter se amo sapientiam, caetera vero vel adesse mihi volo, vel deesse timeo propter ipsam; vitam, quietem, amicos. Quem modum autem potest habere illius pulchritudinis amor, in qua non solum non invideo caeteris, sed etiam plurimos quaero qui mecum appetant, mecum inhient, mecum teneant, mecumque perfruantur; tanto mihi amiciores futuri, quanto erit nobis amata communior'. English translation: J.H.S. Burleigh, *Augustine: Earlier Writings* (The Library of Christian Classics 6; London, 1953), p. 37.

[20] *De civitate Dei* 19,13,2 (CCL 48,680). English translation: Henry Bettenson, p. 872.

De Doctrina Christiana, '(Augustine) does not again refer to love-of-the-neighbour as 'use''[21].

Returning to the idea of the common good in the text from the *Soliloquia* with which we began, we note also the early announcement of the theme of lack of envy — a theme which may have been derived from Seneca[22] — and the presence of the theme of friendship in terms of shared love for wisdom that is held in common. Almost thirty years after the *Soliloquia* we find Augustine in *Epistola* 155, to Macedonius, rejoicing that his correspondent's heart is set on the heavenly city, and instructing him that no one can be a true friend to another human being except when love is freely given; such love, he continues, can be given only by a person who is, to begin with, a lover of truth[23]. There is a clear reminiscence here of the text already quoted from the *Soliloquia* 1,13,22. The ideas of friendship and the common good are also found together in *De Genesi ad litteram* 11,15,20, where Augustine, in describing the two loves on which the two cities are founded, calls 'one social, the other private, one concerned for the common good for the sake of the heavenly society, the other subordinating the common good to self-interest for the sake of a proud lust for power ... the one given to friendship (*alter amicalis*), the other to envy...'[24]. To all intents and purposes, friends and neighbours are here identified with each other. For the rest, however, it is noteworthy how rarely Augustine uses the explicit vocabulary of the common good in relation to friendship as such. When, for example, in *De civitate Dei* 15,5, he warns that anyone who refuses to possess goodness in common with others will not possess it at all, we might expect, on the basis of the *Soliloquia* and the *De Genesi ad litteram*, that he will refer to these others as friends. In fact, he calls them partners or sharers. '(A person) will find', Augustine says, 'that he possesses (goodness) in ampler measure in proportion to his ability to love in it his partner (*consortem*)'[25].

The second element noted above as important in a systematic study of the idea of the common good in Augustine — viz. the distinction between *proprium* and *privatum* on the one hand and *commune* and *publicum* on the other

[21] O. O'Donovan, 'Usus and Fruitio in Augustine, De Doctrina Christiana I', *JThSt*, New Series 33/2 (1982), p. 390.

[22] See Seneca, *Dialog. II* (*De constantia sapientis*) 8,2: 'Non potest ... quisquam aut nocere sapienti aut prodesse, quoniam divina nec iuvari desiderant nec laedi possunt, sapiens autem vicinus proximusque dis consistit, excepta mortalite similis Deo. Ad illa nitens pergensque excelsa, ordinata, intrepida, aequali et concordi cursu fluentia, secura, benigna, bono publico nata, et sibi et aliis salutaria nihil humile concupiscet, nihil flebit'. Text as quoted by Eschmann, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

[23] *Epistola* 155,1,1 (CSEL 44,431).

[24] *De Genesi ad litteram* 11,15,20 (CSEL 28/1,348).

[25] *De civitate Dei* 15,5 (CCL 48,458): 'Non habebit denique istam possessionem, qui eam noluerit habere communem, et tanto eam reperiet ampliorem, quanto amplius ibi potuerit amare consortem'. English translation: Henry Bettenson, p. 601 (with some alterations).

— has received considerable notice[26]. Here we will simply draw attention to two early texts in which Augustine defines the terms, and we will highlight a classic expression of the distinction in the *Confessiones*. In the first book of *De libero arbitrio*, dating from 388, the distinction appears, in a political context, in the classical Roman formulation: *unusquisque minoris rem privatam quam publicam pendat ... depravatus idem populus rem privatam rei publicae praeferat*[27]. Three or more years later, however, in the second book of the same work, the distinction recurs, now in an epistemological discussion. Augustine explains that the terms *proprium* and *quasi privatum* are to be understood in the sense of 'that which belongs to each of us alone, which each of us perceives by ourselves alone, which belongs specifically to our own individual natures', whereas *commune* and *quasi publicum* pertain to 'that which is perceived by all conscious beings without its thereby being corrupted or changed'[28]. N. Joseph Torchia, in particular, has examined the shaping influence of the *commune/proprium* distinction on Augustine's early moral deliberations as evidenced in this second book of *De libero arbitrio*. Torchia shows how Augustine employs an analysis of sensation in which the Plotinian idea of the Soul's omnipresence is recast. Thus Augustine is able to draw an analogy between visual and auditory experience, on the one hand, and the relationship which individuals have to Truth itself, on the other. Truth is like colour seen and music heard: it belongs to all because it is the personal possession or *proprium* of no one. This 'common' Truth includes not only the eternal, necessary truths accessible to reason but also the universal rules of Wisdom which guide human conduct. Sin, as interpreted by Augustine in terms of pride, curiosity, and carnal concupiscence, entails a narrowing of vision to a circumscribed sphere of private concerns[29].

In Book Two of *De libero arbitrio*, then, the *commune/proprium* distinction is used to define the right relationship of the human will to unchangeable good which, because it is totally present to all at the one time, may be enjoyed by all equally and in common[30]. However, another text from the same period, *De*

[26] See D.J. MacQueen, 'The origins and dynamics of society and the state according to St. Augustine (Part 1)', *Augustinian Studies* 4 (1973), p. 100; and 'St Augustine's concept of property ownership', *RAug* 8 (1972), Appendix B. See also R.A. Markus, *art. cit.*, pp. 249-251; and E. TeSelle, 'Justice, love, peace', in R.J. Neuhaus (ed.), *Augustine today* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1993), pp. 88-110.

[27] *De libero arbitrio* 1,6,14 (CCL 29,220).

[28] *De libero arbitrio* 2,7,19 (CCL 29,250): '...magis nobis esse communia, quia in nostrum proprium et quasi privatum non vertuntur atque mutantur ... Proprium ergo et quasi privatum intellegendum est, quod unicuique nostrum soli est, et quod in se solus sentit, quod ad suam naturam proprie pertinet; commune autem et quasi publicum, quod ab omnibus sentientibus nulla sui corruptione atque commutatione sentitur'.

[29] N.J. Torchia, *art. cit.*, pp. 358-362, *passim*.

[30] *De libero arbitrio* 2,14,37 (CCL 29,262): 'Habemus igitur qua fruamur omnes aequaliter atque communiter ... Omnes amatores suos nullo modo sibi invidos recipit, et omnibus communis est, et singulis casta (veritas/sapientia) est ... Non enim ab eius communione in privatum tuum mutas aliquid ... non enim aliquid eius aliquando fit cuiusquam unius aut quorumdam proprium, sed simul omnibus tota est communis'.

vera religione 248, in its deployment of the *commune/privatum* distinction focuses specifically on the quality of the right relationship between people. In the sphere of love for neighbour, to love the common good (*res communis*), and not a private good (*res privata*), means to love in another that which is related to God, and not that which is related to oneself (*illud quod ad deum pertinet*, not *illud quod ad se pertinet*). It is to love other human beings — for example, one's children — in their relationship to God, not to love them as belonging to oneself[31]. This way of thinking is expressed most amply in *Epistola* 243 to Laetus, where loving what pertains to God is further elaborated in terms of loving in the other 'that communion and companionship of which it is said: *They were of one mind and one heart* (Acts 4:32) on the way to God'[32].

A study of *Confessiones* 3,8,16 transposes the distinction between *commune* and *privatum/proprium* into a different key. Augustine in this passage sums up the main kinds of wickedness under the rubric of offences against God and neighbour. Not only are sinful people hostile towards God but they also 'brazenly delight in the collapse of the restraints of human society, and in private caucuses and splits, indulging their personal likes and dislikes'. This is what happens when people abandon 'the one true Creator and Ruler of the entire universe, (and) when from a self-concerned pride (*privata superbia*) a false unity is loved in the part'. Such pride is linked to 'an avaricious desire to possess more, and, at the risk of losing everything, ... loving our own private interest (*proprium nostrum*) more than (God), the good of all that is (*omnium bonum*)'[33]. The one incommutable good of all that is: this is at the same time the good God by which all goods have been created[34], the good God in whose providential order all things, even those which cause distress, 'contribute by their own special beauty to the whole material scheme, as to a universal commonwealth (*communem rem publicam*)'[35]. *Confessiones* 3,8,16 quoted above is redolent not only of the Stoics and Plotinus but also of the Christian Scriptures. The unchangeable and all-inclusive good is depicted not simply as beauty or

[31] *De vera religione* 248 (CSEL 77,63) = 46,88 (CCL 32,245).

[32] *Epistola* 243,4 (CSEL 57,571). See L. Verheijen, *Saint Augustine's monasticism in the light of Acts 4.32-35* (The Saint Augustine Lecture 1975; Villanova, Pa., 1979).

[33] *Confessiones* 3,8,16 (CCL 27,36): '... aut cum diruptis limitibus humanae societatis laetantur audaces privatis conciliationibus aut diremptionibus, prout quidque delectaverit aut offenderit. Et ea fiunt, cum tu derelinqueris, fons vitae, qui es unus et verus creator et rector universitatis, et privata superbia diligitur in parte, unum falsum ... avaritia plus habendi et damno totum amittendi, amplius amando proprium nostrum quam te, omnium bonum'. English translation: Henry Chadwick (Oxford/New York, 1992), pp. 47-48.

[34] See also *De civitate Dei* 11,10,1 (CCL 48,330): 'Ab hoc bono creata sunt omnia bona...'.

[35] *De civitate Dei* 11,22 (CCL 48,340): 'nec adtendunt, quam vel in suis locis naturisque vigeant pulchroque ordine disponatur, quantumque universitati rerum pro suis portionibus decoris tamquam in communem rem publicam conferant vel nobis ipsis...'. English translation: Henry Bettenson, p. 453.

wisdom or truth — from which, as in *De libero arbitrio* 2,15,39, it can be shown that God exists. Rather, the good, in its inexhaustible fullness, is identified with the Creator and Ruler of the universe, to whom Augustine addresses his personal prayer, '*O amor* who ever burns and is never extinguished, *caritas, Deus meus...*'[36].

Thus we have already anticipated our third point: the identification of the common good with God. A classic instance of this identification is to be found in *Epistola* 137,5,17 to Volusianus, dating from 411-412. Here the terms *res publica* and *bonum commune* are explicitly connected. According to Augustine, it is the double commandment of love for God and neighbour, much more than all the books of the philosophers and all legal systems, which forms the foundation not only of physics, ethics and logic, but also of the well-being of the body politic (*salus reipublicae*). A state (*civitas*) has the best of safeguards only when it is founded on 'love for the common good (*bonum commune*), which at its highest and truest is God, and on sincere love for other human beings in God, when they love one another as oriented towards God, from whom they cannot hide the dispositions of the heart with which they love'[37]. For Augustine, therefore, God's being the highest and truest common good provides the conditions for an unfeigned and salutary love of neighbour. It goes without saying, however, that human beings in history are still far from being in full communion with others in the peace of the heavenly city, and that most human beings do not participate in that prefigurement of the heavenly city which is to be found in those communities whose members do not call anything their own but hold all things in common[38]. Ernst Troeltsch is certainly right in typifying Augustine's ethic as an 'ethic of the highest good'[39]. The question is whether it may also validly be characterised as an ethic of the *common* good, and in what sense. Such an ethic in Augustine would be most helpful if it were capable of showing how the designation of God as the highest and truest common good of all may enable fragmented people in this divided world to recognise and actualise the many 'lower' common goods which are necessary to human life. Companionship with others, *societas sui generis*, in its different forms, is by no means the least of these.

[36] *Confessiones* 10,29,40 (CCL 27,176).

[37] *Epistola* 137,5,17 (CSEL 44,122): '...cum bonum commune diligitur, quod summum ac verissimum Deus est, atque in illo invicem sincerissime se diligunt homines, cum propter illum se diligunt, cui, quo animo diligant, occultare non possunt'.

[38] *Praeceptum* 1,3: 'Et non dicatis aliquid proprium, sed sint vobis omnia communia...'. Quoting Acts 4:32b-c.

[39] E. Troeltsch, *Augustin, die christliche Antike und das Mittelalter. Im Anschluss an die Schrift 'De Civitate Dei'* (Historische Bibliothek, 36; Munich, 1915), pp. 49-51. Cited by E. TeSelle, 'Towards an Augustinian politics', *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 16/1 (Spring 1988), p. 99.

The Cross in Augustine's *Tractatus in Iohannem*

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If the period prior to Augustine's ordination as priest in A.D. 391 has been characterised by the 'tentative and often perfunctory character of his early treatment of the Cross'[1], the *Tractatus in Iohannem* introduces us to a very different scenario. Throughout the 124 Tractates we encounter many reflections upon the Cross of Christ. While feeding his flock with the bread of the word, as mediated by John, the significance of the Cross for the life of the Christian and of the Church was seldom absent from Augustine's thought.

I limit my analysis to four points in considering selected texts from the gospel commentary: (1) Prefigurements of the Cross; (2) the Cross and the drama of salvation; (3) the Cross and the Church, noting its connection with the catechumenate, the sacraments and discipleship; and (4) the Cross and the Incarnation.

1. Prefigurements of the Cross

Commenting on the six water pots at the marriage feast of Cana, Augustine associates them with the six ages of the world[2]. The second pot is related to Noah and his ark in which Christ was prefigured. The wood of the ark acts as a prophetic figure for the wood of the Cross on which the life of the world was nailed for our deliverance[3]. Augustine resumes this analogy later in commenting on Jn. 19.34 (*Tr.* 120.2).

Isaac carrying the wood for his own sacrifice (Gen. 22.6), which Augustine links with the third water pot, also serves as a type of Christ carrying his own Cross[4]. Similarly, Moses who struck the rock twice at Meribah with his branch (Num. 20.11) foreshadows Christ as rock (1 Cor. 10.4) being smitten by the wooden beams of the Cross, whence water would gush in abundance for the people[5].

[1] J. McWilliam Dewart, 'Augustine's developing use of the Cross: 387-400', *Augustinian Studies*, 15 (1984), pp. 15-33 at 15.

[2] *Tr.* 9.6 (PL 35,1461).

[3] *Tr.* 9.11 (PL 35,1464).

[4] *Tr.* 9.12 (PL 35,1464). See also *De civ. Dei* 16.32; *C. Faust.* 12.25; *Sermo* 19.3; *Enarr. in Ps.* 30.II.2.9 on Isaac as prototype of Christ.

[5] *Tr.* 26.12; 28.9 (PL 35,1612. 1627).

Augustine follows the fourth evangelist in seeing the bronze serpent raised on a standard by Moses (Num. 21.6-9) as a further symbol of the exaltation of Jesus on the Cross. The biting serpents assailing the Israelites represent the sins of the mortality of the flesh. The serpent on the standard is the Lord on his Cross. Whereas the bite (*morsus*) of the serpent was deadly (*lethalis*), the death (*mors*) of the Lord was life-giving (*vitalis*). Augustine encourages his flock to look in faith on Christ crucified and so be healed from the bites of sin. While the Old Testament prefigurement procured temporal life, the reality of which it was a figure procured eternal life[6].

2. The Cross and the Drama of Salvation

The soteriological value of the Cross is well emphasised for us in *Tr.* 3.3. It was as Christ hung on the Cross, mocked by his persecutors, that he was revealed as the *totus medicus vulnerum nostrorum*. On the Cross he cured our wounds where he long bore his own. By dying a temporal death Christ healed us of death eternal. Augustine concludes by asking: 'And did He die, or in Him did death die? What a death was that that slew death'[7].

The context of *Tr.* 7 reveals Augustine rallying his flock to prevent them from attending a pagan spectacle involving blood-letting. He reminds his audience of the *spectacula Christianorum*, by the blood of a lamb the lion is vanquished[8]. Christians must acknowledge the price by which they have been purchased: *cognoscamus Agnum, cognoscamus pretium nostrum* (*Tr.* 7.7). We can couple this with the evocative image used of Christ in *Tr.* 28.2. Here Christ is said to have been handed over into the enemy's power, so that the bag (*sacculus*) might be rent from which would flow the price of our redemption[9].

Commenting on the dialogue with Nicodemus, Augustine observes that Jesus endured death on the Cross, or rather hung death upon the Cross, in order to deliver us from death. He explains the seeming paradox of a *mors vitae*: 'Is not Christ life, and yet Christ hung on the Cross and Christ died. But in Christ's death, death died. Life dead, slew death, the fullness of life swallowed up death, death was absorbed in the body of Christ'[10].

[6] *Tr.* 12.11 (PL 35,1489-90).

[7] *Tr.* 3.3, 'Et mortuus est, an in illo mors mortua est? Qualis mors, quae mortem occidit'. (PL 35,1397).

[8] *Tr.* 7.6, '... sanguine Agni victus est leo. Ecce spectacula christianorum'. (PL 35,1440). Cf. *Tr.* 117.3 where the Cross is called a *grande spectaculum*.

[9] *Tr.* 28.2 (PL 35,1623). Cf. S. Poque, 'Christus mercator: Note Augustinienne', *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, 48 (1960), pp. 564-577 at 570-571 for parallel texts.

[10] *Tr.* 12.11, 'Mors vitae ... mirabiliter dicitur ... sed in morte Christi mors mortua est, quia vita mortua occidit mortem, plenitudo vitae deglutivit mortem, absorpta est mors in Christi corpore'. (PL 35,1490).

The healing of a single paralytic at the Sheep Pool at Bethzatha (Jn. 5.1-18) is interpreted as a symbol of the whole world being cured by the troubled waters of Christ's passion[11]. Jesus accomplished the work of our salvation on the Cross in fulfilment of the message of the prophets[12]. In *Tr.* 36.4 Augustine expounds on the horrific nature of death by crucifixion. It involved a slow and lingering death. Yet Christ, who was about to take away all death, chose the lowest and worst kind of death. The Cross would become the *signum Christi*, the victorious trophy (*tropaeum*) over the vanquished devil[13].

The Pauline pericope on reconciliation (2 Cor. 5.16-20) seems to have accompanied Jn. 8.31-36 liturgically at Hippo and influences Augustine's commentary in *Tr.* 41. Only one who is sinless can free others from sin. Augustine contrasts the *medium* or *maceria separans* with Christ as *mediator reconcilians*. To remove the separating wall between sinner and God, Christ has come as Mediator. The priest becomes a sacrifice for sin, offering himself as a whole burnt offering on the Cross of his passion[14]. He has become the true sacrifice for sin.

Christ's death is also interpreted in terms of fulfilling the Jewish Passover. Whereas the latter was a shadow (*umbra*), prophetic intimation (*prophetia*) or temporary sign (*significatio*), Christians celebrate the truth *non in umbra, sed in luce*[15]. The Lord has come in the victim's place so enabling us to celebrate the true Passover. Smearing their doorposts with the blood of the Passover lamb (Ex. 12.7,22-23) afforded deliverance to the Jews from the destroyer. Christians, however, bearing the *signum crucis* on their foreheads rejoice in its power to drive away the destroyer and so welcome Christ as indweller.

The waving palm branches which greeted Christ's entry into Jerusalem (Jn. 12.12-6) signified the victory which he was about to gain over death by himself enduring death. It is by the trophy of his Cross (*tropaeo crucis*) that he gains victory over the devil, the prince of death[16]. Building on the Johannine image of the dying wheat-grain (Jn. 12.24) Augustine describes Christ's death as a *mors fructuosa*. In being lifted up on the Cross he draws all after him. The death of the wheat-gain would lead to its own multiplication[17].

Paul made the Cross his special boast (Gal. 6.14), rightly understanding it in terms of the shedding of blood for the remission of sins and the showing forth of divine grace (*Tr.* 98.2). The mature Christian must always know Christ as

[11] *Tr.* 17.13 (PL 35,1534).

[12] *Tr.* 17.15 (PL 35,1534).

[13] *Tr.* 36.4 (PL 35,1665).

[14] *Tr.* 41.5, '... ut ergo tollatur maceria separans quod est peccatum, venit ille mediator reconcilians et factus est sacrificium sacerdos ipse. Et quia sacrificum factus est pro peccato, offerens seipsum in holocaustum in cruce passionis suae...' (PL 35,1695).

[15] *Tr.* 50.2 (PL 35,1758-9). Cf. *Tr.* 55.1; 120.3 (PL 35,1784-5. 1953).

[16] *Tr.* 51.2 (PL 35,1764).

[17] *Tr.* 52.13 (PL 35,1774).

both Creator and Mediator. The crucified Christ is both milk to sucklings and meat to the more advanced[18].

Commenting on the crucifixion scene (Jn. 19.17-22) in *Tr.* 117.3, Augustine contrasts in four-fold manner the way in which impiety and piety behold the Cross, the *grande spectaculum*. To the eyes of impiety it is a grand laughing stock, to piety a grand mystery; to impiety a grand demonstration of ignominy, to piety a great bulwark of faith. Impiety laughs at a king carrying the tree of punishment instead of a kingly rod, piety sees the king carry the tree of crucifixion which he would yet affix on the foreheads of kings. Impiety views it with contemptuous glances, while the Cross is that which the hearts of the saints would glory in hereafter[19].

3. The Cross and the Church

At many points throughout the Tractates Augustine establishes a close link between the *signum crucis* and the life to the Church. Particularly noteworthy are the numerous references to catechumens, and others, bearing the sign of the Cross on their foreheads[20]. While *Tr.* 11.3 makes a clear reference to the *disciplina arcani*, Augustine twice reminds his audience that by virtue of being sealed with the *signum crucis* catechumens already belong to the Church, the *domus magna*[21].

The Magi were led to Christ by a star, a sign that was heavenly and beautiful. Christ, however, desires that his followers bear his sign of humility, the Cross. Christians do not blush in bearing Christ's sign on their foreheads if they also bear it on their hearts[22]. Augustine warns his flock that this sign is no magic emblem. It must be accompanied by correct inner dispositions of heart if Christ is to be welcomed as the indweller (*habitator*) bringing deliverance from the destroyer (*exterminator*)[23].

[18] *Tr.* 98.6, 'Christus autem crucifixus, et lac sugentibus, et cibus est proficientibus'. (PL 35,1883).

[19] *Tr.* 117.3 (PL 35,1945-6).

[20] *Tr.* 3.2; 11.3-4; 36.4; 43.9; 50.2; 53.13; 55.1; 117.3; 118.5. Cf. H. Rondet, 'La Croix sur le front', *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, 42 (1954), pp. 383-394. On the rite of admission of catechumens see *Conf.* 1.11.17; *De cat. rud.* 26.50; F. van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop* (London, 1961), pp. 354-355.

[21] *Tr.* 11 was addressed to catechumens on a Sunday in Lent, A.D. 407. See S. Poque, 'Trois semaines de prédication à Hippone en février-mars 407: Le *Tractatus in Iohannis Evangelium* XI et l'appel aux catéchumenes', *Recherches Augustiniennes*, 7 (1971), pp. 169-187. On the Church as *domus magna* see *Sermo Casienensis* 11.114.4 (MA t. 1,418) and *De bapt.* 4.13.19; 7.51.99-52.100.

[22] *Tr.* 3.2 (PL 35,1396).

[23] *Tr.* 50.2 (PL 35,1759). See also *Tr.* 55.1.

The Cross is Christ's mark of ownership of an individual. As he has bought us at so great a price he does not wish to share his possession with another. Consequently the *signum Christi* and the *signum diaboli* cannot co-exist (*Tr.* 7.7). Augustine also contrasts the *corpus bonorum*, typified by Peter, with the *corpus malorum*, typified by Judas, within the Church. The good have Christ now by faith, in signs and through the sacraments. Furthermore they will have him always (Cf. Jn. 12.8). The wicked, by contrast, only seem to have Christ now in entering the Church, signing themselves with the sign of the Cross and mingling with the members of Christ in approaching the sacraments. But by living wickedly (*male vivendo*) they will not have him forever[24].

In three of the Tractates Augustine develops a familiar Patristic theme of the origin of the Church and the sacraments from the side of Christ as he sleeps on the Cross[25]. The context of reflecting on the first water pot at the marriage feast of Cana prompts Augustine's first exposition of the theme. As Eve was fashioned from Adam's side as he slept (Gen. 2.21-22) so the Church, the new Eve, is formed from the side of Christ (Jn. 19.34) as he endures the sleep of death on the Cross[26]. The second reference occurs in the course of Augustine's commentary on Jesus' dialogue with the Samaritan woman (Jn. 4.I-42), specifically on his being 'tired by the journey' (Jn. 4.6). This tiredness is a consequence of the work of our salvation commenced at the Incarnation. The familiar exegesis follows in which Augustine reflects on how the weakness of Christ is our strength[27].

The third, and most extensive development of the theme, occurs in *Tr.* 120.2 where Augustine comments on the pivotal text in Jn. 19.34. Unlike his many other references to this theme, where the verb almost invariably used for the soldier thrusting his spear into Christ's side is *percutere*, here Augustine notes that the evangelist refers to the soldier 'laying open' (*aperire*) the side of Christ with his spear, rather than 'wounding' or 'piercing'[28]. This leads Augustine to contradict his exegesis elsewhere, notably in *De civitate Dei* 15.26 and 22.17,

[24] *Tr.* 50.12 (PL 35,1763), a familiar Augustinian theme from the anti-Donatist debate. Cf. *In Ep. Ioh. Tr.* 5.7; *De civ. Dei* 1.35.

[25] *Tr.* 9.10; 15.8; 120.2 (PL 35,1463-4.1513. 1953). A widely used theme in Augustine. See S. Tromp, 'De Nativitate Ecclesiae ex corde Iesu in Cruce', *Gregorianum*, 13 (1932), pp. 489-527 for further texts.

[26] *Tr.* 9.10, 'Dormit Adam, ut fiat Eva, Moritur Christus ut fiat ecclesia, Dormienti Adae fiat Eva de latere, mortuo Christo lancea percutitur latus, ut profluant sacramenta quibus formetur ecclesia'. (PL 35,1463).

[27] *Tr.* 15.8 (PL 35,1513).

[28] *Percutere*: used in *Tr.* 9.10; 15.8; *Enarr. in Ps.* 21.II.28; 29.II.22; 56.11; 65.7; 103.IV.6; 126.7; 127.11; 138.2; *Sermo* 5.3; 218.14.14; *De Gen. c. Man.* 2.24.37. The same verb is used of Moses striking the rock (Cf. n. 5 supra). *Perforare*: used in *De civ. Dei.* 15.26; 22.17. *Aperire*: used in *Sermo* 329.1; *C. Faust.* 12.16. *Compungere*: used in *Sermo* 336.5.5; *Enarr. in Ps.* 29.II.22. *Pungere* is also used in two of Augustine's citations of Zech. 12.10 (*Tr.* 21.13; 36.12), while *configere* is used in a third citation (*Tr.* 120.3).

but it does serve his immediate purpose in *Tr.* 120.2. He wished to resume the analogy between the Cross and Noah's ark first mentioned in *Tr.* 9.11.

The *verbum vigilans* of the evangelist enables Augustine to describe the open side of Christ as the *ostium vitae*, thrown open by the soldier's lance, whence flow the sacraments of the Church 'without which there is no entrance to the life which is the true life'. The sacraments flowing from the Cross enable us to enter the Body of Christ, just as the door positioned on the side of Noah's ark (Gen. 6.16) allowed those who entered to be saved from the flood[29]. This *ostium vitae* was also prefigured in Eve being called 'life' and 'mother of the living' (Gen. 3.20). The transgression committed by the first Adam is reversed by the great good presently accomplished on the Cross. This leads Augustine to exclaim: 'O Death, whereby the dead are raised anew to life! What can be purer than such blood? What more health-giving than such a wound?'

Augustine concludes *Tr.* 118 by drawing a further connection between the Cross and the sacraments. It is *per crucem Christi*, though fashioned by the wicked, that every good thing is sealed to us in the celebration of the sacraments. In an interesting liturgical reference he notes that unless the sign of the Cross is applied to the forehead of believers, to the baptismal waters, to the oil for anointing, and to the nourishing sacrament of the Eucharist, *nihil eorum rite perficitur*[30].

Writing in the *De doctrina christiana* 2.41.62 (A.D. 396) Augustine once referred to the Cross as a sign in which all Christian action was described[31]. He often associated the four parts of the Cross with Paul's reference to the 'breadth, length, height and depth' of the love of Christ (Eph. 3.18)[32]. Under the influence of the anti-Pelagian debate his interpretation of the depth dimension of the Cross shifted from an earlier reference to the sacraments of the Church to his later emphasis on the hidden depths of the *gratia Dei*.

Thus, in *Tr.* 118.5 (A.D. 419-420) we find Augustine interpreting the breadth (*lata*) of the Cross in terms of good works performed in all the breadth of

[29] *Tr.* 120.2, 'Vigilanti verbo evangelista usus est, ut non diceret, latus ejus percussit aut vulneravit, aut quod aliud, sed *aperuit*: ut illic quodamodo vitae ostium panderetur, unde sacramenta ecclesiae manaverunt, sine quibus ad vitam quae vera vita est, non intratur ... Hoc praenuntiabat quod Noe in latere arcae ostium facere jusus est ... O mors unde mortui reviviscunt. Quid ergo isto sanguine mundius? Quid vulnere isto salubrius?' (PL 35,1953). Cf. *De civ. Dei* 15.26; *C. Faust.* 12.16,39 for a similar association.

[30] *Tr.* 118.5 (PL 35,1950).

[31] *De doct. christ.* 2.41.62, '...quo signo crucis omnis actio christiana describitur'. (PL 34,64).

[32] See H. Rondet, 'Notes d'exégèse augustinienne: 1. Le Symbolisme de la Croix', *Recherches de Science Religeuse*, 39 (1951), pp. 472-474. The relevant texts in chronological order are: *De doct. christ.* 2.41.62 (A.D. 396); *Ep.* 55.14.25 (A.D. 400); *Enarr. in Ps.* 103.I.14 (A.D. 409); *Ep.* 140.25.62-26.64, 36.82 (A.D. 412); *Ep.* 147.14.34 (A.D. 413); *Sermo* 53.14.15-15.16 (c.A.D. 413-416); *Sermo* 165.2.2-5.5, 7.9 (A.D. 417); *Tr.* 118.5 (c.A.D. 419-20). Rondet's article omitted the *De doct. christ.* reference.

love; the length (*longa*) in terms of perseverance through the whole length of time to the end; the height (*alta*) representing the heavenly goal of divine rewards, not human, to which the good works of the two previous dimensions are ordered. The depth (*profunda*) of the Cross lies hidden in the earth, yet it is from what is concealed that everything visible springs. Our good works spring *de profunditate gratiae Dei* which exceeds all human powers of judgement and comprehension[33]. Augustine continued in this same Tractate, as we have seen above, by connecting the Cross with the sacraments. He thus combines the doctrine of grace with the sacraments in his contemplation of the dimensions of the Cross.

Augustine twice employs Prov. 23.1-2 (LXX) when explaining Johannine texts on Christ laying down his life out of love for his friends (Jn. 10.11-17; 15.13)[34]. Developing the Eucharistic significance of Prov. 23.1-2, and coupling it with 1 Jn. 3.16, he explains that it is the martyrs who truly understand the message of the Eucharist and so imitate their Master's self-offering. They model themselves on the mystery of the Cross sacramentally celebrated in the Eucharist and so perfect their discipleship. Significantly *Tr.* 47.2 makes explicit connection with the invitation to Peter at Tiberias to follow his Lord, even if this involved the Cross (Jn. 21.15-19). Commenting on this Tiberias scene in the penultimate Tractate, Augustine says to Peter: 'Now that the price has been paid for you it is your duty to follow the buyer (*emptorem*), and follow him even to death on the Cross'[35]. To feed the Lord's sheep involves being ready to lay down one's life for these sheep (*Tr.* 47.2).

4. The Cross and the Incarnation

We have earlier seen Augustine's use of Noah's ark as a prefigurement of the Cross. A closely related image, but one of independent origin, is that of the Cross as a ship or life-raft bringing its passengers to the safety of a beloved homeland across the treacherous sea of the world[36]. This image of the Cross is used extensively throughout *Tr.* 2. Augustine, never a keen sea-farer himself, frequently used the sea, even in its tranquil moments, as a symbol of the world in its bitterness, secret depths and unpredictable waves and storms. There are

[33] *Tr.* 118.5 (PL 35,1950).

[34] *Tr.* 47.2; 84.1-2 (PL 35,1733. 1846-8) with an allusion also in *Tr.* 27.12. See S. Poque, 'L'exégèse augustinienne de Proverbes 23,1-2', *Revue Bénédictine*, 78 (1968), pp. 117-127 for systematic analysis of the theme.

[35] *Tr.* 123.4 (PL 35,1967).

[36] See H. Rondet, 'Le symbolisme de la mer chez saint Augustin', *Augustinus Magister* (Paris, 1954), t. 2, pp. 691-701; O. Perler, *Les Voyages de Saint Augustin* (Paris, 1969), pp. 57-81; M.G.St.A. Jackson, 'Augustine all at sea: An interpretation of the opening paragraphs of *De beata vita*', *Studia Patristica*, 18 (1990), pp. 71-77.

close similarities between *Tr.* 2 and some of Augustine's earlier and contemporaneous works where he draws on Classical and Patristic sources alike in developing the imagery[37].

In Tractate 2 Augustine castigates the proud philosophers who see the desired fatherland from a distance but refuse the Cross as the humble means to traverse the intervening sea[38]. Reflecting here on the Johannine prologue, Augustine cleverly uses the imagery of the wood, the ship and the Cross to explain what the incarnate Christ has become for us (Jn. 1.14) so that we might travel to the divinity which he shares with the Father (Jn. 1.1)[39]. Augustine's emphasis here is not primarily on the work of the redemption accomplished on the Cross but rather on the humility of the incarnate Christ as the great antidote to human pride. Christ was crucified *ut humilitatem doceret* (*Tr.* 2.4). The faithful Christian must not despise the lowly Christ but rejoice in clinging to the Cross which brings one safely to the desired goal across the sea of this world. As Augustine later expresses it: 'We come to Christ by Christ: *per Christum hominem ad Christum Deum* (*Tr.* 13.4). The fatherland may be on high, the way to it is lowly by means of the *passio Christi* and the *mors Christi* (*Tr.* 28.5).

Augustine's Johannine commentary contains a rich theology of the Cross. The tapestry of his thought is woven from various Scriptural threads and motifs. In it we find many characteristic Augustinian insights. The Cross is the fulfilment of several Old Testament prefigurements. It is also the humble stage on which the drama of our redemption is enacted, Christ the *mediator reconcilians* curing us of the wounds of sin and death by offering himself as the true Passover sacrifice. The Church and the sacraments spring from the crucified Lord as from their life-giving source. Catechumens and Baptised alike are invited to imitate Paul in making the Cross their special boast. They are proud to bear its sign in their hearts, to contemplate its message in its four dimensions and to cling to this humble wood en route to the port of salvation.

[37] E.g. *De beata vita* 1.1-4; *Sermo* 75; *Enarr. in Ps.* 103.IV.4; *Conf.* 1.16.25. Perler and Jackson (n. 36 supra) identify some of the classical sources, while J. Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols* (London, 1964), pp. 58-70 and H. Rahner, *Greek Myths and Christian Mystery* (London, 1963), pp. 46-68 and 328-386 review early Patristic treatment of the theme.

[38] *Tr.* 2.4, 'Illud potuerunt videre quod est, sed viderunt de longe: noluerunt tenere humilitatem Christi in qua *navi* securi pervenirent ad id quod longe videre potuerunt, et sorduit eis *crux* Christi. Mare transeundum est, et *lignum* contemnis: … et qua transeatur ad patriam non est, nisi *lignum* porteris'. (PL 35,1390-1). Striking parallels in *Conf.* 7.20.26-21.27 and *De civ. Dei* 10.29.

[39] *Tr.* 2.2, 'Ut ergo esset et qua iremus, venit inde ad quem ire volebamus. Et quod fecit? Instituit lignum quo mare transeamus. Nemo enim potest transire mare huius saeculi, nisi cruce Christi portatus'. (PL 35,1389). Cf. *Tr.* 2.3-4,13,16 for further development of the theme.

Augustine on Conscience

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What is the origin of the term 'conscience?' The Greek term for conscience as used in the New Testament, συνείδησις was not a translation of an Hebraic word[1]. But, as Philippe Delhaye has amply demonstrated, the Prophets and their call to repentance show that the reality of moral conscience is everywhere present in the Old Testament[2]. The term 'heart' (*leb*) was the term used. A pure heart meant a clean conscience.

Ernest Fortin has shown that the first extensive use of the term συνείδησις originated in Epicureanism. Very soon the Stoics began teaching the natural character of the reasonable life of virtue and its relation to human happiness[3]. For Seneca a bad conscience brought self-contempt[4].

In Stoicism, however, it is the wise man who knows that to be happy is to be virtuous. Others must be good through rewards and punishments. Without a personal and omniscient God, Stoics put forward a philosophical awareness of a rational universe through their own inner experience. Missing, however, are such characteristics as the universality of conscience and its obligatory character.

Thus the term συνείδησις with more or less its present meaning was in common use in the Hellenistic culture in which St. Paul as a Diaspora Jew participated. He was quite familiar with its main meaning in his time as 'a consciousness that one has done wrong'. He knew that certain educated Christian Corinthians were boasting that their consciences did not reproach them when they ate meat, an action Jewish law had forbidden. Other Christian Jewish Corinthians considered this breaking of the Mosaic law a violation of conscience. In his First letter to the Corinthians Paul attempted to form the consciences of both groups. The rather scrupulous or conservative Corinthians were judging their meat-eating neighbors to be sinful. The enlightened or progressive Corinthians were claiming their right to live by their knowledge that the Mosaic Law regarding certain accidentals did not bind them.

Paul pointed out that the less enlightened Jewish-Christians could be scandalized and influenced into following the example of the others and thereby act against their own consciences. To the progressives he said that although

[1] C.A. Pierce, *Conscience in the New Testament* (London, 1955).

[2] P. Delhaye, *The Christian Conscience* (New York, 1968).

[3] E. Fortin, 'The Political Implications of St. Augustine's Theory of Conscience', *Augustinian Studies*, 1 (1970), pp. 133-53.

[4] Seneca, *Epistula* 97.14-16 as quoted *ibid.*, p. 140.

they had a reasonable right to eat the meat, love for their neighbors should urge them to give up this right to save their brethren from scandal and its influence on them.

Paul engaged himself in forming the Christian conscience: love for neighbor becomes the predominant criterion for evaluating whether one's actions are not only not sinful in themselves but whether they are Christlike in building up rather than breaking down community. There is here a greater emphasis on having a good conscience rather than avoiding a bad one and an understanding that moral responsibility is social as well as individual. The pre-eminence of the law of charity for all Christians is made explicit in Paul's First pastoral Letter to Timothy 1:5 where he says that the purpose of Christian teaching is 'charity, from a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned'.

From this we see that a valid understanding of conscience relates it to true judgments of what is morally good to do, informed by the available wisdom.

Many early Fathers wrote about conscience, writers like Origen and Basil and Jerome, but a fuller development of a theory of conscience was formulated in 4th century North Africa by Augustine of Hippo. He gave to the human conscience the respected role that it has today. In doing so he highlighted aspects of conscience which are essential for allowing it to be the guide of a human person's moral life. Again in this matter, as in others, he brought together insights from the philosophical tradition and from the teachings of Scripture to the improvement of those insights and to the benefit of people of reason, people of faith. His views on conscience are not located in one or several treatises but are found throughout his many works. He used the word '*conscientia*' in its various forms 900+ times.

Now I am suggesting that the firm position which Augustine gives to the role of conscience is related to his teaching that true human knowledge is the result of divine illumination. The clue for this is found in his *De Trinitate*. There he speaks of the soul as

> ... reminded that it should turn to the Lord as to that light by which it was touched in some way, even when it was turned away from Him. For even the godless think of eternity and rightly condemn and rightly praise many things in the moral behavior of men. By what rules, indeed, do they judge if not by those in which they see how each ought to live, even though they themselves do not live in the same manner? Where do they see them? For they do not see them in their own nature, since these things are doubtless in the mind, and their minds are admittedly changeable, but it sees these rules as unchangeable ... where are these rules written in which even the unjust man recognizes what is just, and in which he perceives that he ought to have what he does not have? Where then are they written except in the book of that *light which is called Truth*? From that every just law is transcribed and transferred to the heart of the man who does justice, not by wandering to it but being, as it were, impressed upon it ... But he who does not do justice, and yet sees what is to be done, he is turned away from this light but is still touched by it...[5].

[5] Augustine, *De Trinitate* XIV.iv.21.

This kind of knowledge has for the human being the force of law, a law that is universal and obligatory[6]. It implies that right and wrong are not merely cultural byproducts agreed upon by a social group in a particular part of the world and then imposed on other groups. Augustine taught that

> there is no soul, however wicked, which can in any way reason, in whose conscience God does not speak. For who but God has written the law of nature in the hearts of men? that law of which the Apostle says: 'For when the Gentiles who have not the law (Mosaic) do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law are a law unto themselves: this shows the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing them witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another in the day when the Lord shall judge the secrets of men'. And therefore as in the case of every rational soul who thinks and reasons, even though blinded by passion, we attribute whatever is true in its reasoning not to itself but to the very *light of truth* by which, however faintly it is illuminated according to its capacity so as to perceive some measure of truth by its reasoning[7].

Augustine himself expressed a desire for an informed conscience in an early letter to Valerius (A.D. 391). He was the Greek bishop of Hippo who asked him to assist with the preaching. Augustine, considering himself insufficiently instructed, requested time to study the Scriptures. He wanted to know '... the instructions written in the Sacred Books, which a man of God may learn and hold so as to act with authority in churchly matters or, if not that, at least to live with a safe conscience ... or to die without losing that life to which, alone, meek and humble Christian hearts aspire'[8].

The obligation to follow one's conscience resides, according to Augustine, with human access to eternal law, natural and revealed. Conscience opens one to law and law obliges. No human agent, individual or collective such as government can require any action contrary to the eternal law[9]. This is a situation where Augustine explicitly teaches that one must follow one's conscience.

He frequently spoke of the 'voice of conscience' and dramatized it in the *Confessions* where he wrote:

> Now the day came when I stood naked in my own sight and when my own conscience accused me: 'Why is my voice not heard? Surely you are the man who used to say that for an uncertain truth you could not cast off the baggage of vanity. Behold there is now certainty and that burden still weighs upon you. Others (those who read the *Life of Antony* and decided to become hermits) have received wings to liberate their shoulders from the load, others who have neither worn out themselves searching nor spent more than ten years considering it'[10].

[6] Augustine, *Epistula* 64.
[7] Augustine, *De sermone in monte* II.ix.32.
[8] Augustine, *Epistula* 21.4.
[9] Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 145.15; *Epistula* 185.2.8; *Sermo* 62.8.13.
[10] Augustine, *Confessiones* VIII, vii, 29; *De civitate Dei* XII, viii, 11.

Augustine thinking and God speaking make the conscience no static thing. He experienced God as active in his conscience, 'bringing my shameful errors before my face, that I might see them and hate them ... God is the life of the heart'[11]. This life of the heart is not seated in the bodily senses, it is in the secret *light* within, not in the darkness outside; it is in the End of the commandments, not in the beginning of sin. 'Now the End of the commandment is charity from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an unfeigned faith'. (1 Tim. 1:5)

This quotation from Paul was repeated many times by Augustine who interpreted the 'good conscience' as signifying 'hope', and therefore these three, faith, love, and hope bring forth good actions, the seeds of virtue. They bring an awareness of God within and of eternal life with Him, begun now in hope. This is a shift from the pre-Christian emphasis on conscience as a mere awareness that one has done something wrong.

The good conscience with the joy it brings is not necessarily a sinless one. It is the conscience of one who accepts the healing grace of Christ to remedy the effects of sins[12]. This is described in the *Confessions*.

'We must therefore understand [the Final Judgment]', says Augustine, 'as of a certain divine power, by which it shall be brought about that everyone shall recall to memory all his own deeds, whether good or evil, and shall mentally survey them with a marvelous rapidity, so that this knowledge will either accuse or excuse conscience, and thus all and each shall be simultaneously judged'[13]. God's role in the Final Judgment will be that of a Witness to what consciences reveal[14].

With Augustine the characteristics of human conscience became clearer: its universality, its origin with the use of reason, its reliability regarding normative precepts of right and wrong on the general level of lies, thefts, murder, adultery as contrary to nature and offensive to God, its causing the experience of guilt after sin and of joy in good action, its participation in the Eternal or natural law given by God and knowable by rational beings, and therefore its binding character, its obligatoriness. Augustine sums up this basic natural law in the biblical rule which harmonizes with all human experience, namely, 'we are to treat others as we would like to be treated by them'[15].

In '*conscientia*' Augustine comprises both the natural disposition of the mind to distinguish right from wrong and tend toward the right, along with applying general principles to acts. Later, Thomas Aquinas will distinguish the disposition

[11] Augustine, *Confessiones* V, vi.44.
[12] Augustine, *De spiritu et littera* XIII.21.
[13] Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XX, xiv.42.
[14] Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XX, xxvi, 85.
[15] Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 57,1; *Confessiones* I, XVIII.29; *In johannis evangelium* 49.12.

to grasp general moral principles from their application to particular cases. He will call the former synderesis and the latter, conscience[16].

Having noticed how often Augustine used the word 'light' in referring to conscience, and recalling his connection of human reason with 'divine illumination', namely, the presence of God to the mind, is it any wonder that he believed that if human persons were not weakened by ignorance and unruly desires, no external law would have been necessary? The conscience as the place where wisdom and prudence were united could have been trusted as each one's guide to good action. Now it is participation in God's knowledge through divine illumination and divine Revelation.

[16] Cf. O.J. Brown, *Natural Rectitude and Divine Law in Aquinas* (Toronto, 1981): p. 175: Crowe maintains that the term *synderesis*, entering the scholastic vocabulary by way of St. Jerome's Commentary on *Ezechiel*, is an erroneous substitution, scribal or otherwise, for the term συνείδησις (*conscientia*). H. Siebeck argues against this. Peter Lombard mingles *scintilla-conscientia-synderesis*. Probably due to this Aquinas who wished to distinguish clearly the habit of the first practical principle and conscience as an act chose to minimize mention of synderesis as such. It is analyzed carefully in the early *De veritate* but the word occurs only occasionally in the *Summa theologiae*. (Ia, q. 79, a. 12; q. 79, a. 13; II-IIae q. 47, a. 6, ad 1 and ad 3).

Le témoignage d'Augustin sur l'hymne ambrosien *Apostolorum passio*

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Augustin est notre principal informateur sur le début du chant des Hymnes à Milan en 386[1]; il est aussi le garant de l'authenticité de quelques-unes des pièces qui nous sont parvenues dans la masse des 'Hymnes ambrosiens'[2]. Il *cite* en effet, en les rapportant explicitement à Ambroise, des vers de quatre des quatorze hymnes à huit strophes en dimètres iambiques que, depuis Biraghi[3], on attribue communément à l'évêque de Milan, et l'on trouve dans son œuvre, outre des échos de deux des hymnes qu'il mentionne par ailleurs, des *allusions* à trois autres hymnes, dont il ne parle pas explicitement[4], mais dont l'authenticité est établie par d'autres témoignages plus ou moins anciens. Parmi les sept hymnes restants, et qui appartiennent tous au répertoire milanais, un seul ne jouit de l'appui d'aucun témoignage ancien: l'hymne *Apostolorum passio* dédié à Pierre et Paul[5].

C'est la raison principale pour laquelle M. Simonetti, sans 'pouvoir donner un jugement bien décidé', était porté 'à considérer cet hymne comme non authentique, sinon de façon certaine, au moins de façon probable'[6], malgré les raisons apportées par ailleurs en faveur de l'authenticité. J'ai eu moi-même à faire le tri entre les divers arguments allégués concernant l'âge et l'authenticité de cette pièce[7]. Tout en penchant pour son authenticité, j'avais demandé qu'on ne s'appuie pas sur cet hymne pour y fonder des conclusions qui le dépassent.

Cette 'prudente réserve' n'a plus lieu d'exister. Car j'ai trouvé chez Augustin plusieurs exploitations de cet hymne, qui en prouvent au moins l'*ancienneté*. Les pages qui suivent ont pour but de montrer que l'*origine* ambrosienne est

[1] Augustin, *Confessions*, 9, 7, 15 (*BA* 14, p. 99).

[2] Sur cette appellation, voir Raban Maur, *De clericorum institutione*, 5, 49 (*PL* 107, c. 362 D-E).

[3] L. Biraghi, *Inni sinceri e carmi di sant'Ambrogio vescovo di Milano* (Milano, 1862).

[4] Sur ces témoignages anciens, v. M.H. Jullien, 'Les sources de la tradition ancienne des quatorze Hymnes attribuées à saint Ambroise de Milan' in *Revue d'histoire des textes* 19 (1989), pp. 57-189 et surtout p. 61. L'allusion à l'Hymne 13 (sur Laurent) me paraît discutable.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 65. Les quatorze hymnes ne sont tous présents que dans l'Hymnaire milanais (*ibid.*, p. 159).

[6] M. Simonetti, 'Studi sull'innologia popolare cristiana dei primi secoli', in *Atti della Accademia nazionale dei Lincei*, ser. 8, vol. 4,6 (Roma, 1952), pp. 398-400.

[7] Dans le cadre de l'édition commentée des *Hymnes* d'Ambroise de Milan, texte établi, traduit et annoté sous la direction de J. Fontaine (Paris, 1992), où j'avais la charge de cet *Hymne* 12. Voir les pages pp. 515-520 pour les questions d'authenticité et en particulier la conclusion, p. 520.

aussi garantie, bien que la situation puisse être plus complexe qu'on ne le songerait au premier abord. L'utilisation la plus ancienne de l'hymne semble bien figurer, en effet, dans l'une des premières lettres conservées d'Augustin à Paulin de Nole.

Le contexte particulier de ce remploi impose que nous remontions au début des relations de Paulin avec Augustin, et même que nous nous intéressions à l'œuvre de Paulin. Mais la prédication d'Augustin nous montrera que le thème qu'il aborde avec Paulin en 405 n'est pas lié à la personne de son correspondant et que l'utilisation de l'hymne, bien que celui-ci ne soit jamais cité comme tel, ne dépend pas de la personne ou de l'œuvre de Paulin, partant, qu'elle rentre dans le cadre des remplois ordinaires par Augustin des hymnes d'Ambroise qu'il a découverts à Milan, mais sans doute progagés en Afrique, et en particulier à Hippone.

– I –

Le tout début des relations de Paulin avec l'Afrique nous échappe[8]. Celles-ci commencent à son arrivée à Nole, sans qu'on sache pour quelle raison exacte il avait envoyé l'un de ses hommes à Carthage, ni comment il connaissait Alypius, l'ami d'Augustin, qui fut le premier à lui répondre. La première lettre de Paulin que nous ayons fait état de cette réponse d'Alypius, et de plusieurs de ses informations[9]. L'Africain indiquait entre autres qu'il avait entendu *parler* de Paulin à Milan auprès d'Ambroise — ce qui nous vaut de Paulin une déclaration de fidélité à Ambroise[10] —, mais aussi qu'il avait *lu* — on ne sait quand — un 'hymne' composé par Paulin[11]. Nous aurons à revenir sur ces deux points. La nouvelle lettre de Paulin à Alypius était accompagnée d'une lettre à Augustin, dont Alypius avait parlé avec éloge[12].

Augustin ne répondit pas immédiatement à cette lettre remplie d'admiration et d'affection. Etait-il si pris par ses charges pastorales comme prêtre de Valerius? Ce retard va provoquer une nouvelle lettre de Paulin, qui croisera la (première) lettre d'Augustin. Celui-ci ne se montre pas moins chaleureux que son correspondant. Il exploite longuement les *topoi* de la 'lettre comme substitut

[8] Je n'ai pas l'intention de revenir ici sur cette question délicate ni sur la datation des premiers écrits. Je me contente du cadre général, tel qu'on peut le trouver chez P. Courcelle, 'Les lacunes de la correspondance entre saint Augustin et Paulin de Nole' in *REAnc* 53 (1951), pp. 253-300, repris dans *Les Confessions dans la tradition littéraire...* (Paris, 1963), Appendice III (sous le titre: La correspondance avec Paulin et la genèse des Confessions), pp. 559-607, d'après lequel je cite ici.

[9] Paulin de Nole, *Ep.* 3 (ed. W. Hartel, *CSEL* 29, 13. = Aug. *Ep.* 24 ed. Al. Goldbacher, *CSEL* 34, 1). Je donne les deux références lorsque les lettres existent dans les deux collections actuelles.

[10] *Ibid.* 4 (p. 16, l. 13-p. 17, l. 7).

[11] *Ibid.* 6 (p. 18, l. 11-12): 'Et hoc rogo scribas mihi quem hymnum meum agnoueris'.

[12] Paulin, *Ep.* 4 (= Aug., *Ep.* 25).

de la présence'[13]. Mais à la fin, sans se contenter de ces échanges par lettre, il prie délicatement Paulin, s'il est libre de toute tâche dans l'Église, de venir en personne apaiser la soif de l'Afrique[14]. La demande est renouvelée dans la deuxième réponse. Augustin est entre-temps devenu le coadjuteur de Valerius. Il a appris des envoyés de Paulin que celui-ci n'exerce aucune fonction pastorale à Nole. Il insiste donc pour que Paulin vienne en Afrique, où l'exemple de son renoncement aux richesses aurait la plus grande influence, auprès des païens comme auprès des chrétiens[15].

Nous sommes en 395 ou 396, selon la date — discutée — de la consécration d'Augustin, à laquelle je ne peux m'arrêter ici. Je ne dirais rien non plus des raisons qui ont pu conduire Paulin, après un tel enthousiasme, à éluder toute réponse durant plusieurs années. Lorsque les échanges ont repris un cours régulier, il ne semble pas que Paulin ait relevé l'offre d'Augustin, puisque celui-ci la lui a renouvelée — au moins une fois[16] —, avant de recevoir, en 405[17], une brève réponse négative, d'après la lettre 80 d'Augustin qui en fait état: Paulin a déclaré qu'il entendait demeurer à Nole, sauf à préférer la volonté de Dieu[18].

La déclaration a paru trop rapide à Augustin. Il demande à son correspondant de lui expliquer plus longuement comment on reconnaît la volonté de Dieu. Et de lui soumettre lui-même tout d'abord deux cas de soumission à la volonté de Dieu — celui de Pierre et de son acceptation de sa mort, telle que le Christ la lui avait annoncée au bord du lac après sa résurrection; celui d'Abraham lors du sacrifice d'Isaac —, avant de passer à des exemples plus quotidiens, mais moins clairs à résoudre.

Voici cette page, un peu longue, mais nécessaire à entendre, puisque c'est en évoquant l'attitude de Pierre qu'Augustin transcrit, sans la moindre annonce, deux vers de l'hymne *Apostolorum passio*.

(J'aimerais, écrit-il), que tu expliques de façon un peu plus claire comment nous connaissans la volonté de Dieu que nous devons préférer à notre propre volonté. *Est-ce seulement dans les affaires que nous ne devons endurer volontairement que parce que nous serions forcés de les endurer même malgré nous — en ce cas, en effet, arrive ce que nous ne voulons pas; mais nous rectifions notre volonté pour vouloir ce que*

[13] Augustin, *Ep.* 27, 1-2 (ed Al. Goldbacher, *CSEL* 34, 1, pp. 95-98).

[14] *Ibid.*, 6 (p. 102, l. 13-16): 'Fratres ... desiderant germanitatem, beatitatem, humanitatem tuam. Non audeo petere, sed si tibi ab ecclesiasticis muneribus uacat, uides quid mecum sitiat Africa'.

[15] Augustin, *Ep.* 31, 4-5 (*CSEL* 34, 2, p. 4, l. 12-p. 5, l. 2).

[16] D'après l'indication de l'*Ep.* 80, 2 (p. 347, l. 20): 'ecce illam quaestiunculam quam *nuper* proposueram...'.

[17] La date est établie par la mention du retour prochain de Theasius et Evodius (*Ep.* 80, 1), dont le voyage en Italie a été occasionné par les troubles donatistes. Voir la *Prosopographie Chrétienne du Bas-Empire*, Afrique (Paris, 1982), s.v. Euodius (p. 369) et Theasius (p. 1105).

[18] Augustin, *Ep.* 80, 2 (p. 348, l. 1-3): '...cum dixisses ita te illo quo feliciter uteris loco (= Nolae) perseuerare decreuisse, ut, si quid de te aliud Domino placuerit, eius volontatem praeferas tuae'.

Dieu veut, lui dont il n'est ni permis de refuser la volonté souveraine ni possible d'éviter la volonté toute puissante: ainsi Pierre, qu'un autre a enchaîné et entraîné là où il n'avait pas voulu. Cependant, 'il alla là où il n'aurait voulu, et c'est volontairement qu'il dompta l'âpre mort' — *ou bien est-ce aussi dans le cas où nous pourrions ne pas modifier notre décision, bien qu'arrive quelque chose qui nous manifeste plutôt l'appel de Dieu à modifier cette décision.* Cette décision n'était pas mauvaise, et on s'y maintiendrait avec justice, si Dieu ne nous appelait à une autre décision. Il n'était pas mal en effet pour Abraham de nourrir et d'éduquer son fils, autant qu'il le pouvait, autant que cela dépendait de lui. Mais, ayant soudain reçu l'ordre de le tuer, il modifia sa première décision, qui n'était pas mauvaise; mais sa décision aurait été mauvaise s'il ne l'avait pas modifiée, après l'ordre qu'il avait reçu. Sur ce point aussi je doute que tu aies un avis différent du mien.

Mais la plupart du temps, ce n'est ni une voix du ciel, ni un prophète, ni la révélation d'un songe ou de la sortie de l'âme qu'on appelle une extase, mais le cours même des évènements qui nous appelle à changer nos desseins et nous force à reconnaître la volonté de Dieu, différente de ce qu'était la nôtre. Ainsi, nous avions le dessein de partir et voici que surgit une affaire que la vérité consultée sur notre devoir nous interdit d'abandonner. Ou, alors que nous avions résolu de rester, on nous annonce une nouvelle, et la même vérité consultée nous contraint de partir. C'est sur ce troisième genre de raisons de modifier sa décision que je te demande de me donner ton avis avec plus de détail et de clarté...'[19].

Nous ne savons malheureusement pas si Paulin a répondu à cette question, ni non plus si Augustin est revenu une nouvelle fois sur le sujet dans la lettre plus développée qu'il se promettait d'écrire au retour d'Italie — et de Nole — de ses deux amis Théasius et Evodius. Encore moins savons-nous, si Paulin a reconnu dans l'exemple de Pierre, deux vers, transcrits sans la moindre insérende, de l'hymne *Apostolorum passio*.

Quo nollet iit, sed uolens
mortem subegit asperam (XII,19-20).

Augustin n'ayant pas l'habitude d'écrire en dimètres ïambiques, il ne fait pas de doute que la phrase reprend sans peine le texte même de l'hymne, avec son enjambement et sa disjonction significative *mortem ... asperam*, où l'adjectif *asper* qualifie rarement la mort dans la poésie classique[20].

[19] *Ibid.* (p. 348, l. 4-p. 349, l. 8). Je ne transcris ici que la partie en italiques de la traduction: 'Vtrum tantum in ea re, quam propterea uolentes perferre debemus, quia et inuiti cogeremur — ibi enim fit quidem quod nolumus, sed ideo nos corrigimus, ut uelimus, quia ille uult, cuius uoluntatis nec excellentiam fas est recusare nec omnipotentiam licet euitare, sicut Petrum alter cinxit et tulit quo noluerat; uerumtamen, *quo nollet, iit, sed uolens mortem subegit asperam* — an et ibi, ubi est potestas non mutare sententiam, quamuis aliud occurrat, in quo potius appareat uoluntas Dei ad mutandam sententiam nos uocantis'. (p. 348, l. 6-14 – Les mots en italiques ne sont autres que ceux de l'hymne).

[20] Voir mon commentaire du v. 20, pp. 538-535. *Iuit* est aussi acceptable que *iit*, et réciproquement. On notera qu'Augustin aime parler de l'*asperitas amarae mortis*, de l'*aspera uia mortis* (S. 297, 2-3-PL 38, c. 1360 B-D).

Bien qu'aucun éditeur ne l'ait aperçu et que tous se contentent de renvoyer pour ce passage au texte évangélique[21], on peut donc assurer que la lettre d'Augustin transcrit l'Hymne ambrosien, même si celui-ci se réfère à sa manière au texte de *Joh.* 21.18-19. Ce remploi, à la date de 405 où il est fait, fournit tout d'abord un *terminus ante quem* important: l'hymne existait au moins dix ans après la mort d'Ambroise.

Reste à savoir s'il est d'Ambroise et comment s'explique un remploi aussi discret de la part d'Augustin. On rappellera tout d'abord que si Augustin a cité de façon *explicite* les Hymnes 1, 3, 4 et 5 d'Ambroise, il a utilisé *sans le dire* non seulement les deux hymnes 4 et 5, mais aussi les Hymnes 2, 6 et peut-être 13, dont l'authenticité est attestée par ailleurs[22]. On remarquera aussi que ces citations ou allusions s'étalent sur toute la vie d'Augustin et ne se cantonnent pas aux *Confessions* ou aux écrits proches de 386[23]. Rien d'étonnant à ce qu'une lettre de 405 utilise ces vers, surtout dans un échange avec un lettré et un ami d'Ambroise. Rappelons-nous que, dès sa réponse à une première lettre (perdue) de Paulin, Alypius a évoqué son séjour à Milan en 384-387 et la manière dont il avait entendu parler de Paulin auprès d'Ambroise[24]. Les Africains connaissent donc bien les rapports particuliers entretenus par Paulin avec Ambroise et ces liens ont été confirmés par Paulin lui-même dans sa réponse à Alypius.

On peut donc penser avec vraisemblance que, dans cette lettre 80, Augustin joue sur la culture religieuse et poétique de son correspondant et qu'il table sur le succès que ces hymnes d'Ambroise ont acquis, malgré certaines résistances, à Milan ou en Afrique. Dans les *Confessions*, Augustin n'a-t-il pas déclaré, quelques années auparavant, que l'usage des hymnes, tel que l'évêque de Milan l'avait instauré, s'était répandu à travers l'Occident[25]? Il a d'ailleurs, à peu près à la même époque, écrit un ouvrage, malheureusement perdu, destiné à défendre l'usage, qui venait de se répandre à Carthage, de chanter à l'autel, durant la célébration eucharistique, des 'hymnes tirés du livre des Psaumes'[26]. Il est à peu près certain que l'initiative d'Aurelius devait s'inspirer de celle d'Ambroise et qu'Augustin n'avait pas été sans le souligner. Il est donc tout

[21] Ni les Mauristes, repris par Migne, ni Goldbacher, ni la *BAC* VIII 2ed., ni les *Fathers of the Church*, 12, ni la *Nuova biblioteca Agostiniana*, 21 ne font le moindre renvoi à Ambroise, mais ils se réfèrent à l'épisode de l'apparition de Jésus au bord du lac.

[22] Voir *supra*, n. 4.

[23] Voir chez M.H. Jullien, *art. cit.* (n. 4), p. 61, n. 12, la série des citations (jusque dans les *Retractationes* 1, 21, 1) et des allusions (jusque dans le *C. Arianos*, 8).

[24] Voir *supra*, p. 69 et n. 10.

[25] Augustin, *Confessions*, 9, 7, 15 (*BA* 14, p. 98): 'ex illo (instituto) in hodiernum retentum multis iam ac paene omnibus gregibus tuis et per cetera orbis imitantibus'.

[26] Augustin, *Contra Hilarum*, connu par les seules *Retractationes*, II, 11 (*BA* 12, pp. 468-470) et datable, d'après sa place, des environs de 400. Sur ce traité perdu, voir J. Murphy, 'The Contra Hilarum of Augustine. Its liturgical and musical Implications' in *Augustinian Studies* 10 (1979), pp. 133-143.

naturel que les productions d'Ambroise soient bien présentes à la mémoire d'Augustin, entretenue peut-être par l'usage liturgique, et qu'elles viennent d'autant plus facilement sous sa plume — ou à sa bouche — qu'il écrit à un fidèle d'Ambroise, qui les utilise lui aussi.

– II –

On ne peut cependant pas écarter sans l'envisager une autre hypothèse: Paulin était lui-même un poète. Paulin se voit attribué par Gennade un *Sacramentorum opus et hymnorum*[27], dont nous ne savons rien. Celui-ci ou ceux-ci appartiendraient-ils à l'œuvre épiscopale de Paulin qu'il conviendrait encore de se rappeler la première lettre d'Alypius à Paulin et la réponse de ce dernier: Alypius avait lu un 'hymne' de Paulin, sans préciser lequel, ce qui provoque une question de Paulin[28]. Que nous soyons en 394 ou en 395, il ne peut guère être déjà question de *Natalicium* en l'honneur de Félix[29]. S'agirait-il de la *Laus Johannis*, qui peut être considérée comme un hymne, ou des quelques *Psaumes* versifiés, dont la composition remonte également au séjour de Paulin en Espagne[30]? En rigueur de termes, on ne peut pas exclure que Paulin ait écrit des *Hymnes* à la manière d'Ambroise et que, parmi ceux-ci, ait pu se trouver un hymne en l'honneur de Pierre et Paul[31]. Dans de telles conditions, on en viendrait à conjecturer qu'Augustin, en reprenant ces deux vers, renvoyait Paulin à lui-même, ce qui ne nécessitait la moindre insérende[32].

[27] Gennade, *De uiris illustribus*, 49 (ed. Richardson, *TU* 14, 1; Leipzig, 1896, p. 78-79). Le texte n'est pas pleinement sûr. Richardson introduit le mot *opus*. La *PL* 58, c. 1087 écrit: 'Sacramentarium et Hymnarium'.

[28] Voir *supra*, n. 11.

[29] Les premiers *Natalicia* sont très courts et ont un caractère très personnel.

[30] P. Courcelle (*art. cit.* (n. 8), p. 562, n. 3) parle de *poème* et se demande si ce n'est pas à Milan qu'Alypius l'aurait connu, en se référant à Fabre, selon lequel les trois premiers poèmes de Paulin sont antérieurs à 389. Je crois avoir montré que ces poèmes sont en réalité de 393-394 ('Les premiers rapports de Paulin de Nole avec Jérôme: moine et philosophe? poète ou exégète' in *Polyanthema, Studi offerti a Salvatore Costanza* (*Studi tardoantichi* 7, 1989), pp. 178-216 et surtout pp. 206-208).

[31] On en chante peut-être à Nole: *Carm.* 23, 115. Voir aussi *Ep.* 15, 4 (*CSEL* 29, p. 144, l. 2). A une date indéterminée, mais relativement tardive, Paulin recevra de Gaule un *recueil* d'Hymnes (*Ep. 41, 1-CSEL* 29, p. 356, l. 7).

[32] Dans sa lettre 31, 3 (*CSEL* 34, 2, p. 3, l. 8-11) à Paulin, Augustin reprend les propres termes de Paulin (*ep.* 6, 2-*CSEL* 30, p. 41, l. 3-5 = ep. 30, 3 Aug.-*CSEL* 34, 1, p. 124, l. 7-9); mais il le signale expressément: 'Agnoscitis enim, credo, haec esse ex epistola uestra' (p. 3, l. 12).

– III–

Pourtant, à y réfléchir, une telle hypothèse paraît peu plausible. Tout d'abord, parce que, malgré une palette prosodique variée, nous ne trouvons chez Paulin la moindre strophe en dimètres iambiques[33]. De plus, au moment où il écrit à Alypius en lui demandant quel 'hymne' il a pu lire de lui[34], Paulin vient juste de passer par Rome où il n'a guère été bien accueilli par la *superba discretio* de Sirice et de son clergé[35]. Voie-t-on qu'il ait déjà mis son art au service de Pierre et Paul, comme il commence juste à le faire pour Félix? La composition serait-elle alors plus tardive? Mais, malgré l'habitude qu'il prendra d'aller à Rome pour le 29 Juin[36], Paulin ne donne ni à Pierre ni à Paul une grande place dans son œuvre, en dehors de la mention de leurs tombeaux à Rome, du pèlerinage qui s'y déroule ou du pouvoir de leurs reliques[37]. S'il se réfère à quelques épisodes des *Evangiles* ou des *Actes des Apôtres* qui concernent Pierre[38], jamais il ne parle de la *mort* même de Pierre. Ambroise, au contraire, l'évoque à deux reprises dans son œuvre en prose et, une fois, avec la curieuse tournure *inuerso uestigio* que l'on trouve dans l'Hymne au v. 13 pour décrire le mode de crucifixion de Pierre[39].

D'autre part, comme l'a signalé Steier[40], cette évocation se double, dans la description de l'attitude de l'Apôtre, d'une allusion à la décision de Pierre d'affronter son martyre, telle que la racontent les *Actes de Pierre* et telle que le rappelle en particulier Ambroise dans son *Sermo contra Auxentium* de 386. Tout cela n'invite pas à attribuer la paternité de l'hymne à Paulin, auquel Augustin retournerait en quelque sorte son texte, mais bien à Ambroise, admiré par Paulin comme par Augustin, même si ce dernier n'a pas forcément perçu l'allusion d'Ambroise aux *Actes de Pierre*, qui se trouve également dans une page de l'*Explanatio in Lucam* qu'il semble bien avoir lue par ailleurs.

[33] On trouve des associations de tétramètres et de dimètres iambiques en *Carm.* 11, 49-68; 24, et des sénaires iambiques en *Carm.* 21, 105-271, mais pas de *strophe* en dimètres iambiques.

[34] Voir n. 11.

[35] Paulin, *Ep.* 5, 13-14 (*CSEL* 29, p. 33-34 et surtout p. 33, l. 27).

[36] Selon ses propres dires: *Ep.* 17, 1 (*CSEL* 29, p. 125, l. 19-25); 18, 1 (p. 128, l. 12-17); 20, 2 (p. 144, l. 28-p. 145, l. 1); 43, 1 (p. 364, l. 14-18). Mais il y va ensuite après Pâques: *Ep.* 45, 1 (p. 379, l. 15-16).

[37] *Carm.* 27, 569; 19, 54sq.; 342.

[38] *Carm.* 15, 263 (libération de Pierre sous Hérode); 26, 374 (Pierre sur les eaux); *Ep.* 20, 6 (*CSEL* 29, p. 147, l. 22-25: Pierre pêcheur); 21, 2 (p. 150, l. 5-10: Pierre et Jean au tombeau du Christ); 23, 34 (p. 192, l. 10-12: Pierre et le boiteux de la Belle Porte); 23, 43 (p. 198, l. 22-25: Pierre pierre de l'Eglise); 50, 5 (p. 408, l. 4-7: la prédication de Pierre après la Pentecôte).

[39] Voir mon commentaire (n. 7), pp. 535, 537-538.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 538, sur le v. 19: A. Steier, 'Untersuchungen über der Eichtheit der Hymnen des Ambrosius' in *JKPh* Suppl. 28 (Leipzig, 1903), pp. 553-662 et particulièrement p. 614.

Ambroise y rapproche la crainte de Pierre devant la mort de celle du Christ lors de son agonie[41]. On retrouve en effet plusieurs fois ce rapprochement dans la prédication d'Augustin[42]. Ce qui est dit alors de l'attitude de Pierre peut éclairer l'opposition que signale brièvement la lettre de 405 entre les deux volontés de Pierre: celle qui lui fait *naturellement* ne pas vouloir mourir — c'est à dire, selon l'annonce du Christ, ne pas vouloir aller au supplice où on le conduisait —, et celle qui le mène de façon décidée au combat contre 'l'âpre mort'. Tous ces sermons ne sont pas datés avec sûreté[43] et tous ne peuvent pas, et de loin, être rapportés à l'hymne d'Ambroise. Mais il en est un qui reprend littéralement l'un de nos deux vers.

Partons du Sermon 296, prêché le 29 juin 410, à en juger par les allusions aux malheurs de Rome et aux reproches que l'on fait aux chrétiens[44]. Devant ces malheurs à supporter, Augustin en appelle d'abord à l'exemple du Christ qui s'est soumis à la volonté de son Père après avoir reculé devant la mort au moment de son agonie. Il avance ensuite l'exemple de Pierre, en citant la parole de Jésus: 'Lorsque tu seras vieux, un autre te ceindra et te portera là où tu ne veux pas', et il commente: 'Il montre en Pierre la volonté humaine et son tremblement devant la mort', avant d'ajouter cette question: 'Est-ce que, parce qu'il n'a pas voulu mourir, il n'a pas voulu être couronné? *Numquid, quia nolens mortuus est, nolens coronatus est?*'[45]. Remarquons l'interrogation négative. Nous retrouvons la même opposition, mais sous un tour affirmatif, dans la deuxième *Enarratio* sur le Psaume 30, avec cette fois une utilisation nette de l'Hymne 12.

Celle-ci a été prononcée peu après le 29 juin, d'après ce qui est explicitement dit[46], et l'on doit pouvoir dater cette *Enarratio* des années 405 (voire 400)-410, d'après ses allusions aux Donatistes et à l'unité de l'Eglise[47]. Ici

[41] Ambroise, *Explanatio in Lucam*, 10, 178 (*SC* 52, p. 216). La page précédente commente *Joh.* 21, 18 sq.

[42] On trouve cette utilisation conjointe de *Mat.* 26. 38 et *Joh.* 21, 18 en *Enarratio in Ps 30*, 2, 1, 3 (*CC* 38, p. 192 - Cf. *PL* 36, c. 231 A-D); *Tract. in Iohannem* 123,5 (*CC* 36, p. 679, 84-96); *Serm.* 296, 6 (*PL* 38, c. 1356 C-E); 297, 2, 3 (c. 1360 B); 299, 8 (c. 1375 D-E); 344, 3 (*PL* 39, c. 1513 B-E).

[43] Pour les *Sermons*, on trouvera les différentes datations proposées chez P. Verbraken, *Etudes critiques sur les Sermons authentiques de saint Augustin* (Instrumenta Patristica 12; Steenbrugge 1976), pp. 131-132.

[44] Les opinions hésitent entre 410 et 411. Il ne me semble pas que Rome soit *déjà* prise.

[45] Augustin, *Serm.* 296, 5, 6 (*PL* 38, c. 1355 C-D): 'Dominum tuum uide, caput tuum uide, exemplum uitae tuae uide; redemptorem tuum, pastorem tuum attende: *Pater, si fieri potest, transeat a me calix iste*. Quomodo ostendit humanam uoluntatem et continuo conuertit renisum ad oboedientiam? *Verumtamen non quod ego uolo, sed quod tu uis, Pater*. Ecce Petro hoc dixit: *Cum senueris, alter te cinget et feret quo tu non uis*. Ostendit in illo humanam uoluntatem circa trepidationem mortis. Numquid quia nolens mortuus est, nolens coronatus est?'

[46] Augustin, *Enarratio in Ps.* 30, 2, 1, 3 (*CC* 38, p. 192, 38-39): 'diceretur ipsi Petro *quod audiuimus natali Apostolorum die, quando...*'.

[47] *Enarratio in Ps.* 30, 2, 2, 8 et 12.

encore, les deux attitudes du Christ à son agonie et de Pierre lors de sa passion sont rapprochées, mais pour montrer que la crainte devant la mort est quelque chose de naturel à l'homme, même saint. Et c'est alors qu'Augustin reprend, à un mot près, le vers 19 de l'Hymne. Je transcris d'abord le texte latin:

'Ergo, si Petrus, apostolus tanta perfectione, *quo nollet iit uolens* (nolens mortuus est, sed uolens coronatus est), quid mirum si est aliquis pauor in passione etiam iustorum, etiam sanctorum? Pauor est ex humana infirmitate, spes ex divina promissione…'.
'Ainsi donc, si Pierre, un apôtre d'une si grande perfection, est allé volontiers là où il ne voulût pas aller (il est mort bien qu'il ne le voulût pas, mais c'est en le voulant qu'il fut couronné), qu'y a t-il d'étonnant si les justes et les saints eux-mêmes éprouvent quelque frayeur dans leur passion? La frayeur vient de la faiblesse humaine, l'espérance de la promesse divine'[48].

En se tenant à l'exemple de Pierre, deux remarques s'imposent. Tout d'abord, le commentaire, sous forme positive, qui retarde la question d'Augustin, est destiné à éclairer une formulation qui peut paraître elliptique ou obscure à l'auditoire. Qu'est-ce à dire, sinon qu'Augustin a *repris des termes qui ne lui appartiennent pas* et qu'il vient de citer l'hymne d'Ambroise que son public doit connaître, mais ne pas forcément comprendre parfaitement? D'autre part, si le vers n'est pas complet tel qu'il est cité, la conjonction *sed* qui lui manque — dans le texte que nous connaissons — figure, à sa place, dans le commentaire: *sed uolens* … Il n'est pas nécessaire de supposer un accident, ni de corriger le texte comme les copistes et les éditeurs l'ont fait à l'envi, faute d'avoir aperçu l'origine ambrosienne de l'expression[49]. Augustin, qui ne voulait pas utiliser les deux vers de cette strophe comme il le fait dans sa lettre à Paulin, a raccordé sa phrase en conservant la seule opposition entre les deux volontés de Pierre, mais peut-être parce qu'il y avait là pour lui une idée sur laquelle il avait déjà été amené à réfléchir.

Quelle que soit sa date exacte, cette *Enarratio* montre qu'Augustin ne réserve pas à Paulin des vers qui seraient — ou pourraient être — de lui[50]. Ce ou ces vers ont au contraire toutes raisons d'être l'œuvre d'Ambroise. Celui-ci aime ces raccourcis d'expression et laisse toujours à penser à son lecteur. On ne s'étonnera pas qu'Augustin n'ait cru nécessaire de signaler à Paulin ni

[48] *Enarratio in Ps.* 30, 2, 1, 3 (p. 192, l. 43-47).

[49] Le texte cité est celui de l'édition Dekkers-Fraipont, qui reviennent au texte des Mauristes et au ms. Paris. 9533 (s. VI). Mais on trouvera dans leur apparat, comme dans celui de la *PL* 36 (qui donne un autre texte), un certain nombre d'autres leçons ou propositions.

[50] On peut d'ailleurs, une fois l'assurance acquise qu'Augustin connaît cet hymne, reconnaître certains de ses éléments en d'autres de ses textes. Par ex., le *S. Morin Guelferbytanus* 23 (*PLS* 2, c. 598) semble reprendre le début de l'hymne: '*Apostolorum passio* beatorum istum nobis *sacrauit diem … Petrus Apostolorum primus*, Paulus Apostolorum nouissimus…'; le *Tractatus in Iohannem* 123, 5 (*CC* 36, p. 679, l. 84) dit: '*nolens* ad eam uenit (= molestia mortis), *sed uolens* eam uicit', où le *uicit* confirme la leçon *subegit* de l'hymne qui a parfois été édulcorée. Sur la *mors aspera* du v. 20, v. la n. 20.

l'existence ni l'origine de sa citation. Ce sont là raffinements de lettrés, d'autant plus naturels, dans le cas présent, que tous deux communiaient dans une même vénération d'Ambroise. Mais on ne s'étonnera pas non plus que ces vers d'Ambroise aient provoqué la réflexion d'Augustin et, comme souvent, bien au delà de leur emploi ou de leur sens premier. Ce sont là ces 'gouttes de parfum' qui ont enflammé son âme, ou mieux, de ce vin qui a provoqué cette 'sobre ivresse' dont il s'est senti envahi en écoutant Ambroise[51].

[51] Augustin, *Confessions*, 5, 13, 23 (*BA* 13, p. 506).

St. Augustine and the Issue of Word Origin

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The general topic I want to consider is the contribution brought by the bishop to the advance of language instruction in late antiquity; the way he complemented the tasks of the grammarian and filled the vacuum of expertise created by the inadequacy that was beginning to characterise the professional teachers of language. More particularly, I want to discuss the problem of etymology as a means for language instruction, and one way in which it was employed by Augustine in addressing his audience.

The Latin grammarian of late antiquity is portrayed by modern descriptions as enjoying a position of strength. This derived, first, from his mastery of the language and of the skills of the craft passed on to him by tradition. He then controlled the access of others to this knowledge, prescribing correct speech for the social elite he was serving, imparting it through teaching, and defending it against corruption from either the vulgar idiom or the vernacular. A dominant figure within his classroom, he was aware of his authority as a guarantor of social continuity and stability, important assets to the educated society in a world of changes.

Such have been the modern descriptions of the grammarian. They portray his activity in positive terms, focusing on his satisfaction with the forms of analysis he was relying upon, as well as the good response from his audience. These descriptions say little about his inadequacy.

Recently, attention has been directed to the presence of shortcomings.[1] The handbooks collected in Keil's *Grammatici Latini*, for example, display an extremely uniform material: the grammarians repeat the same patterns of analysis, lessons and illustrations that had been used for generations (cf. Kaster, 1986). To the modern reader, their texts seem to personify the stagnation that has been thought to describe late antiquity. But grammar was not free from criticism already in antiquity: language teaching, centred on weighing individual words in literary texts, was seen at times as pedantic or superficial, choking the spirit of literature with its technical rules. The constant appeal to antiquity also

[1] Cf. Robert A. Kaster, 'Islands in the Stream: The grammarians of Late Antiquity', *Historiographia Linguistica* 13/2-3 (1986), pp. 323-342; and *Guardians of Language: The grammarian and society in late antiquity* (Berkeley, California, 1987); Vivien A. Law, 'Late Latin grammars in the early Middle Ages: A typological history', in Daniel J. Taylor (ed.), *The History of Linguistics in the Classical Period* (Studies in the History of the Language Sciences, 46; Amsterdam, 1987), pp. 191-206.

failed to impress: the grammarian was attacked for encouraging a way of speaking that time had dismissed, while paying no attention to change and the living language.[2]

Moreover, interested only in providing the language for a wealthy and eloquent audience, the grammarian was drawn into the division between town and country that disregarded the poor and illiterate population. None of the grammarians of late antiquity felt concerned to extend his message to other social layers, to the description of other strata of the language: they remained fixed on classical Latin and on the needs of the elitist audience they depended upon for security and status.

By the end of the fourth century, this audience was diminishing, while an influx of non-native speakers started thickening the ranks of those demanding changes in language teaching. Other needs arose with the spread of Christianity, which replaced the old cultural values with the new religious ones. This meant that teachers had to focus more on literacy: without the study of Latin, new clerics could not hold a service, nor could new converts understand the technical idiom of Christianity.

The grammarians had to adjust to the new demands of their pupils. Yet the solutions they came upon are not our concern here.[3] Rather, I shall argue that, long before the grammarians began to respond to changing circumstances in the sixth century, their role had been complemented by the linguistic task of the bishop, who had been more receptive to change. He also filled the gap at other levels of society, paying attention to strata of language that the grammarians had considered beneath interest and addressing an audience that had been constantly ignored.

The Bishop as Teacher of Language: New Focus

As former grammarian and teacher of rhetoric, St. Augustine underwent this shift of focus himself, and the results can be seen in his work: *Ars breviata*, for example, the grammar he wrote while preparing for baptism (386/87), contains Christian elements, coexisting with the general secular tone.[4] Yet it is in his later works that his thinking is shown as more thoroughly marked by innovation, under the sign of Christianity.

[2] See Kaster (1987:165, note 2) for references of the most representative criticisms within the classical tradition.

[3] The problem has already been addressed in secondary literature (see 1 above).

[4] Two recent studies which argue for the authenticity of the *Ars breviata* are Vivien A. Law, 'St. Augustine's *De grammatica*: lost or found?', *Recherches Augustiniennes* 19 (1984), pp. 155-83, and U. Pizzani, 'Gli scritti grammaticali attribuiti a S. Agostino', *Miscellanea di studi agostiniani in onore di P. Agostino Trapè, OSA* (Augustinianum 25; 1985), pp. 361-83.

Receptive to his duties as a Christian teacher, Augustine was prepared to respond to the contemporary needs of language instruction by modifying forms and functions of the old school. To the grammarian's teaching focused on isolated words he answered with a pattern which uses divine illumination to get behind verbal forms. With this, the exclusive authority of the classical authors was replaced by the living one of God, which meant freeing speech rather than suffocating it.

The appeal to antiquity for the discovery of the correct verbal forms did not impress Augustine either, and we find him attacking the grammarian for placing so much emphasis on unimportant rules of speech: one who prays to God for forgiveness hardly needs any such rules (*De doct. christ.* 2.13.19). He pleads instead for the right of the vulgar language to be used and encouraged, aware that such a right could also dispel the criticisms that surrounded the unpolished language of the Bible.

Finally, the bishop extended his message to the larger masses, where his efforts brought new converts and his teaching made a difference. It is primarily with this fundamental shift of attention that language teaching changed its character completely, coming closer to reality; its focus was directed to the country, the uneducated people, the non-native speakers of Latin, other linguistic strata and languages. The only problem that was left for the bishop to tackle was what methods of instruction to use.

'Baptised' Methods of Teaching. Etymology

Like other early Christian scholars who tended to extremes in their reactions to classical, pagan methods of instruction, Augustine felt somewhat uncertain about what he could or could not use. Etymology had been a trope characteristic of the sophisticated style in which the proponents of paganism took pleasure; it was a sign of curiosity and pride, part of what a Christian was supposed to reject. Still, it was everywhere in the texts that had played a fundamental role in his schooling as well as in his Christian or pagan readings as an adult. It had been used extensively by the authors he admired, the ones he wanted to exceed in mastery.

Seen from this perspective, Augustine's contradictory reactions to etymology seem no longer surprising. On the one hand, he could speak quite harshly against it. In the only passage that explicitly treats his views of etymology (*De dialectica* 6), he criticised it as a matter of personal ingenuity, with curiosity rather than necessity as its motivating force.[5] On the other hand, a look at his

[5] See *De dialectica* (chapter 6: *res mea sententia nimis curiosa et minus necessaria; ineptum esset aggredi quod persequi profecto infinitum est; huc accedit quod ut somniorum interpretatio ita verborum origo pro cuiusque ingenio iudicatur*).

writings is enough to observe that he used etymology extensively, in forms that seem to differ little, if at all, from those present in the works of his predecessors and contemporaries.[6]

Augustine never justified his total change of mind after *De dialectica*. Yet his position is stated in more general terms when, stepping outside the culture of secular prestige, he also urged the fruitful marriage of Christian understanding with the knowledge of liberal arts: this provided techniques and categories that could be converted to Christian use. Why were these needed? First, Augustine realised that, to be legitimated as valid knowledge, Christianity had to disprove its rivals on their own terms. Secondly, both evangelization and conversion demanded the adaptation of classical grammar to a program of instruction in the special vocabulary within Christian communities: this depended upon, in Augustine's formulation, carrying gold out of Egypt and refashioning it for the service of God (*De doct. christ.* 2.11-15; 2.16-41; 3.1-4). Etymology was part of this treasure. With Augustine, it was no longer just a rhetorical device, a mere pattern of grammatical explanation, a simple tool for textual criticism, but a teaching method to be used in addressing an audience with various levels of education and linguistic needs:

1. There were, first, the needs of the vast audiences waiting to hear the Christian message before or shortly after conversion, the simple who listened and were touched by biblical stories, and who could gain benefit from the literal meanings of biblical terminology. Fairly uneducated, with only basic skills in reading and writing Latin, these people demanded preaching in a language that matched their understanding. For them, the first step in conversion was a grasp of the basic Christian vocabulary.

By the time of Augustine's activity as a bishop Christian Latin had become a variety largely incomprehensible to outsiders. To the new Christian converts also it must have appeared just as difficult, since it was full of technical terms borrowed from Hebrew and Greek to denote things and notions with no Latin equivalent. Some had been transliterated and had established themselves in the Latin Christian language, raising problems to those lacking education in Greek. Not surprisingly, in his sermons and homilies Augustine had to make sure the loan-words he was using were understood. A pioneer in Christian etymologising, he provided meanings for much of the Greek and Hebrew terminology in the Bible: *catholicus, episcopus, martyr, martyrium, holocaustum, clericus, monachus*, and *angelus, sabbatum* and *pascha*, all received etymological interpretations at some point in Augustine's work.

2. Secondly, there were the needs of the moderately educated laymen advancing in religious maturity, who saw the moral lessons in the Bible, taught

[6] See M. Amsler, *Etymology and Grammatical Discourse in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Studies in the History of the Language Sciences, 44; Amsterdam (1989), pp. 44-54, 100-108), for a detailed analysis of Augustine's etymology.

the Christian message privately, but could not speak to and for the entire community. With a basic knowledge of the Christian vocabulary, they had other difficulties. One of their problems was the explanation of the subtler terms within the Christian vocabulary that had been calqued in Latin to acquire meanings attached to their literal equivalents in Greek. Augustine extended his pedagogical program to accommodate their needs. Not far from the sermons in this respect, his commentaries and text interpretations often reflect a similar didactic use of etymology, when he draws on *dominicum* (like κύριακον, 'the Lord's (House)'), *testimonia* (for μαρτυρία in the sense of 'martyrdom'), *nuntius* (for ἄγγελος), *superintentor* (for ἐπισκοπεῖν), *verbum* and *sermo* (having the force of the untranslatable λόγος with its facets of 'reason' and 'word').

3. There were, finally, the truly spiritual: the educated brethren, people like Jerome and himself, the few authorised assistants delegated to interpret, defend and correct in the name of the entire community. To these, Augustine would dedicate treatises or would write letters. In addressing these people, Augustine needed to describe the semantic shift certain terms were undergoing, the lexical innovations added to the special religious vocabulary and the pagan terminology he was converting to Christian use to designate notions found in Latin form, but whose meaning had somehow to be twisted. What he performed here was a subtler form of linguistic instruction, based more on the logical argumentation or the attack of newly acquired terminology than on simple language teaching. Most of the etymologies in his larger works would thus defend Augustine's choice, showing that either the original or the newly acquired meanings of certain words were more appropriate to represent the intended concepts than one may have believed at first sight. And, to give an example, the tenth book of *De civitate Dei* contains several cases of words whose theological sense is revived through etymology: *religio, curia, res divina, heros*, and *via regalis* are pagan terms that Augustine 'usurped for Christian use'[7] and defended, with etymological argumentation, as necessary within the Christian vocabulary.

Such etymologies, through the constant use of this language in divine worship, gave dignity and deeper understanding to this new terminology. With their help, such usages were firmly implanted in the awareness of the audience by logical explanation and constant reading, hearing and speaking. They also showed how useful pagan forms could be to the achievement of Christian truths.

[7] See J. Den Boeft, 'Some etymologies in Augustine's *De civitate Dei X*', *Vigiliae Christianae* 33 (1979), pp. 242-259.

Die Platoniker und die *civitas dei* (zu Aug. *civ.* 8-10)

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Augustins Auseinandersetzung mit der platonischen Philosophie in *De Civitate Dei* 8-10 bildet den letzten Abschnitt des ersten Hauptteils der Schrift (der Bücher 1-10), der sich gegen die Verfechter heidnischer Kulte richtet. Im ersten Teil dieser Refutatio der heidnischen Kulte (in den Büchern 1-5) hat Augustin gezeigt, daß diejenigen Menschen, deren Religiosität durch das Streben nach einer diesseitigen *beatitudo* motiviert ist, nicht der *civitas dei* angehören können, der (spirituellen) 'Gemeinschaft von Bürgern', die einerseits die heiligen Engel und andererseits die durch Gottes Gnade Auserwählten umfaßt, die sich entweder auf Erden 'in der Fremde' befinden (*peregrinantes in terra*) oder im 'himmlischen Vaterland' (der *superna* oder *caelestis patria*)[1]. In den Büchern 6-10 geht es nun also um die Frage, ob etwa die heidnischen Kulte mit dem Ziel der *beatitudo* im Jenseits die erstrebte Gemeinschaft in der *civitas dei* vermitteln können. Während den Adressaten dieses zweiten Teils insgesamt bereits eine höhere Wertschätzung entgegengebracht wird als den Gegnern des ersten Teils, soll der Auseinandersetzung mit den Philosophen in den Büchern 8-10 nochmals vermehrte Aufmerksamkeit zuteil werden als den anderen Gegnern, die Augustin in den Büchern 6-7 widerlegt hat und denen er damit die Vermittlung der Zugehörigkeit zur *civitas dei* abspricht. Augustin legt hier bekanntlich die drei varronischen Kategorien der Theologie zugrunde: Die Philosophen, als Vertreter der *theologia naturalis*, stehen dabei über den Vertretern der *theologia civilis* und *fabulosa*; denn die Philosophen befassen sich nicht mit städtischen Kulten oder der poetischen Darstellung der traditionellen Mythen, sondern mit dem Kosmos (6, 5).

Gegner der Auseinandersetzung in den Büchern 8-10 sind aber nicht alle Philosophen, sondern Augustin konzentriert sich auf die Widerlegung der Platoniker, da diese 'Gott erkannt haben', d.h. da ihre Gottesvorstellung derjenigen der christlichen Lehre entspricht (8, 1; 8, 4; 8, 6; 8, 9; 8, 10; 10, 2; 10, 3)[2]. Sie werden also über diejenigen Philosophen gestellt, die eine materialistische

[1] Vgl. die Stellen bei A.P. Orbán, 'Ursprung und Inhalt der Zwei-Staaten-Lehre in Augustins «De Civitate Dei»', *ABG* 24 (1980), S. 180f.; K. Thraede, 'Gottesstaat (Civitas Dei)', *RAC* 12 (1983), Sp. 68; E.A. Schmidt, *Zeit und Geschichte bei Augustin* (Heidelberg, 1985), S. 85-88.

[2] Augustin differenziert zwar in seinen Referaten der einzelnen Lehrmeinungen und auch sonst öfter zwischen einzelnen Platonikern (v.a. wenn seine Wertung positiv ist), fällt dann aber am Schluß sein Verdikt gegen den Platonismus insgesamt.

Gottesvorstellung haben (8, 1) und eben auch über alle anderen Gegner, mit denen sich Augustin in den Büchern 1-7 auseinandergesetzt hat[3],

1.) da sie die *beatitudo* im Jenseits ansetzen (im Unterschied zu den Gegnern in den Büchern 2-5);

2.) da ihre Lehre den ganzen Kosmos umfaßt (im Unterschied zu den Gegnern in den Büchern 6-7);

3.) da ihre Gottesvorstellung 'wahr' ist (im Unterschied zu den übrigen Philosophen).

Nachdem nun also alle anderen heidnischen Kulte und Religionen widerlegt sind und nur noch die Platoniker als Beinahe-Christen übrigbleiben, stellt sich am Anfang von Buch 8 implizit die Frage, ob vielleicht die platonische Lehre den Zugang zur *civitas dei* vermitteln kann. Der entscheidende Unterschied zwischen christlicher und platonischer Lehre wird allerdings bereits zu Beginn der Auseinandersetzung mit den Platonikern deutlich gemacht: Wie die anderen heidnischen Theologien beschränkt sich auch die platonische Theologie nicht auf die Verehrung des *unus incommutabilis deus*, sondern sie ist polytheistisch (8, 1).

Nun habe aber Platon die Meinung vertreten, sagt Augustin, daß alle Götter gut seien (8, 13); daraus schließt er, daß die sogenannten 'schlechten' Götter eben nicht Götter, sondern — gemäß christlichem Sprachgebrauch — Dämonen seien (8, 14; vgl. bereits 4, 17; 5, 9). Augustin setzt sie — und damit folgt er einer konventionellen christlichen Interpretation — mit den gefallenen Engeln gleich und ihren Fürst mit dem *diabolus*; die guten Götter identifiziert er entsprechend mit den heiligen Engeln (8, 22; 8, 24)[4]. Dies bedeutet, daß platonische und christliche Lehre doch dieselben Vorstellungen haben vom einen Gott und den himmlischen und dämonischen Wesen; man spricht — wie Augustin in guter rhetorischer und apologetischer Tradition betont — trotz der verschiedenen Nomenklatur von denselben Dingen bzw. von denselben Wesen und dem *einen* Gott.

Ein Problem bleibt der Umstand, daß die Platoniker dem Kult, den die Menschen den Göttern und Dämonen darbringen, nicht entgegentreten. Kultisch verehrt werden die Dämonen von den Menschen bekanntlich deshalb, weil sie Mittelwesen zwischen Gott und den Menschen sind und man ihnen deswegen eine Mittler-Funktion zwischen Gott und den Menschen zuschreibt. Augustin spricht (nicht nur in *De Civitate Dei*, sondern auch in anderen Schriften) den Dämonen diese Mittler-Fähigkeit jedoch ab: Da die Dämonen Gott feind sind, können sie gar nicht Vermittler sein zwischen ihm und den Menschen (vgl. bes. 8, 22), und da sie unrein sind, können sie die menschliche Seele auch

[3] Vgl. 8, 4, S. 326, 15-18 Dombart-Kalb; 8, 6, S. 329, 23f.; 8, 7, S. 332, 3; 8, 8; 8, 10, S. 335, 31 und S. 336, 8f.

[4] Vgl. 9, 19-23; 10, 16; 10, 26. Dazu vgl. J. Michl, 'Engel IV (christlich)', *RAC* 5 (1962), Sp. 115f.; P.G. Van der Nat, 'Geister (Dämonen): C. III. Apologeten'; *RAC* 9 (1976), Sp. 716.

nicht reinigen und auf die höchste Erkenntnis vorbereiten (9, 18)[5]. Dämonen-Kult, Theurgie und Magie sind also wirkungslos. Die Dämonen *versperren* vielmehr den Weg zur Glückseligkeit, als daß sie ihn weisen (9, 15; 9, 18)[6]. Und auch die guten Götter bzw. Engel verdienen und wollen keinen Kult (8, 25; 9, 23); denn auch sie können nicht Mittler sein zwischen Gott und den Menschen; dies kann einzig Christus, der allein zugleich Gott und Mensch ist (so bereits in 9, 15)[7].

Im Verlauf der Argumentation in den Büchern 8-10 arbeitet Augustin weitere Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen platonischer und christlicher Lehre heraus, von denen drei hier näher ausgeführt werden sollen:

1.) Die Platoniker erstreben als höchstes Ziel, wie die Christen, das *frui deo* bzw., in biblischer Sprache, das *adhaerere deo*[8] und die Erlangung der *superna* oder *caelestis patria* (10, 32). Ihr Ziel ist also nichts anderes als die Gemeinschaft mit den guten Göttern bzw. Engeln in der *civitas dei*[9].

2.) Sie haben die Notwendigkeit eines Mittlers zwischen Gott und den Menschen erkannt, und sie sehen auch, daß die Dämonen den Affekten unterworfen und schlecht sind (8, 13f.; 8, 17; u.ö.). Dementsprechend sind die Platoniker, d.h. zumindest Porphyrios, auch kritisch gegenüber Dämonenkult, Theurgie und Magie und erkennen diesen Praktiken höchstens eine eingeschränkte Wirkung zu (10, 9-11; vgl. 8, 19; 10, 26f.; 10, 28). Sie halten die Menschen nur deshalb nicht davon ab, da sie sich, so sagt Augustin, davor fürchteten, das nicht-philosophische Volk zu verärgern, wenn sie sich offen dagegen aussprechen würden; denn Dämonenglaube, Theurgie und Magie sind ja fest integrierte Elemente der volkstümlichen Religiosität. Weil die Platoniker den Erfolg bei den Massen nicht den weniger körperflüchtigen, materialistischen Lehren überlassen wollten, hätten sie den Leuten diesen Kult belassen (8, 22; 10, 1; 10, 3; 10, 27).

3.) Porphyrios hat gesehen, daß nur der πατρικὸς νοῦς, bzw. der *paternus intellectus* oder die *paterna mens*, die Menschen zum höchsten Ziel und zur höchsten Erkenntnis führen kann (10, 23f.; 10, 28). Nun kommt ja aber gemäß

[5] Dazu G. Rémy, *Le Christ médiateur dans l'œuvre de saint Augustin*, Bd. 1 (Lille/Paris, 1979), S. 236f.

[6] Vgl. auch *vera relig.* 4, 7; *doctr. christ.* 2, 36; *trin.* 4, 12, 15; *serm. Dolbeau* 62, 61 Zz. 1493f.

[7] Dazu Rémy, op. cit. (Anm. 5), S. 275ff.

[8] Nach *psalm.* 72, 28; vgl. z.B. 8, 8, S. 333, 8ff.; 10, 18, S. 431, 20 und 28; vgl. 10, 3, S. 406, 11 und 20; 10, 25, S. 439, 21f. und S. 441, 15; u.ö. Dazu Rémy, op. cit. (Anm. 5), S. 86-91.

[9] Diese Identifikation der platonischen mit der christlichen *patria* berechtigt jedoch nicht zur Gleichsetzung der *civitas terrena* mit dem *mundus sensibilis*, da es sich bei Augustins zwei *civitates* nicht um eine 'gestufte Unterscheidung zweier Staaten nach ihrer Vollkommenheit handelt', wie dies in der platonischen Zwei-Welten-Lehre der Fall ist (gegen C. Parma, 'Plotinische Motive in Augustins Begriff der Civitas Dei', *VChr* 22 (1968), S. 45-48); dazu 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, etc., 1991), S. 247-49 und 252-54.

platonischer Doktrin der göttliche νοῦς selbst nicht mit den Menschen in Berührung (10, 24; 10, 28f.), und demnach müssen sich die Menschen allein um die Erlangung der höchsten Erkenntnis bemühen, was im Diesseits nur einigen wenigen und höchstens für einige kurze Augenblicke gelingen kann (9, 16; 10, 29).

Die Konsequenzen für die nicht-philosophischen Heiden sind klar: Das Ziel können sie aus eigener Kraft nicht erreichen, und da sie von den Platonikern in ihrem Irrglauben an die Mittlerdienste der Dämonen belassen werden, stehen ihre Chancen sogar noch schlechter: Die Dämonen gehören ja wegen ihrer Schlechtigkeit selbst der *civitas diaboli* an, und deshalb verhindern sie nicht nur eine Gemeinschaft mit den guten Engeln in der *civitas dei*, sondern sie und ihr 'Fürst' ziehen die Menschen in ihre Gemeinschaft hinein.

Augustin beschuldigt also die Platoniker, mit ihrer gegen außen vertretenen Dämonenlehre für den Irrtum der Massen verantwortlich zu sein (10, 3 p. 405, 23: sie sind *populorum erroribus auctores*; vgl. 10, 1; 10, 27f.), er beschuldigt sie implizit also auch, die Menschen von der *civitas dei* abzuhalten und an die *civitas diaboli* zu binden. Dieses Vergehen wiegt umso schwerer, als die Platoniker das Ziel ja sehen, aber trotzdem die Menschen auf den falschen Weg führen (10, 27; 10, 32); trotz ihrem Wissen um die Schlechtigkeit der Dämonen haben sie ihre Lehre nicht modifizieren wollen und den Götterkult beibehalten, auch nachdem sich Christus als wahrer Mittler erwiesen hatte (10, 28f. und 32)[10]. Damit haben die Platoniker dazu beigetragen, daß das heidnische Volk von der *civitas dei* ausgeschlossen bleibt[11].

Wenn man nach den ersten 7 Büchern von *De Civitate Dei* den Anfang von Buch 8 liest und wenn man von Augustins Bewunderung für die platonische Lehre weiß und seinem steten Respekt gegenüber den Platonikern, drängt sich manchem Leser wohl die Frage auf: Ob Philosophen wie Platon, Plotin oder Porphyrios, die *nobilissimi* unter den heidnischen Philosophen, die laut Augustin das 'himmlische Vaterland' als Ziel vor sich gesehen und Gott erkannt haben, die die Gotteserkenntnis auch nicht sich selbst, sondern der Erleuchtung durch Gott zugeschrieben haben (10, 2), ja, die sogar von dessen Gnade gesprochen haben (10, 29)[12]: ob es nicht doch möglich wäre, daß vielleicht *sie* der *civitas dei* angehören könnten. Natürlich muß die Frage offen bleiben; denn, wie Augustin sagt, die Aufnahme der Menschen in die *civitas dei* ist letztlich (von Gott) vorbestimmt (vgl. 1, 35). Doch soviel wird aus Augustins Ausführungen klar: die Voraussetzungen sind schlecht für die Platoniker. Auch wenn Augustin ihnen sozusagen 'mildernde Umstände' zugesteht, indem

[10] In *vera relig.* 3-5 gesteht Augustin Platon selbst zu, daß er, wenn er nach Christi Geburt gelebt und von dessen Wirkung auf die Menschheit erfahren hätte, ihn sicherlich als wahren Mittler zwischen Menschen und Gott anerkannt hätte.

[11] Vgl. denselben Vorwurf gegen Porphyrios in *trin.* 4, 12, 15 und 4, 10, 13. Dazu E. TeSelle, 'Porphyry and Augustine', *AugStud* 5 (1974), S. 131-33.

[12] Dazu TeSelle, op. cit. (Anm. 11), S. 141.

er die Vermutung äußert, daß sie selbst Opfer dämonischer Täuschung seien (10, 27)[13], so sind sie doch schuldig, da sie die Menschen wider besseres Wissen nicht vor dem Irrtum des Götter- und Dämonenkults bewahrten.

In den vorangehenden Ausführungen wurde in erster Linie der rationalistische Aspekt von Augustins Argumentation dargestellt, wobei ein anderes Argument gegen die Platoniker in den Hintergrund treten mußte: der Vorwurf des fehlenden Glaubens an die Menschwerdung Gottes und an die Mittlerfunktion Christi. Doch zum einen bringt Augustin selbst dieses Argument nur am Rand vor (der Vorwurf: '*non credunt*' (scil. *Platonici*) wird erst in 10, 10 explizit geäußert), obwohl dieser Punkt für ihn natürlich nicht bedeutungslos ist. Und zum andern steht in dieser Refutatio natürlich die Taktik im Hintergrund, daß er sich als geschickter Rhetor und Apologet ganz bewußt auf die Argumentationsebene seiner Gegner begibt: indem er die Kompatibilität der platonischen und christlichen Lehre betont, kann er genau aufzeigen, *wo* die platonische Lehre versagt, und indem er rationalistisch und pragmatisch argumentiert, versucht er zu erreichen, daß die angesprochenen Gegner *einsehen*, daß nur Christus (als Mensch gewordener Gott) die Menschen zur *civitas dei* führen kann. Da aber die Menschwerdung Gottes letztlich Gegenstand des Glaubens ist, muß er am Ende doch die Tragweite seiner rationalistischen Argumentation einschränken und die Fehler, die er den Platonikern minutiös nachzuweisen versucht, auf ihren fehlenden Glauben zurückführen: *non credunt et ob hoc non intellegunt* (10, 10 S. 460, 18f.).

Nachdem also Augustin gezeigt hat, daß selbst die *nobilissimi* unter den Philosophen, die mit ihrem Verständnis von Gott und dem 'himmlischen Vaterland' der christlichen Lehre sehr nahe kommen, die Menschen nicht zur 'Bürgerschaft Gottes' führen können, ist die Refutatio der heidnischen Religionen bzw. Theologien und Philosophien abgeschlossen. Das Feld ist somit frei für die Darlegung der christlichen Vorstellungen von der Entstehung und der Geschichte der *civitas dei*[14] und vom Weg, der die Menschen dorthin führt.

[13] Vgl. auch *doctr. christ.* 2, 35f.; *conf.* 7, 21, 27; 10, 42, 67; *trin.* 4, 15, 20.

[14] Augustin antwortet damit auch auf die in 10, 32 referierte Aussage des Porphyrios, daß ihm in der 'Geschichte' eine *via universalis salutis* nicht bekannt sei. Dazu B. Studer, 'La Cognitio Historialis di Porfirio nel De Civitate Dei di Agostino (civ. 10, 32)', in *La narrativa cristiana antica* (Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 50; Rom, 1995), S. 529-53, bes. 548ff.

The Glory of Christ's Second Coming in Augustine's *Enarrationes in psalmos*

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Augustine's concept of glory is so rich and multifaceted that it defies distillation into a single sentence. Even when the notion of human glory is separated from that of divine glory, the latter yields various interpretations and nuances, e.g. from the praise or honor given to God by his creatures to the objective preeminence of God's being which accompanies every divine manifestation. When Augustine speaks specifically of Christ's glory, his focus is on the Resurrection and Ascension as the crowning glory of Christ's earthly life. These two events — often presented as one glorification — are rooted first of all in the eternal glory of the Son before the Father which belongs to him before the world was made. They are also rooted in the passion inasmuch as the Resurrection and Ascension are the glorious and semi-public manifestation of Christ's hidden victorious struggle with the powers of death. In all of these 'moments' of Christ's glory, the source from which the glory proceeds is the divine nature, paradoxically both hidden and revealed through the human nature of Christ[1]. There is, however, one more 'event' to consider, in the presentation of which Augustine hints at a decidedly new element in his concept of Christ's glory.

That event is the Second Coming, the final stage for the manifestation of Christ's glory, when the Son of Man will appear in glory coming on the clouds of heaven to judge the living and the dead. The final coming receives considerable attention in the *Enarrationes*, not so much because the subject of judgement is pedagogically very useful to Augustine the pastor — it is that — but more importantly because the *Parousia is the final and definitive revelation of Christ's glory.*

The sense of glory as well as most of the imagery used by Augustine for the Second Coming is drawn from Mt 25:31-46; I quote the first few verses:

> When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left (vv. 31-33)[2].

[1] For a fuller discussion of these matters, see my Ph.D. dissertation at The Catholic University of America: 'The Glory of God in Augustine's *Enarrationes in psalmos*'; available through Dissertation Services; Ann Arbor, 1996.

[2] As for 'when' Christ will come, following Mt 24:36 and Acts 1:7, Augustine was always insistent that 'it is not God's will that humans should ever know when the end is coming'. Brian E. Daley, S.J., *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 134. And see, e.g., *En.* 6.2.

Sometimes Augustine is content merely to repeat the eschatological picture of Christ coming with his angels in glory, gathering all the nations before him, and separating the sheep from the goats (124.8 and cf. 101.I.17)[3]. More often he elaborates on the themes drawing out the implications and expanding on the imagery.

The first theme, of Christ coming in glory, is closely related for Augustine with Christ's glory at the right hand of the Father. In the same flesh with which he rose and ascended into heaven, Christ has taken his seat beside his Father, and has been given a Name which is above every name (cf. Phil 2:9)[4]. This enthronement at the Father's right hand, hidden now (138.25)[5], will be manifest at the Second Coming.

The second theme of the 'throne' calls to mind Augustine's teaching on Christ's kingship over all creation as its Creator (cf. 149.6), and his position of honor as its Redeemer (cf. 95.15). More significantly, the throne symbolizes for Augustine Christ's role as Judge of the living and the dead[6]. As Judge, the luminous glory which proceeds from him makes all that is hidden appear with manifest clarity. Nothing remains hidden from this discerning glory, which is like a sword of light whose cutting edge separates the good from the wicked. This discerning quality of glory is exactly that ascribed to Christ's light and truth in 42.4, again in the context of the last judgement, when the wheat will be separated from the tares.

The reason Augustine sets forth for all judgement being given to the Son of Man (following Jn 5:27) is very interesting: Christ can judge because he has been judged, and because he has suffered (48.I.5). Augustine may be suggesting that through the experience of having been judged wrongly and suffered innocently, the man Christ was thereby most eminently suited to pass judgement on good and evil. But even apart from his own experience of being judged, Christ will judge the whole world because he paid for the whole of it[7]. Redemption has given Christ *as man* a legal right over those redeemed; in turn it obliges them to pay back what he demands (109.3).

[3] All references are to the *Enarrationes in psalmos* unless otherwise stated, the first number referring to the specific commentary (1-150), then to the section (e.g. 124.8). A Roman numeral inserted between the two means that Augustine commented on this psalm more than once or that he broke his commentary into several homilies (e.g. 101.I.17). When the Latin is cited, the line numbers where the reference is located in the *Corpus Christianorum* edition, vol. 38-40, have been included along with the page number in parentheses. For an example, see note 4.

[4] *Donauit*, inquit, *ei nomen quod est super omne nomen*; Christo secundum hominem, Christo secundum carnem mortuo, resurgenti, adscendenti, *donauit nomen quod est super omne nomen* ... 109.7.41-44 (1607).

[5] 'Hidden', in order to foster belief and hope; cf.: Mirabile ergo mysterium Christi sedentis ad dexteram Dei: occultatum est ut crederetur, subtractum est ut sperаretur. 109.8.10-12 (1607).

[6] Qui descendit et adscendit, qui mortuus est et resurrexit, qui hominem assumtum in caelum leuauit, ipse parauit in caelo thronum suum. Thronus sedes est iudicis. 102.26.2-5 (1472).

[7] Nam, *Iudicabit orbem terrarum in aequitate*: non partem, quia non partem emit. Totum iudicare habet, quia pro toto pretium dedit. 95.15.1-3 (1352).

When Christ comes forth from his glorious throne, he will come in the Name of the Father, just as he did in his first coming (cf. Jn 5:43). But the manner of coming between the two advents is vastly different. In his first coming he was considered comparable to other men 'in his humiliation', but no such mistake will be made at his Second Coming. The words which are rightly said of God: 'O God, who is like to you?' (Ps 82:2)[8] will then also fittingly be said of Christ whose unlikeness to other men will be manifest when he comes in glory[9], an 'unlikeness' which will cause sinners to stand in frightful awe (*expauescere*) of him whom they had thought weak (53.4) and despicable (85.21), and will cause them to tremble (113.I.13).

Perhaps the image most frequently associated with the glory of Christ's Parousia is that of 'light'. The Second Coming will be a *clarificatio*, a 'day of clarifying brilliance' (87.13) which will herald in the ineffable day. As already mentioned, this light of glory is likened to a sword which will shine forth as light for the just but as terror for the wicked[10]. Note that the glory of Christ will appear differently to the just and to the unjust. In one commentary, Christ's glory will be a light to the just but fire to the wicked for their punishment[11], in another the mystery of Christ manifested in the flesh will shine for the just but will burn for the unjust[12].

The Glory of the Humanity at the Parousia — implied?

Statements such as the preceding one, indicate that Augustine's use of glory in the Parousia has undergone a slight alteration. In other presentations of Christ's glory the term refers to the divine nature hidden beneath the humanity but which can be discerned by those who have the spiritual eyes to see it. This is the case when Augustine presents Christ working his miracles, or hanging

[8] Numbered according to the LXX, which Augustine follows.

[9] Quid enim magnum dicitur, cum Deo dicitur: *Quis similis erit tibi*, nisi illi dicatur, qui similis esse hominibus uoluit, formam serui accipiens, in similitudine hominum factus, et habitu inuentus ut homo? Et ideo non ait: Quis similis est tibi? quod utique recte diceretur, si hoc ad diuinitatem referretur. Quia uero ad formam serui relatum est, tunc eius a ceteris hominibus dissimilitudo apparebit, quando apparebit in gloria. 82.2.16-23 (1141).

[10] *Nisi conuertimini*, inquit, *gladium suum uibrabit*. Potest ipse homo dominicus gladius Dei intellegi bis acutus, id est framea, quam non uibrauit primo aduentu, sed tamquam in uagina humilitatis abscondit; uibrabit autem cum in secundo aduentu ueniens iudicare uiuos et mortuos, in manifesto splendore claritatis suae, iustis suis lumen, et terrores impiis coruscabit. 7.13.1-7 (45).

[11] ... cum in sua claritate fuerit praesentatus, uelut ignis, ad poenam impiorum lumenque iustorum. 67.3.12-13 (870).

[12] I am presuming that the: 'sacramentum manifestatum est in carne', in the following quotation refers both to what is manifest by day (in this world) and what will be manifested by night (at the day of judgement): *Ipse enim rectos faciet cursus tuos, et itinera tua in pace producet*, per Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum, cuius in hoc saeculo, tamquam in die, sacramentum manifestatum est in carne, uelut in nube; in iudicio uero, tamquam in terrore nocturno, quia tunc erit magna tribulatio saeculi tamquam ignis, et lucebit iustis, et ardebit iniustis. 77.13.10-15 (1078).

on the cross in the beauty of his divine righteousness, or in the splendor of his Resurrection, where his true identity as Son of God is confirmed. The only exception to glory being the manifestation of the divinity may be in Augustine's understanding of the role of the flesh in the passion and its subsequent glorification at the Resurrection. But what is only hinted at in the teaching on the exaltation inherent in these two events is more evident in his treatment of the Parousia. Even here, however, the teaching is not fully explicit, as if Augustine himself were not aware of the full implication of his words.

The new sense of glory is this: the Parousia is not the glorification of God as God or even of Christ as God, but of *Christ as the God-Man come in all the glory of his humanity*. The vision of Christ *as God* will follow upon the judgement only as a reward for those who will be saved. At the Second Coming, on the other hand, the glory of his humanity will shine forth with utmost clarity revealing both his *identity* and his *power*[13].

This new sense of glory emerges from — among others — Augustine's description of how the unjust shall react to Christ's presence. Although he says that they will see Christ in the same 'form in which he was crucified'[14], he yet goes on to observe how they shall tremble and be ashamed before him. Since Christ's compatriots did not tremble at his first coming, something has been added to the vision of Christ at the Parousia. The 'addition' is precisely the vision of Christ *in glory*. No longer will he be seen *in his weakness* but rather *in his power*. Augustine does draw attention to this difference as, for example, in the passage quoted above in which he emphasizes that Christ's *unlikeness* to other men in his humanity — characterized by the words: 'Who is like to you?' — will be apparent at his coming in glory. But he does not go on to take this into account with a theology of the glorified humanity of Christ. If anything, he confuses the issue by analyzing only two visions of Christ, the vision of his humanity and that of his divinity, without further differentiating between the visual perception of Jesus of Nazareth and the vision of the glorified Christ of the Parousia[15]. In fact

[13] William S. Babcock has also noted the difference in Augustine's description of Christ at the two comings, e.g.: (at the final judgement, it will be) 'quite impossible to mistake the identity and significance of this man'. *The Christ of the Exchange: A Study in the Christology of Augustine's 'Enarrationes in psalmos'* (UMI Dissertation Services; Ann Arbor, 1994), p. 203.

[14] Cf.: Veniet Dominus Deus noster, primo formam ipsam in qua crucifixus est et resurrexit. 129.10.16-18 (1896). Although Augustine also refers to the resurrection here, his purpose is not to distinguish the different states of Christ's body but merely to show the identity between the humanity of Christ which could be seen on earth before the Ascension and that which will return at the end of the ages.

[15] Note for instance the distinction in 109.12 where Augustine aligns two texts to show that the vision of Christ as man is very different from the vision of Christ as God. The two texts are: 'They shall look upon me, whom they have pierced' (Zach 12:10), and: 'Let the ungodly be rooted out, that he may not behold the glory of the Lord' (Is 26:10). In the final judgement, he says, all shall see him as man in the form in which he was pierced, but only the just shall see his glory, i.e. his very essence as God. Since the unjust are also seeing him in a way not taken into account by this distinction, i.e. seeing him as man *in glory*, the distinction is incomplete and

he presents them differently, but he fails to draw the appropriate theological inferences, at least in the *Enarrationes*[16]. Nevertheless, his presentation of Christ coming in glory[17] has laid the foundation for a theology of the glorified humanity. Such a theology would state the glory of the God-Man Christ, which is partly manifested at the Resurrection and Ascension, is fully manifested at the Parousia[18]. *This final glory belongs as much to the humanity as it does to the divinity*. Because of the role of the humanity in redemption, it has won the glorious honor of sitting at the Father's right hand and of shining forth its own glory at the Parousia. Because the victory was won in his very flesh, that flesh now partakes of his victorious glory. Christ has won for himself a 'Name made illustrious through the weakness of the cross'[19]. Thus the humanity is no longer a mere instrument[20] of the glory of God lying beneath it, nor does it

somewhat confusing. The difficulty lies in the fact that Augustine has to take account of — and try to harmonize — two different and difficult texts.

[16] The presentation of the humanity of Christ vis-à-vis his glory in the *Tractates on John* complements what he says of it in the *Enarrationes*. He explicitly mentions there the glorification of the humanity, which he sees rooted in the predestination of Christ and realized at the Resurrection and Ascension (*Tract.* 105.7-8 and cf. 63.3). As in the *Enarrationes*, the link between the exaltation of Christ in the Resurrection and the humility of Christ in the passion is also explicitly made (*Tract.* 104.3). He is, however, both more adamant that glory begins with the exaltation of the Resurrection (and not with the passion), and at the same time more forthright in admitting the possibility of glory in the passion: 'Some take it that the Son has been glorified by the Father in this: that he did not spare him, but handed him over for the sake of us all. But if he is said to have been glorified by the passion, how much more by the Resurrection?' (Clarificatum a Patre Filium nonnulli accipiunt, in hoc quod ei non pepercit, sed pro nobis omnibus tradidit eum. Sed si passione clarificatus dicitur, quanto magis resurrectione? *Tract* 104.3.1-4 (602)). Again Augustine recoils in *Tract.* 63.2.9-16 from ascribing a kind of glory to humiliation, seemingly because the two concepts appear irreconcilable to him; nevertheless, he is again willing to admit that *if* the passion is being signified by Christ's words in John 7:39 ('the Spirit had not yet been given since Jesus had not yet been glorified'), then this sense of glory is a 'mirum'. He prefers to see the glorification as a *consequence* of the passion as, for example, in *Tract.* 63.3, where the humanity of Christ is presented as having merited to be glorified because of its obedience. An example from the *Enarrationes* would be 126.5.

[17] 'He (Christ) will appear as man judging but in glory'. (Apparebit enim homo iudicans, sed in claritate. 85.21.9-10 (1193)).

[18] Babcock has noted that in some sense, as manifest as Christ will be at the Second Coming, there will also be an element of 'occultus' because the divinity will not be manifest in essence, but only as belonging to Christ: 'Despite the contrast between *occultus* and *manifestus*, Christ's return as judge does not mean that he will be seen as God but rather that his humanity will be seen as the humanity of God'. *Ibid.*, p. 207.

[19] Venit ergo ut moreretur ex infirmitate, uenturus est ut iudicet in uirtute Dei; sed per infirmitatem crucis clarificatum est nomen eius. 53.4.18-20 (650).

[20] To my knowledge, Augustine does not use the word 'instrumentum' for Christ's humanity, perhaps because the word connotes a too-passive cooperation on the part of the humanity for him. If one distinguishes, however, between an active and a passive instrumentality, and applies the former to the humanity, it seems a legitimate use of the term (confirmed by Aquinas' acceptance of it, see *Summa Theologica* III, Q.18 A.1, Reply Obj. 2), and one which accords with Augustine's understanding of the use made of the humanity by the Person of the Word. Babcock utilizes the term liberally, *ibid.*, e.g., p. 338.

merely share in the glory of the eternal Son because the two natures are inseparably joined in the one Person, rather the human nature shines with a glory preeminently its own[21]. This seems also to be implied when Augustine is insistent that Christ coming in his glory comes in the form in which he was crucified. His first purpose is to point out that the same Man who was thought to be weak will come back triumphant. But I believe that he also intends to convey that the very glory of the passion, the hidden glory of a conquering hero, will be mightily displayed within the human form of Christ for all to see, for their salvation or damnation.

As I have noted, the sense of glory which emerges from Augustine's description of the Second Coming of Christ contains several elements. For one, the glory acts like a discerning light, exposing everything before it with clarifying intensity, and in the process revealing an individual's position among the sheep or the goats. But this aspect of glory is secondary to the real manifestation, which is not that of the beholders but of Him who is being beheld. Christ's glory at the Second Coming is primarily the manifestation of his identity, not simply as God, but specifically as the God-Man, who having sown the seed of his blood in the earth has now returned to collect the harvest[22]. The *power*, then, which Augustine identifies with the glory of the Parousia is specifically the mighty and compelling *truth* of Christ's identity: the intimate unity of the God-Man come in all his glory.

[21] Ultimately, the glory of the humanity of Christ must necessarily be Augustine's basis for the glory of the whole Body of Christ, the *Totus Christus*.

[22] For the concept of Christ as the seed which dies and bears much fruit, see 103.III.26; for the final judgement described as a harvest (cf. Mt 13:29), see 42.4.

Marriage and Monasticism in St. Augustine: The bond of friendship

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'There is nothing so social by nature and so discordant by its perversion as the (human) race' (*City of God* XII, 28, 1).

In *City of God* XIX (13) Augustine describes the ideal form of human society as, 'a perfectly ordered and perfectly harmonious fellowship in the enjoyment of God and mutual fellowship in God'. In paradise, in this life and in the resurrected life, man, for Augustine, is a social being, intended to create, foster and maintain life in society. His understanding of the nature of this society changes as his experience and theological reflection evolve.

In *Confessions* VIII Augustine presents the final stage of his conversion as a choice between two different social identities: either celibacy or marriage. At this stage nothing less than celibacy would do — only one distinctive form of life would meet the high calling of Christianity — he must renounce his arranged marriage, his temporary mistress, and henceforth embrace celibacy as a life-long companion.

Why are marriage and celibacy so sharply contrasted here? The answer to this question depends on when one asks it: at the moment of his conversion Augustine's unequivocal choice of celibacy is probably due to philosophical influences, to Manichaean ideals, to the strong emphasis on asceticism in fourth century Christianity and its correspondingly low estimate of marriage as a direct result of the fall. But viewed retrospectively, in the light of his later theology, the picture is a rather different one: though the celibate life will always be given a higher place by Augustine, the contrast with the married life will become less antithetic, to the point where the two can be seen as two different social identities which are yet characterised by the same ideals, the same goals and the same temporal ambiguities. In this paper I would like to examine one aspect of this evolution by examining Augustine's ideas on friendship[1].

It has justly been observed that Augustine never seems to be alone; he is always in the company of family, friends or a community. His character was a gregarious one and he evidently needed someone to share his thoughts, with

[1] I am very much indebted to the excellent chapter on Augustine in Carolinne White's book, *Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century* (Cambridge, 1992).

whom he could discuss and debate[2]. That he valued these friendships highly is more than evident[3], and that he reflected upon the familiar classical ideals of friendship to reshape them in a Christian mould is unsurprising but also revealing of his thought on life in society — both married and celibate. He finds nothing to disagree with in Cicero who can in fact be seen as the source of many of his descriptions of the married or monastic life: friendship is 'an agreement on all things human and divine with goodwill and love' (*Laelius* 6,20), Cicero comments in the *Laelius de amicitia*, 'so that many should, as it were, become one soul' (*Laelius* 25,92)[4]. But Augustine adds that the source of such friendship lies in God's grace[5]; that unity in the body of Christ provides the solidest base for friendship[6], and love of God in one's friend is the best way to love him properly[7] — this is the meaning of the double commandment to love God and neighbour: God is to be loved above all else; one's neighbour is to be loved in and for him[8]. He describes such friendship as a natural good, like health, which is essential to human existence and any form of human relationship[9]. It was through friendship, or friendly benevolence (*amicalis benevolentia*), that Adam fell in not abandoning Eve[10].

When Augustine turns to defend Christian marriage in 401, in *On the Good of Marriage*, he attempts to strike a middle way between Jerome and his out-right denigration of marriage on the one side, and Jovinian, who put marriage on a par with virginity, on the other, by acknowledging that although virginity is better, marriage is good: the three 'goods' of marriage he describes as progeny (*proles*), fidelity (*fides*), and the sacrament (*sacramentum*)[11]. In respect of each of these goods in this treatise marriage is above all treated as a relationship which is founded upon, informed by and which finds its ideal realisation in the friendship of the partners. At the very beginning of the treatise Augustine writes, 'Since every person is part of the human race and human nature is something social and has in itself the power of friendship as a great good, God willed for this reason to create all humans from one person, so that they might be held fast in their society not only by likeness of descent, but also by the

[2] Eg. *conf.* 4,18,13; *ep.* 130,4, to Proba; *ep.* 258.

[3] Eg. his account of the death of his friend in *conf.* 4,6,11.

[4] Friends who share the same interests and wishes love each other as much as they love themselves (*De officiis* 1,17,56).

[5] *Conf.* 4,4,7.

[6] *Div. qu.* 71.6-7; *ep.* 208; 142,1.

[7] *s.* 336,2,2; *conf.* 4,9,14.

[8] See the rather convoluted and ultimately rather inconclusive discussion of this in *doctr. chr.* I.

[9] *s. Denis* 16,1; *f. inuis.* 2,4 - cited by T.J. Van Bavel 'Augustine's View on Women', *Augustiniana* 39 (1989), p. 48.

[10] *Gn. litt.* XI,42,59.

[11] *b. coniug.* 24,32. Cf 4,3; 4,4; 7,6; *Gn. litt.* 9,7. See E. Schmitt *Le mariage chrétien dans l'œuvre de Saint Augustin* (Paris, 1983), pp. 232-233 for a list of texts referring to the three goods, in chronological order.

bond of relationship. Thus the first tie of natural human society (or fellowship — *societas*) is husband and wife'[12]. He goes on to describe the married couple as those who are 'joined one to another side by side, who walk together, and look together where they walk'[13]. For Roman citizens, the ideal of *concordia* represented their highest expectation of marriage — that the partners should live in harmony and unity, holding all things in common: this constituted the basis for harmony and unity in the city and beyond that, in the state[14]. In *On the Good of Marriage* Augustine takes over, and christianises these ideas, describing *fides* as a *concordia religiosa*[15], and referring to Acts 4,32 — a text which will also be determinative in his description of the common monastic life — he suggests that the union of man and wife in marriage, with one heart and one mind towards God, signifies the unity of the heavenly city[16].

It is significantly in this context that Augustine places the sexual aspect of marriage — the good of *proles* or procreation — not as a result of the fall, but as part of the 'friendly fellowship' of marriage[17]. This foreshadows his later treatment of the question in Book IX of his *Literal Commentary on Genesis* of 410, which was probably also to some extent directed against Jovinian and others who saw in the attitude of extreme ascetics such as Jerome the marks of Manichaeism. Here, almost alone among the Fathers (with the exception of Ambrosiaster), he maintains that Adam and Eve were a married couple and would have had children by sexual intercourse *before the fall*. Thus procreation, like marriage, is part of man's original and intended state; he is intended to live in fellowship, to found a society[18]. Of course, after the fall, concupisence destroys the untroubled control of the will and fundamentally undermines and

[12] 1,1. Cf *ciu.* XII,22 and 28.

[13] Ibid. There are numerous passages which refer to the mutual affection of the partners and friendship as the basis for this affection - see Schmidt, op. cit., pp. 280-281 for a list of these. He observes that 'L'amour dont Augustin se fait ici l'avocat est une intimité profonde entre deux âmes, pure de toute recherche égoiste et passionnelle, une sorte de chasteté du cœur, condition même de toute véritable chasteté du corps', p. 181.

[14] Eg. Ulpian *On Duties* 1,17,54 'The origin of society is in the joining (coniugium) of man and woman, next in children, then in the household (una domus) all things held in common; this is the foundation (principium) of the city and, so to speak, the seed-bed of the state (seminarium rei publicae)' (Quoted by B.D. Shaw 'The Family in Late Antiquity: The Experience of Augustine', *Past and Present* 115 (1987) p. 11, who notes that these ideas are deeply Stoic in tone).

[15] 13,15.

[16] 18,21.

[17] 9,9. Cf *s.* 9,6,7 'For the first thing a baby sees when opening its eyes, are its parents, and life begins with their friendship'. See J. Doignon 'Une définition de l'amour conjugal édenique chez Augustin: piae caritatis adfectus (Gen. ad litt. 3,21,33)', *Vetera Christianorum* 19 (1982), pp. 25-36, for a discussion of *Gn. litt.* III,21,33, where Augustine gives a spiritual interpretation of procreation in Paradise in terms of the love and friendship which pertained between Adam and Eve, and of Augustine's reliance on classical ideals of friendship in this context.

[18] Cf. *b. coniug.* 24,32; *mor.* II,18,65; *nupt. et conc.* I,4,5; *adult. coniug.* II,12,12.

vitiates the married relationship — which to a large extent explains Augustine's preference for chastity — but it by no means destroys it or its ultimate value[19].

Indeed the sexual aspect of marriage was by no means definitive of it for Augustine[20]. This is evident in what he has to say about the third 'good' of marriage — the sacramental aspect. He maintains that there is an enduring 'quiddam coniugale', an enduring marital 'thing' which survives its breakdown, just as there is a 'sacramentum fidei' of baptism which survives apostasy[21] and describes it as a smaller but identical sacrament to the great sacrament of union which is between Christ and his Church[22]. So, even in a case of sterility in one of the partners, the marriage cannot, as in Roman law, be dissolved[23]. There is, as he puts it, a 'natural society (*societas*) itself in a difference of sex'[24] which is independent of procreation, or the age of the partners. Against Julian, who argued that there can be no marriage without intercourse[25], Augustine cites the example of the old and infirm, observing that one becomes the friend and companion of one's spouse to the extent that sexual desire no longer intrudes[26]: they are bound not 'by the voluptuous ties of their bodies but by the voluntary affections of their minds'[27]. He develops these views most especially in relation to Mary and Joseph, who were married even though there was no sexual relation between the partners. They are called husband and wife because, as he puts it, 'intercourse of the mind is more intimate than that of the body'[28].

Augustine's understanding of the celibate life evolved along much the same lines as his reflection on marriage: from the proposed, but never realised community of friends at Thagaste (386 – *Conf.* 6,14,24), to the Christian reading party-cum-philosophical retreat of Cassiciacum (386), through the common life of the lay *servi Dei* at Thagaste (388) to the lay and then clerical monastery

[19] Indeed, in one text, (which is unfortunately rather difficult to date), Augustine distinguishes between the concupiscence which is an inevitable result of the fall — *concupiscentia carnis* — and the concupiscence, or desire, which is present in marriage — *concupiscentia nuptiarum*, which includes desire for conjugal chastity, the desire to have children, and desire for a common life (*concupiscentiam vinculi socialis*) *ep.* 6*,5 (*BA* 46B). It probably dates to c. 420-421. Augustine does concede, in other places, that there may have been libido in Paradise, but of a different sort to what we now know, eg. *c. ep. pel.* I,34 (i.e. against the Pelagians, here, rather than the Manichees).

[20] Indeed, he maintains that it is no longer necessary, the number of saints having been made up - see Schmidt, op. cit. p. 266, note 38.

[21] *Nupt. et conc.* I,11.

[22] *Ibid.* I,23; 31-32.

[23] *b. coniug.* 7,7; 21.

[24] Ibid. 3,3.

[25] *c. Jul.* V,16,62 'Julian has given a bad definition of marriage, because the essence of marriage is not identical with sexual intercourse'. Jerome also thought that there could be no true marriage without sexual relations (*Adv. Helv.* 19).

[26] *c. Jul.* V,12.

[27] *Nupt. et conc.* 1.12.

[28] *c. Faust.* XXIII,8 - quoted by E.A. Clark in 'Adam's Only Companion. Augustine and the Early Christian debate on Marriage', *Recherches Augustiniennes* 21 (1986) pp. 139-162, who also refers to *cons. eu.* II,1,2-3; *s.* 51,13,21.

at Hippo (391; 395/6), his idea of the celibate life was of one lived in community, with friends, or later, with individuals who sought a common life: to be, again in the words of Acts 4, 32, 'of one heart and mind' in loving fellowship and by sharing of goods[29]. It is as if he sought a temporal alternative to the now vitiated ideal of the married, social life of paradise, in monastic life in the world, which he saw as the closest approximation to it man could now achieve — hence his frequent use of familial and even sexual imagery to describe the celibate life[30]. This suggestion is borne out in reading Augustine's *Rule* (397), written soon after he became Bishop of Hippo. Its primary concern is not so much with asceticism, the attainment of holiness or perfection, as in the East, as with the social aspect of life lived in common and the moral, ethical aspects of such a life. His ideal of the monastic life, like that of marriage, is of one characterised by *caritas*[31], by unity and *concordia*, which makes it the basis of harmonious life in the church, and thereby of God's heavenly city (*en. Ps.* 105,34), His *res publica* (*op. mon.* 25,32). In the *Rule*, Augustine states 'The main purpose of your having come together is to live harmoniously in your house, intent upon God in oneness of mind and heart' (*reg.* 1,2). Echoing again what we have already discovered of his teaching on marriage he writes in his famous description of the monk in the *Enarrationes in Psalmos* (132,6), 'Those who live in unity in such a way that they form but one person are rightly called "monos", one single person. They make true to life what is written, "of one mind and one heart" (Acts 4,32), that is, many bodies but not many minds, many bodies but not many hearts'.

The bond of unity, the oneness of mind and heart, which pertains between a married couple and the members of a monastic community, is founded, above all, for Augustine, in the bond of friendship. These ideas are increasingly emphasised in Augustine's thought, as R.A. Markus has made clear[32], when from c. 400 onwards, he began to define sin not so much in terms of a breach of right order as in social categories, in terms of sin against the community in self-referential pride and self-seeking, turning away from the common good to one's own private good[33]. It is sin as a failure of the love, fellowship and friendship which lies at the heart of human society and which defines it in relation to God — hence the pivotal emphasis upon oneness, harmony and love in his treatment of married life and of monasticism. Commenting on I Cor. 13,5, that love 'is not self seeking' Augustine urges the monks not to seek their own advantage but to be motivated by love of one another and work in the interests of

[29] This text was definitive of Augustine's understanding of the monastic life - see L. Verheijen, *Saint Augustine's Monasticism in the Light of Acts 4,32-35* (Villanova, 1979).

[30] *b. coniug.* 21; 55; *virg.* 2; 11; 48; 55.

[31] The literature on this is abundant - see eg. A. Zumkeller, *Augustine's Ideal of the Monastic Life* (New York, 1986), p. 153f.

[32] *Sacred and Secular* (Aldershot, 1994), '*De ciuitate dei*: Pride and the common good', III.

[33] See *Gn. litt.* 11,15,20 quoted by Markus, ibid., p. 256.

the community (*reg.* 5,2); they should serve one another without grumbling (5,9); refrain from quarrelling (6,1); be ready to apologise (6,2) ... — all to preserve the harmony which lies in mutual love and service in Christ — in other words, in friendship.

As one might infer from this brief reference to the Rule and its injunctions for selfless action, the monastic life in Augustine's experience often fell far short of the ideal of unity and harmony to which it aspired, and failures of love, in instances of proud, selfish actions, seemed to be inherent in any attempt to live in community[34]. The choice that faced Augustine at conversion between marriage and celibacy was therefore by no means as clear cut as it at first seemed: it was not one between perfection and failure — it was, as he puts it, one between that which is good and that which is better. The monastic life, into which his celibate vocation inevitably developed was not, as it often seems in Patristic writings, that of an elite, in contrast to the silent majority of married couples. Both modes of living in society were, for Augustine, characterised by the unavoidable ambiguity of Christian life in the world inherent in man's fallenness — just as there was no room for spiritual elitism in the monastery, so also in the home — both are states of friendship, fellowship and love striving for unity and concord, but which cannot, in this life, be immune from the failures of love, the self-interest and concupiscence symptomatic of man's fallenness. Both, to some extent, anticipate the perfect community of unity, mutual love and friendship which will be the heavenly city, but neither can realise it in its fullness here[35]. Married life, in its pre-fallen state, was indeed the ideal; celibacy, or monasticism, he believed was the best form the ideals embodied in the paradisal married-relationship could take in this life. But the married state, post-fall, is not antithetical to it. As a relationship of friendship, fellowship and unity, with sexual relations subordinated to procreation, marriage therefore seems to be a viable alternative to monasticism which perhaps deserved greater prominence even in Augustine, than it received. The reasons why it did not would be the subject of another paper.

[34] See *en. Ps. 99* for Augustine's shrewd awareness of this. Also, s. 355 and 356 for specific cases. He can therefore comment: 'It is better to be married and humble than celibate and proud' (*s. virg.* 51,52).

[35] See R.A. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, 1992), Chapter 11, where these ideas are considered and Augustine is contrasted with Cassian in this respect.

Styles of Clerical Address in the Letters of Augustine

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The rhetorical conventions of late antique Latin Christianity called for styles of epistolary address that are bound to appear to us as overly formal, florid, and effusive. A modern cleric of whatever Christian denomination is likely to feel somewhat pretentious when addressing a colleague even as 'reverend and dear sir (or madam)', but Augustine and his contemporaries went far beyond such relatively tame forms of clerical salutation. As any reader of their letters is immediately made aware, styles of clerical address operated as a widespread and highly developed code language which late antique Christian clerics used with precision to flatter, cajole, befriend, reprimand, and mock one another, as the situation demanded[1].

For example, Augustine's *Epistula* 149 to Paulinus of Nola, written in the year 414, is addressed to 'his most blessed, venerably esteemed and estimably venerable, holy and religiously cherished brother and fellow bishop, Paulinus'. Then Augustine refers to two other clerics whom he styles as 'our brother and fellow presbyter, Quintus' and 'our son and fellow deacon, Rufinus'[2]. Note especially Augustine's use of the terms *coepiscopus*, *conpresbyter*, and *condiaconus*. It is my contention that these forms consisting of the prefix *con-* plus the name of an order of ordained clergy are characteristically Augustinian, and that when properly understood they yield some valuable insights into his theology of ministry.

Admittedly, Augustine was not the only, or even the first, Christian cleric writing in Latin to use such forms of clerical address. A search via CD-Rom of the CETEDOC patristic corpus yields 453 occurrences of *coepiscopus*, 170 occurrences of the related term *consacerdos* (beginning with single instances in the writings of Tertullian and Cyprian), 60 occurrences of *com-* or *conpresbyter*, and 14 occurrences of *condiaconus*[3]. Most of these occurrences appear in letters, either in the opening salutation or in reference to a third party, but some are in canons of church councils, dogmatic treatises, or other literary genres. Behind this usage lie many examples of comparable patristic Greek

[1] See Sister Mary Bridget O'Brien, *Titles of Address in Christian Latin Epistolography to 543 A.D.* (Washington, D.C., 1930), and Ernst Jerg, *Vir Venerabilis: Untersuchungen zur Titulatur der Bischöfe in den ausserkirchlichen Texten der Spätantike als Beitrag zur Deutung ihrer öffentlichen Stellung* (Vienna, 1970).

[2] Augustine, *Ep.* 149, ed. A. Goldbacher (CSEL 44:348).

[3] CETEDOC Library of Christian Latin Texts: CLCLT-2 (Turnhout, 1994).

forms beginning with συμ, as well as Latin versions of 1 Pet. 5:1 where the Vulgate uses *consenior* but at least one Old Latin version read *conpresbyter*[4]. We should also recall the widespread use of such familiar classical forms as *conservus* ('fellow servant') and *commilito* ('fellow soldier')[5].

A remarkable feature of this body of data, however, is that 27% of the total number of Latin patristic occurrences of the four forms in question here appears in the writings of Augustine, most frequently in his letters. When we look at the two forms *con(m)presbyter* and *condiaconus*, in which the reference is to a member of the lower clergy, the results are even more striking: Augustine provides 39 out of 60 (or 65%) of the examples of *con(m)presbyter* and 12 out of 14 (or 86%) of the examples of *condiaconus*. Clearly, these particular styles of clerical address were characteristic of Augustine, even distinctively so.

How should these terms be understood in the context of Augustine's letters to his clerical colleagues[6]? *Coepiscopus* is rather straightforward, since as bishop of Hippo Augustine used it to refer to another bishop, or in the plural to several other bishops. *Consacerdos* in Augustine's writings was virtually a synonymous term, like *coepiscopus* consistently applied by him to another bishop — although in later periods it was often employed with reference to the priestly ministry of a presbyter[7]. *Conpresbyter* and *condiaconus* were used by Augustine in addressing the lower clergy in those orders, whether belonging to his own diocese or to other dioceses, both nearby and far away.

All four of these terms suggest that Augustine was thinking of his clerical correspondents as his close partners and comrades in the church's ordained ministry. Note, however, that they did not necessarily imply that writer and recipient occupied the same ecclesiastical rank. Augustine was a bishop, and for a short time he had been a presbyter, but we know that he himself was never a deacon, having been ordained to the presbyterate *per saltum* in accordance with late fourth-century custom[8]. Nor should we imagine that Augustine would have thought of himself as containing all the other orders of ministry within himself by virtue of his episcopate. It is true, of course, that as early as the fourth century the various orders of clergy had come to be thought of as a *cursus honorum*, analogous to secular dignities and arranged hierarchically as steps

[4] *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ed. G.W.H. Lampe (Oxford, 1961), s.v. συμέπίσκοπος, συνίερεύς, συμπρεσβύτερος, and συνδιάκονος; *Bibliorum sacrorum latinae versiones antiquae seu vetus italica*, ed. P. Sabatier (Remis, 1743; reprinted Turnhout, 1981), vol. 3, p. 955.

[5] *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, ed. P.G.W. Glare (Oxford, 1982), s.v. Note that *conservus* appears in the Vulgate at Mt. 18:28-33 and 24:49; Col. 1:7; and Rev. 6:11, 19:10, and 22:9, as does *commilito* at Phil. 2:25 and Philem. 1:2.

[6] For the prosopography of Augustine's correspondents, see Frank Morgenstern, *Die Briefpartner des Augustinus von Hippo: Prosopographische, sozial- und ideologie-geschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Bochum, 1993).

[7] Albert Blaise, *Dictionnaire latin-français des auteurs du moyen-age* (Turnhout, 1975), s.v. *consacerdos*.

[8] Possidius, *Vita S. Augustini episcopi* 4 (PL 32:36-37).

on a ladder, rather than understood organically, in pre-Nicene fashion, as interdependent and equally respectable roles; nevertheless, the subsuming of presbyterate and diaconate within the person of the bishop was a somewhat later development which first arose only in the early middle ages[9].

In Augustine's letters, the primary connotation of these forms of clerical address is not so much hierarchial and bureaucratic as it is familial and intimate. Although in half of the cases these forms appear in conjunction with the honorific *dominus*, we find them associated even more often, and always more closely, with the terms of masculine relations within the family. For example, when Augustine was writing to another bishop, or referring to a bishop in the third person, he usually employed fraternal language. In 38 out of 57 instances of *coepiscopus* in the letters, and in 26 of the 28 instances of *consacerdos*, these terms are joined with some form of the word *frater*. Only twice did Augustine speak of a bishop as both *consacerdos* and *pater*, and in both cases he was addressing the primate of his own province of Numidia[10].

When he called someone his *conpresbyter*, Augustine also frequently joined this term to the word *frater*, no less than 24 times out of 30. Not once does he refer to a *conpresbyter* as his father or his son, but on two occasions when writing to another bishop he referred to a presbyter of that bishop's diocese as both 'our fellow presbyter' and 'your son'[11]. By contrast, a *condiaconus* is most often addressed by Augustine as 'my son', though the powerful Roman deacon Celestine (later to be elected pope) is called 'my brother', as are the Carthaginian deacons Quodvultdeus and Restitutus[12].

Augustine was well aware of the nuances provided by the interplay of familial language with the language of clerical orders, as is evident when he writes to Jerome that the priest Orosius had come to him, 'in peace, a brother; in age, a son; in dignity, a *conpresbyter*'[13]. When he rang the changes of bishop, presbyter, and deacon, or of father, brother, and son, Augustine was acknowledging and at the same time confirming intricate patterns of ecclesiastical relationship which involved varying degrees of power, authority, dependence, and mutual respect.

How, then, should these terms best be translated in order to capture the proper effect? The most recent English translations of Augustine's letters generally

[9] Gregory Dix, 'The Ministry in the Early Church c. A.D. 90-410', in *The Apostolic Ministry: Essays on the History and the Doctrine of Episcopacy*, ed. Kenneth E. Kirk (London, 1946), p. 284; Alexander Faivre, *Naissance d'une hiérarchie: les premières étapes du cursus clérical* (Paris, 1977); John St. H. Gibaut, 'Sequential Ordination in Historical Perspective: A Response to J. Robert Wright', *Anglican Theological Review* 77 (1995), pp. 367-391.

[10] *Ep.* 59 (CSEL 34.2:219), to Victorinus; *Ep.* 65 (CSEL 34.2:232), to Xanthippus.

[11] *Ep.* 176.4 (CSEL 44:667), of Jerome, to Pope Innocent; *Ep.* 197.1 (CSEL 57:231), of Cornutus, to Hesychius.

[12] *Ep.* 192 (CSEL 57:165), to Celestine; *Ep.* 224 (CSEL 57:451), to Quodvultdeus; *Ep.* 249 (CSEL 57:592), to Restitutus.

[13] *Ep.* 166.2 (CSEL 44:547).

render the prefix *con-* as 'fellow', so that we find *condiaconus* as 'fellow deacon', *conpresbyter* as 'fellow priest', and *coepiscopus* as 'fellow bishop'[14]. The problem here is that such translations might be taken to imply that both parties have the same ecclesiastical status, which we have seen not to be the case. Perhaps it would be useful to see how these terms are handled by translators working in some other languages. The Spanish translation preserves the prefix *con-* intact, which would be neither meaningful nor desirable in English[15]. However, both the French and the Italian translations offer us an attractive alternative which in English could be rendered as 'colleague in the episcopate', 'colleague in the priesthood', 'colleague in the presbyterate', and 'colleague in the diaconate'[16]. In the interest of even greater clarity, we might follow the example of the Italian translator who rendered *condiaconus* in *Epistula* 110 by a felicitous paraphrase that well illuminates the sense of the term: *collega di ministero, il diacono Timoteo*[17].

In conclusion, what do these styles of clerical address tell us about Augustine's theology of ministry? His predilection for these terms, and especially for those related to the lower orders, is consistent with his emphasis on the communal character of diocesan clergy. Remember that Augustine was one of the first bishops in the West to require all his clergy to live together in the bishop's own household under a monastic rule that stressed unity of heart and soul in imitation of the apostolic community at Jerusalem[18]. For Augustine, the ideal cleric (like the ideal monk) was a member of a closely-knit group of friends sharing a common life in Christ. To be a bishop, presbyter, or deacon was to belong to a ministering community, a college of clerics distinct from one another in function and rank but joined together by mutual affection for a single

[14] See *Saint Augustine: Letters* in the Fathers of the Church series, vols. 12, 18, 20, 30, 32, and 81 (New York and Washington, D.C., 1951-1989). In the first five vols., Sister Wilfred Parsons translated *coepiscopus*, *consacerdos*, and *conpresbyter* all alike as 'fellow priest', but this confusing practice has been remedied somewhat by Robert Eno in the sixth volume, where he translates the first two of these terms as 'fellow bishop'. We should not, however, accept Eno's suggestion (FC 81:33, n. 2) that in *Ep.* 3* Augustine could be using *condiaconus* in a less precise sense as 'fellow servant'. There is no evidence for this usage in Augustine's writings, or elsewhere in Latin patristic literature.

[15] *Obras de San Augustin*, ed. prep. for L. Cilleruelo, vols. 8 and 11 (Madrid, 1951-1953).

[16] *Lettres de Saint Augustin*, trans. M. Poujoulat, 4 vols. (Paris, 1858); *Œuvres de Saint Augustin: Lettres 1*-29**, ed. J. Divjak (Paris, 1987); *Opere di Sant'Agostino: Le lettere*, ed. L. Carrozzi (3 vols., Rome, 1969-1974). Similarly, J.G. Cunningham's English translation of selected letters of Augustine, first published in *The Works of Aurelius Augustine*, ed. Marcus Dods, vols. 6 and 13 (Edinburgh, 1872-1875) and partially reprinted in NPNF, ser. 1, vol. 1, pp. 209-593, often renders *consacerdos* and *conpresbyter* as 'partner in the priestly office' and *coepiscopus* as 'colleague'.

[17] *Opere di Sant'Agostino: Le lettere*, ed. L. Carrozzi (Rome, 1969), vol. 1, p. 1089.

[18] F. Van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop: The Life and Work of a Father of the Church*, trans. Brian Battershaw and G.R. Lamb (London and New York, 1961), pp. 199-206; and George Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo and His Monastic Rule* (Oxford, 1987).

purpose. Thus in one of his sermons Augustine could refer to his entire episcopal household in a single breath when he named them as 'all my brothers and *conclericos*, those who live with me, the presbyters, deacons, subdeacons, and my nephew Patricius'[19].

Some years ago, H.E.J. Cowdrey remarked that Augustine's teaching about holy orders was 'most inconspicuously presented and very incompletely argued'[20]. Cowdrey was referring to Augustine's doctrine of priestly character as developed in opposition to the Donatists, but the same thing is true of his conception of clerical collegiality. For his teaching on this subject we must look to the pattern of his own episcopal ministry at Hippo, to his sermons on various matters of clerical discipline, to the monastic rule that governed his 'monastery of clerics', and also to his letters[21]. Within those letters, particular attention should be paid to the various styles of address with which Augustine constructed a web of clerical relationships connected by bonds of affection, deference, and mutual respect.

[19] *Sermo* 356.3, ed. D.C. Lamot in *Stromata Patristica et Mediaevalia* 1 (Brussels, 1950), p. 134.

[20] H.E.J. Cowdrey, 'The Dissemination of St. Augustine's Doctrine of Holy Orders During the Later Patristic Age', *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 20 (1969), p. 451.

[21] The reference to a *monasterium clericorum* appears in *Sermo* 355.2, ed. D.C. Lambot in *Stromata Patristica et Mediaevalia* 1 (Brussels, 1950), p. 126. For a useful summary of Augustine's views on clerical status and rank, see J. Pintard, *Le sacerdoce selon Saint Augustin: Le prêtre dans la cité de Dieu* (Paris, 1960), pp. 267-374.

Martyrdom and Divine Intervention in St. Augustine

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Returning to North Africa from Italy in 388 A.D. Augustine initiated reforms in the rôle of the martyr-cult in the theology and devotion of the church which had been forged in the era of persecution. The evidence of the Martyrdom of Polycarp, the Roman *Depositiones martyrum* and the correspondence of Cyprian[1] is that a eucharist in honour of a particular martyr was celebrated on the *natale* and close by the martyr's tomb. This eucharist often incorporated intercession for the martyr[2].

Saxer[3] draws attention to Augustine's reforming spirit in the suppression of *refrigeria*, funeral banquets in honour of martyrs, so beloved of Monica his mother[4] and in the phasing out of prayer for the martyrs. For Augustine, the martyr's victory is bound up with Christ's passion and victory over death. The church prays for the other dead who are asleep but entrusts itself to the prayers of the martyrs[5] as the advocates of its members[6] before Christ the Judge and head of his body which is on earth.

Discussion of martyrdom within the sermon became the means of fashioning an appropriate popular opinion on the new rôle of the martyr in the life of an empire free from overt persecution and in making this new-style martyr-cult an important interpretative key to the struggle at the heart of the everyday life of the christian faithful.

The problem of the definition of who is a martyr stemmed from the era of persecution. The openly schismatic tension over the orthodoxy of those who had been *traditores* and their successors in the catholic church showed itself in the violent antagonism of Augustine's day between catholic and Donatist. It gave added urgency to the need to answer from within the catholic tradition the question: Is a martyr defined by suffering alone or by the cause for which he undergoes that suffering? Augustine consistently argues that it is the cause not the suffering that makes a martyr a martyr[7]. To explain the scriptural statement

[1] Particularly *ep.* 12:2; 39:3.
[2] Ibid.
[3] *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* (Cambridge, 1992) p. 532.
[4] *Conf.* 6:2.
[5] *s.* 284:5.
[6] *s.* 285:5.
[7] *s.* 274, *s.* 275, *s.* 327, *s.* 328.

that every man is a liar, Augustine argues that it is the Holy Spirit who speaks in the martyr. All heretics and pagans by contrast suffer for the sake of falsity[8].

That someone speaks attests to the life of the body, what someone says attests to the life of the soul[9]. To want something on one's own terms is to lie[10] and the denial of the truth constitutes adultery of the heart[11]. The martyr is God's witness[12] and martyrs suffered and died for the promise of the truth[13]. By the generalized exhortation: '*Veritatem retribue, in veritate Dominum lauda*'[14], Augustine puts his catholic congregation in continuity with the martyr's cause as identified with truth.

The martyr's long-suffering (*patientia*) derives from the righteousness of his cause, endured for the sake of Christ[15], and must be distinguished from the grit and determination (*duritia*) of the wicked[16]. Even before the Pelagian controversy came to dominate Augustine's thinking on the interaction of divine grace and human will, perseverance was emerging as the great practical theological virtue in the christian's grappling with the earthly life. The full implications of the victory won by Christ in his death and resurrection are yet to be revealed in the Final Judgement by Christ himself[17] but it is of this victory that martyrs are already a visual aid[18]. The martyrs' capacity for long-suffering comes from God and in the body, the members of Christ, it derives immediately from Christ the head[19]. Perseverance to the end is what ensures salvation[20]. Three virtues combine to constitute victory for martyr and ordinary christian in the spiritual life: through self-control (*continentia*) one overcomes allurements, through long-suffering (*patientia*) one overcomes punishments and torments and through wisdom (*sapientia*) one overcomes one's errors and mistakes[21]. By the exemplary and unfaltering execution of these virtues the martyr sets the agenda for the ordinary faithful.

The daily struggle between the material and the spiritual is played out in a capacity-filled arena by the martyrs[22]. The completeness of the martyrs' victory

[8] *s.* 328:2-4.
[9] *s.* 65:6.
[10] *Enarr. psl.* 102:4.
[11] *s.* 318:2.
[12] *testis Dei, enarr. psl.* 118 *s.* 23:7.
[13] *s.* 4:2.
[14] *Enarr. psl.* 102:4.
[15] *s.* 283:3.
[16] *s.* 274.
[17] *s.* 28:5 Christ Jesus is described: *judicatus injuste, judicaturus juste.*
[18] *In jn. evang. tract.* 27: Augustine argues that *John* 15:5 carries the same intention as the exhortation to martyrs as contained in *Matt.* 24:13.
[19] *s.* 274 and *in jn. evang. tract.* 84:2, discussing *John* 15:13.
[20] *Enarr. psl.* 156:6.
[21] *s.* 274, see also *s.* 283:1,2.
[22] *s.* 301:1 speaks of *magnum spectaculum fidei nostrae*; *s.* 315:10 speaks of the *arena* and says: *agnosce cum qua (ira) pugnas in theatro pectoris tui*, and also: *Deus absit certaminibus vestris, ut prosit vobis quod tanti Martyris agonem spectastis.*

over the temptations which invite the soul to cling to what is bodily inspires ordinary christians in their less sensational but more protracted struggle.

Augustine castigates the desire of many to delay death in this life because of the sweetness of a life on earth, however laborious and time-bound[23]. He recommends, instead, taking the route through death to the life in which it is impossible to die[24]. This transition was already complete for the martyr Laurentius during his *passio*: so intense was the heat of his desire for heavenly joys that he had nothing to fear in the intense heat to which his body was being subjected; for him the external flame applied by his persecutors began, instead, to grow cold[25]. Rather than having the time-bound glory of those who seek vain things, martyrs have the eternal glory of those who suffer for a short time but reign for ever[26].

Augustine conceives divine intervention as a deliberate intrusion by God into the perceived material norm for a specific spiritual purpose. Augustine's uncritical and strongly Neoplatonic assumption of the superiority of the spiritual over the material, the invisible over the visible and the interior over the exterior makes it relatively easy for him to argue for the superiority of God's non-intervention in his wider spiritual purpose for the soul and for such non-intervention as a greater, rather than a lesser, love shown to his creation. God can, nonetheless, within the same scheme of things, decide to intervene in order directly to fulfil a spiritual purpose which is specific to the good of his faithful.

Augustine discusses two possibilities connected with divine intervention and martyrdom, together with a further discussion of the punishment of schismatics, each with reference to Old Testament figures:

(a) God intervenes to save the three Israelite men in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace (Daniel 3).

(b) God does not intervene to save the Maccabaean brothers from the fire of their Gentile persecutor, Antiochus.

Augustine counters the argument that there were no martyrs before Christ by saying that although they could not technically be killed *pro nominis Christi confessione*, they were nonetheless killed *pro veritate*[27]. *Sermo* 300 argues that before there was a *populus christianus* there was a *populus Deo* and that the Maccabaeans confessed Christ *in occulto*; this is the same confession as the martyrs' confession of Christ *in manifesto* after his resurrection.

The problem briefly stated is that (a) and (b) reflect superficially identical situations, yet in (a) prayer is seen to have been answered, in (b) not so. Augustine stresses that God was and remains the God of both groups of

[23] *s.* 280.3.
[24] Ibid.
[25] *s.* 304.4.
[26] *Enarr. psl.* 118 *s.* 23:7.
[27] *Enarr. psl.* 140:26.

martyrs[28] and that both were equally righteous because both equally confessed their sins and expressed their conviction that they deserved to suffer[29].

The disparity represented by this comparison was not confined to the pages of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha. *Sermo* 286.6 reveals that many North African martyrs had wanted to be spared in the same way as had the three men in Daniel and *enarratio in psalmum* 33. *Sermo* 2:22 tells us that it was a problem of the penitent of Augustine's congregation that God does not today listen to the suppliant in the way he listened to the three men in the fiery furnace. Some went so far as to argue that the three were not martyrs because they were not consumed by fire[30]. Augustine counters this by comparing them with the Apostle John. Although he never suffered a martyr's *passio* in his body, his soul was made ready by God for such suffering. Were you to question the flames, the three men did not suffer, but if you ask their will, then they were indeed crowned as martyrs[31]. Augustine's resolution of this dilemma is derived from his well-honed distinction between the *occultum* and the *manifestum*. It is not our ordinary human eyes but the eyes of the heart which enable us to see that the God of the *tres pueri* and of the Maccabees is the same God[32]. Once this is understood, it becomes clear that both are saved invisibly[33] and, on the principle that the spiritual is superior to the material, the Maccabaean martyrs paradoxically won the greater prize[34]. The three men had overcome the single temptation to deny God, but were faced with the prospect of returning to the material world of spiritual uncertainty, characterized by Augustine as *tentatio*, where they had to do battle yet again with the devil[35]. This is consistent with Augustine's statement that it is in the furnace of the body of the martyr that the devil is burned[36].

The Maccabaeans were victorious over the physical death which is inescapable within the scope of the earthly life. Through the example of the Maccabaeans, men learn how to die for the truth, while their mother teaches women to act with long-suffering and unspeakable strength[37]. The superiority of the spiritual over the physical was clearly understood by their mother who actively wanted her children to die, because she knew that they were entering not death but life[38]. She was not a spectator[39] but a participant in their *passio*[40].

[28] *s.* 32:15.
[29] *s.* 301:2.
[30] *s.* 296:5.
[31] Ibid.
[32] *s.* 286.6.
[33] *Enarr. psl.* 36 *s.* 3.9.
[34] Ibid.
[35] *s.* 301.2.
[36] *s.* 176:3, *s.* 180:1.
[37] *s.* 300:6.
[38] *s.* 286:6, *s.* 300:7.
[39] *s.* 301:1 where she is described as *hortatrix* rather than *spectatrix*.
[40] *s.* 300:6: *a filiis non separata spectando, et filiis addita moriendo*. Augustine argues the same for Hannah, mother of Samuel in *civ. dei* 17: iv and *enarr. psl.* 98:10.

She knew that instead of losing them (*amittebat*) she was sending them ahead (*promittebat*) of her[41]. Her *patientia* equalled theirs[42]. Her example to women[43] was more that of Mother Church than that of Mother Eve[44] and stemmed from her pure love of God[45].

The disparity between the lot of these two groups makes important links with Augustine's wider spiritual theology.

Nebuchadnezzar and Antiochus, the oppressors, display the two classic opposing responses to the presence of the true God, mercy and pride[46]. Having failed in his initial attempt to force the three men to worship an idol, Nebuchadnezzar himself paradoxically turns to worship the true God[47]. For Augustine this is a pre-fulfilment, within the prophetic era, of something asked for from the kings of the earth against the enemies of the church[48]. God saved the Three in the furnace in order to confound the *carnales*[49], to show that God presides over a reality both material and spiritual. They caused the king whom they had enraged to turn to God. Their not being changed was catalytic in the change wrought in the faithless Nebuchadnezzar[50].

Antiochus represents the happy (*felices*) of this world. They are falsely happy and in fact are unhappy. For Augustine the supreme danger is that earthly happiness can corrupt in soul rather than in body alone[51]. Christianity embraces both martyr and tyrant in that in Antioch itself stands the Basilica of the Maccabees, built and maintained by the Christians[52]. Antiochus exemplifies within the providence of God a function essential to God's purpose for his people. God no more deliberately avoided using Antiochus in his canvas of salvation than a painter avoids the use of black in his composition[53].

The people of God are flogged and put to the test through Antiochus. By the same God the Three are crowned as martyrs. In the *passio* of Christ Jesus, God used Judas and the devil to good purpose[54]. Secondly, the way in which God allowed the Maccabaeans to suffer and die was designed to make those who

[41] *s.* 301:1.
[42] *De moribus* 1:43.
[43] *s.* 300:6.
[44] *s.* 301:1 and see *s.* 280-283 on the Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity.
[45] *De moribus* 1:43.
[46] *s.* 301:2 Antiochus *meruit obdurari, auxit superbiam* while Nebuchadnezzar *meruit converti, invenit misericordiam*.
[47] *Ep.* 93:iii:9.
[48] Ibid.
[49] *Enarr. psl.* 33 *s.* 2:22.
[50] *s.* 301:2.
[51] *s.* 301:8.
[52] *s.* 300:6.
[53] *s.* 301:4.
[54] *s.* 301:4-7, in particular *s.* 301:4: *usus est ergo male diabolus suo vase: usus est ambobus Dominus bene*.

inflict persecution suffer even worse penalties for imagining that they could succeed in persecuting the martyrs of God[55].

Augustine makes clear the contemporary importance of the fate of the Maccabaeans[56]. They were challenged to deny the law of Moses in the same way as later martyrs were challenged to deny the law of Christ[57]. Augustine ties firmly together the sufferings of the Maccabaeans, the psalm-prophecies fulfilled in the Johannine passion-narrative of Jesus and the glory attained by those who in later times confessed Christ[58]. Significantly, Augustine also relates the non-intervention of God in the martyrs' passions to the contemporary daily testing of his congregation[59].

The third occasion of divine intervention (c) is the sudden punishment and death in dramatic circumstances of Dathan, Core and Abiram, proto-schismatics and thinly disguised precursors of the contemporary Donatists[60]. Augustine describes them as setting up an altar in defiance of the city of God, an expression of their separation and wilful alienation from the inheritance of Christ[61]. Their schism was a crime more serious against God than Israel's idolatry[62] or their handing over the sacred books in the time of Jeremiah[63]. Their being swallowed up by the earth together with the burning of those who had supported them[64] is the only appropriate response to so extreme a manifestation of the human pride consequent on the Fall[65].

God's dramatic intervention to obliterate Dathan, Core and Abiram is understood as a direct manifestation of his love for his people. These schismatics served as an example of what must be avoided if the faithful are to secure a favourable hearing at the Last Judgement[66]. God's intervention against them implements the final separation which the Last Judgement entails and is something for which catholic martyrs are right to pray[67]. God effects the bodily

[55] *Enarr. psl.* 33 *s.* 2:22.
[56] *s.* 300:1.
[57] *s.* 300:2.
[58] Ibid. and more generally *s.* 300:1-4.
[59] *s.* 326:2 God does not intervene to save martyrs *de carceribus, a gladio, a bestiis* because he wants to prove the worth of every christian in order to crown him with the martyrs.
[60] *Ep.* 93.ix.28: *impiae separationis auctores*; *de gest. cum Emerito* 10: *ipsi primo schisma fecerunt*. Dathan, Core and Abiram are the prototype of wilful sectarianism: *qui se primitus per seditionem abrumpere voluerunt*, *quaest. in hept.* 7:26-28.
[61] *Ep.* 43:24.
[62] Ibid. also *contra Faustum* 22:79.
[63] *Ep.* 76:4, *ep.* 51:1.
[64] *Ep.* 43:24, *ep.* 87:4.
[65] *Enarr. psl.* 54:16; *enarr. psl.* 105:17: *una causa superbissimi et sacrilegi schismatis*.
[66] *Ep.* 87:4.
[67] *De serm. Dom.* 1:76: *Apocalypse* 6:10 speaks of those saints who pray for retribution while Stephen, the first martyr, prayed for his persecutors to be forgiven. Augustine argues that the overthrowing of *regnum peccati* is a valid object of prayer. *quaest. in hept.* 7:27 describes the separation of Dathan, Core and Abiram as a pre-run of the Final Judgement and as akin to the separation of wheat and tares of *Matt.* 13:30, 40-43.

separation of Dathan, Core and Abiram from the people of God to show that punishment hangs now over the wicked[68]. However, such schismatics pose no ultimate threat of contamination to the saints. They are not ordered by God to separate themselves from them[69].

To Augustine, schismatics like Dathan, Core and Abiram are the willing agents of their own destruction because of their wilful defection[70]. They go down to hell alive, conscious that they are perishing. In *Enarratio in psalmum* 93 Augustine discusses the two possible uses and outcomes of *confusio*:
(1) it brings sin to those who are ashamed to change their ways. The result of this is that people go down to hell alive, as prefigured by Dathan, Core and Abiram.
(2) it brings grace and glory. This correct *confusio* is essential to conversion[71].

Donatists have wilfully excluded themselves from the catholic church: they exited off their own bat and were not driven out[72]. The fire of love holds together the faithful and is rooted in the 'one petition' of psalm 26:4, to live in the house of the Lord all one's days[73]. Augustine draws the sharp distinction between the Apostle Peter and an imaginary Donatist: '*intrat charitate, tu exis animositate*'. Only within the church are martyrs held in honour[74].

The application of the fate of Dathan, Core and Abiram to the Donatists is clear from the fact that the Epistles discussed above are anti-Donatist. What's more, Augustine's treatise: *de Baptismo* contains a plea to the Donatists to accept correction during the time-scale when God's longsuffering can still lead to repentance. Those like Dathan, Core and Abiram and the sons of Aaron do not go unpunished and the same holds for those who are like them (*tales*)[75]. The Proceedings of the Council of Bagae show that the fate of Dathan, Core and Abiram is very much part of the rhetoric of Donatist/Catholic polemic[76] and Maximian, an example of internal Donatist schism, is referred to as an adulterer of the truth, an enemy of the church and a minister of Dathan, Core and Abiram. For Felicianus there is a punishment even greater than that of Dathan, Core and Abiram, living on among the living while spiritually dead[77].

Augustine regularly speaks of the martyrdom worked out on one's sick-bed[78] and this is but a very specific locus of temptation to reject God for magical cures in the context of the barrage of persecutions which the christian has to

[68] *Quaest. in hept.* 7:26-28.
[69] Ibid.
[70] *Enarr. psl.* 54:16, *ep.* 93:52, *ep.* 9:28.
[71] *Enarr. psl.* 69:3 where Augustine speaks of his hopes for persecutors.
[72] *s.* 285:6.
[73] *s.* 284:4.
[74] *s.* 285:6,7.
[75] *De Baptismo* 3.xviii.24.
[76] *Ep.* 87:3, ep. 108, *de gest. cum Emerito* 10, *contra Cresc.* 4: ix.72.
[77] *Ep.* 108.ii.5 and iv.13.
[78] *s.* 4:36, *s.* 286:7, *s.* 318:3.

endure and win against the devil on a daily basis[79]. The crown of martyrdom is open to all, and the way to martyrdom is through perseverance in the life of grace, following Christ and not jumping in ahead of him[80].

But a martyr is not superman. Augustine repeatedly and consistently returns to Peter and Paul, both examples of fallible saints who were ultimately crowned martyrs, but only by the continuing, reforming activity of God's grace. As Vincentius derived his *patientia* from God rather than from his own strength[81], so also the ordinary christian must do likewise. The devil has taken over where the era of historical persecution left off[82]. The spiritual priorities common to martyr and ordinary christian alike are those displayed by Felix, a local North African martyr: '*contempsit mundum, contempsit praesentia ut acciperet futura*'[83].

God dispenses eternal salvation with his right hand, temporal blessings with his left; the former is the preserve of the just, the latter the only type of blessing experienced by the wicked in common with the just[84]. The distinction in prayer between the request of the heart (*petitio cordis*) and the request of the flesh (*petitio carnis*) runs in parallel with this and an answer to the former is ultimately more valuable than an answer to the latter. God, knowing what is expedient for his children, on occasion witholds the temporary blessings common to them and to those who refuse to be his children[85], in order to discipline his children to receive God himself as their inheritance[86].

Christians inhabit a tent of war while on the *peregrinatio*, because their warfare is with the devil. This will be exchanged for a permanent dwelling with permanent enjoyment of God's presence[87] and the loving possession of what ought to be loved[88]. The petition which conditions the rest of the christian's prayer is the desire to inhabit the permanent house of the Lord[89]. It encapsulates the spiritual attitude manifested by the martyrs[90] and now, in the earthly tent of war, martyrs are revered because they show the correct spiritual virtues[91]. *Patientia* in particular is the vehicle of their hope during the *peregrinatio*[92].

[79] *s.* 4:37.
[80] *s.* 284:6 *non praeveniendo sed sequendo et orando.*
[81] *s.* 274.
[82] *s.* 4:36.
[83] *Enarr. psl.* 127:6.
[84] *Enarr. psl.* 120:8,9, *enarr. psl.* 137:14, *enarr. psl.* 89:12. The latter form corresponds to the providential dispensation encapsulated in *Matt.* 5:45.
[85] *s.* 286:5.
[86] Ibid. This is the sentiment expressed in *Hebrews* 12:6.
[87] *Enarr. psl.* 26 *enarr.* 2:6.
[88] Ibid.: 7.
[89] *Ps.* 26:4. See also *s.* 284:4: the *unam petitionem* is unity, the fire of love.
[90] *s.* 284:4.
[91] *s.* 285:7 *gratiam, pietatem, constantiam, collectionem* as opposed to *audaciam, temeritatem, pertinaciam, divisionem.*
[92] *s.* 158:8, *s.* 238:1,2. The two besetting sins of humanity are *voluptates* and *dolores*. These are countered by *continentia* and *patientia* respectively.

Behind the martyrs and God's customary unwillingness to intervene to shield them from violent death is the person of Christ Jesus. Taking to oneself the Lord's Passion is the crux of belief and the way of salvation[93]. Christ is king of the martyrs[94]. He first dealt effectively with the temptations which beset the martyrs by conquering his own classic and exemplary temptations[95]. Christ's condescension in suffering for our sakes[96] is the definitive example for us to follow in shunning the allurements of temporal things[97]. Such imitation of Christ involves our receiving the cup of salvation and calling on the name of the Lord[98] and this is the same cup which Christ received on the cross[99].

The resurrection, in which martyrs already participate, shows that Christ could have come down from the cross, since rising from the dead demands greater power than coming down from the cross[100]. His refusal to come down, coupled with God's refusal to intervene, results from the fact that the cross is the place where fallen man's salvation is won[101].

In his theological reflexions on martyrdom, Augustine stood within an existing North African tradition. Tertullian saw martyrdom as God's cure against idolatry, as warfare against the devil and as the triumph of baptized cleanliness on the part of the martyrs in the struggle with Antichrist[102].

Cyprian speaks at length of the Maccabean brothers and the *tres pueri* of Daniel[103]. He urges African martyrs to perseverance[104] and makes some attempt to apply the witness of confessors in the dungeons to the christian's daily life[105]. Cyprian expresses the completeness of the freedom from earthly attachments given by martyrdom in these terms: the baptism of blood, martyrdom, grants the crown of virtues whereas the baptism of water grants only remission of sins[106]. He also speaks of the martyrs' identification with Christ in his passion by virtue of theirs[107].

The comprehensiveness of application of such themes of living on the other side of the present life while living in it is distinctive of Augustine. The irony is that having initially swept through the African room of martyr theology with a new Italian broom, he subsequently found himself re-vitalizing the North African tradition *in situ*.

[93] *Enarr. psl.* 69:4.
[94] *s.* 276:1 *s.* 284:5 refers to Christ as *martyrum dux.*
[95] *s.* 284:5.
[96] *s.* 284:6, *s.* 304:3.
[97] *s.* 304:3: *praeter effusionem cruoris, praeter vincula et carceres, praeter flagella et ungulas.*
[98] *Enarr. psl.* 102:4.
[99] *s.* 329:2.
[100] *Enarr. psl.* 40:13.
[101] *In jn. evang. tract.* 3:3: *ibi vulnera tua curavit, ubi sua diu pertulit.*
[102] *Scorpiace.*
[103] *Ep.* 55, *ad Fort. de exhort. martyr.* 11.
[104] *Ep.* 8.
[105] *Ep.* 15.
[106] *Ad Fort. de exhort. martyr.* 11.4.
[107] *Ep.* 25.2.

'Great Art Thou': An Interpretation of the Opening Chapter of the *Confessions* of St. Augustine

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It is noteworthy that in recent years a number of papers have been published on the opening passage (I,1,1) of St. Augustine's *Confessions*[1] by Japanese scholars in Japanese theological and philosophical journals[2]. What is it in this passage which attracts them so strongly? I dare to say it is the fact that in this short passage the fundamentals of religious language in general, as well as those of the Christian language are beautifully elaborated by Augustine's genius in such a perfect and concise way as is not to be easily found elsewhere; and at the same time because the concreteness of Augustine's language in the passage totally accords with the Japanese religious consciousness.

I explain these points, first by taking up the first sentence and elucidating its essential features, next by clarifying the hidden meaning of the second sentence which is added to the first one as a sort of echo, and then by giving a short analysis of the structure of the whole opening chapter.

(I) 'Magnus es, domine, et laudabilis ualde'.
— 'GREAT ART THOU, O Lord, and greatly to be praised'.
(English translation by E.B. Pusey)

In this first sentence the whole message of this great work and the whole of Augustine's religious consciousness is fully expressed.

(1) The whole sentence is motivated and dominated, it seems to me, by one word expressed in the vocative, 'domine (O Lord)'. The one word, 'domine', spoken in three syllables (do-mi-ne), opens a space of language in which two factors are set apart and at the same time are brought into connection. The two factors are what is addressed by this word, 'domine', on the one hand, and what is addressing it by the same word, 'domine', on the other hand. The one word, 'domine', spoken in three syllables, opens the transparent space of language within the world of our ordinary language, within the mess of the disorderly world of our ordinary language. Or rather, it creates the transparent space of orderly language within the darkness where we are living. The word, 'domine', spoken in the vocative, is the most fundamental word in the realm of religion. It is the word of religion as such. It comes out from the innermost part of Augustine himself and expresses the most fundamental lesson Augustine learned in the course of his conversion. All that is spoken in this book later on is initiated by this first word of religion. 'God', 'human being' and any other word come after this word, when we later reflect on our first grip of religion (or rather on our first being gripped by religion) and try to construct a conceptual scheme in the universal language that is theology.

What attracts us in the thought of Augustine is this concreteness of language in which he expresses his basic experience of religion.

(2) Now, this sentence is a composite one composed of two sentences with a vocative placed between. Its first part, 'magnus es' (great art thou) describes *what is* (quid est) concerning that which is addressed by the vocative, 'domine'. Namely, greatness is predicated of this object which is addressed 'Lord'. Greatness makes the *being* of this object itself which is addressed 'Lord'. The greatness in this sentence does not imply any spatial magnitude. It means the ontological superiority of the one addressed as 'Lord' over the one addressing

[1] Magnus es, domine, et laudabilis ualde: magna uirtus tua et sapientiae tuae non est numerus. et laudare te uult homo, aliqua portio creaturae tuae, et homo circumferens mortalitatem suam, circumferens testimonium peccati sui et testimonium, quia superbis resistis: et tamen laudare te uult homo, aliqua portio creaturae tuae. tu excitas, ut laudare te delectet, quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te. da mihi, domine, scrie et intellegere, utrum sit prius inuocare te an laudare te et scire te prius sit an inuocare te. sed quis te inuocat nesciens te? aliud enim pro alio potest inuocare nesciens. an potius inuocaris, ut sciaris? quomodo autem inuocabunt, in quem non crediderunt? aut quomodo credunt sine praedicante? et laudabunt dominum qui requirunt eum, quaerentes enim inueniunt eum et inuenientes laudabunt eum. quaeram te, domine, inuocans te et inuocem te credens in te: praedicatus enim es nobis. inuocat te, domine, fides mea, quam dedisti mihi, quam inspirasti mihi per humanitatem filii tui, per ministerium praedicatoris tui.

[2] Akira Yamada, 'LOQUACES MUTI-AUGUSTINUS, Confess. I.c.4, n. 4', *Studies in Medieval Thought* Vol. 5 (1962), pp. 56-77; Masao Okano, 'Praeludium – Studies of the *Confessions* Book I, Chapter 1', *The Source and Development of the Western Mind* (Tokyo, 1975), pp. 157-175; idem, 'Inquiry into memoria and the Structure of the *Confessions*', *Bulletin of the Thomas Institute in Kyoto* (Kyoto, 1977), pp. 121-142; Yoshichika Miyatani, 'Studies of the *Confessions*, 2', *Theological Studies* Vol. 26 (1978), pp. 32-62; Hiroyuki Ogino, 'QUAERERE INVOCANS – Structure of Inquiry in the Opening Passage of the *Confessions*', *Bulletin of the Tokyo Women's College*, Vol. 40 Nr. 1 (1989), pp. 1-16; Takeshi Kato, 'The Structure of *invocare* in the Confessions Book I, Chapter 1, Section 1', *Bulletin of the Bonaventura Institute*, Vol. 6 (1989); idem, 'The Place of *invocare* – The Confessions Vol. I, Chapter 2, Section 2 ~ Chapter 5, Section 6', *Bulletin of the St. Paul University*, Nr. 49, pp. 1-22; Yoichi Arai, '*Yobu, Yobikakeru, Yobimotomeru* in Augustine', *Knowledge and Transcendence in the Medieval Age* (Tokyo, 1992), pp. 71-79; Shinro Kato, 'What Great is: An Essay of Literal Interpretation of the Opening Passage of Augustine's *Confessions* (1.1.1)', *Religion and Culture* 15 (1993), pp. 1-24; idem, 'Christianity in the Global Time and St. Augustine' (in English), *Religion and Culture* 17 (1995); Yoichi Arai, '*Invocare* in the Structure of the Opening Passage of the *Confessions*', *Studies in Medieval Thought*, Vol. 37 (1995).

Relevant Bibliography in general:
Romano Guardini, *Anfang: Eine Auslegung der ersten funf Kapitel von Augustin's Bekenntnissen* (München, 1950); *Les Confessions* (Bibliothèque Augustinienne: Œuvres de Saint Augustin 13, Texte de l'édition de M. Skutella, introduction et notes par A. Solignac, traduction de E. Tréhorel et G. Bouissou; Paris, 1962), pp. 647-650 (note complémentaire par G. Bouissou), p. 275 (notes 1, 2, 3 par A. Solignac); G. Wijdeveld, 'Remarques sur quelques passages des "Confessions"', *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*, VI (1960), pp. 315-316; James J. O'Donnell, Augustine, *Confessions*, Vol. II Commentary on Books 1-7 (Oxford, 1992), pp. 8-17.

it as 'Lord'. Metaphysically and theologically this superiority is later interpreted as superiority of the creator over his creatures. But in this primary sentence it is simply expressed as 'greatness'. We know that greatness is generally predicated of gods in other religions. 'Great' seems to be an ancient, sacred word which human beings attribute in general to deities in their religious experiences. We also know what kind of fundamental role the term 'greatness' plays in the subsequent history of the European theologico-philosophical thinking, for example in Anselm of Canterbury. Greatness is the primary word also for Augustine in expressing the being of that which is addressed as 'Lord'.

(3) Then, what does the sentence tell us in its second part? It tells us that 'thou art greatly to be praised (laudabilis ualde)'. The word, 'laudabilis' (worthy to be praised), requires from us 'praising' as appropriate behaviour towards that which is great. Thus, it is not only a word of description but also in a sense a word of command. And the act of praising is the only possible way we can behave appropriately before that which is great, before that which is addressed as 'Lord'. Praise is the most fundamental act of our religious attitude.

From these considerations we can conclude that in the first sentence of the *Confessions* Augustine addresses the one who has done a great deed of mercy to him in the course of his conversion, and describes, then, in its first part the greatness of its being itself, and, further, in its second part confesses that it is, thus, worthy to be praised. In this way Augustine summarizes in this first sentence the whole range of his interior experience on the one hand and the whole range of religion as a whole on the other hand.

(II) 'magna virtus tua et sapientiae tuae non est numerus'.

— 'great is Thy power, and Thy wisdom infinite'.

The second sentence sounds as if it echoes the force of the first by likewise citing a verse of the Psalms as in the case of the first sentence[3]. As usual, Augustine slightly modifies the original verse of the Psalm in a way that makes it fit in with the meaning of the whole context. In fact, in these first two lines the third person of the original Psalm text has been transformed into the second person and in this way a collective and objective act of 'laudatio' by the Hebrew people towards their God has been transformed into a personal and subjective act of Augustine towards *his* God, where this act opens an interior space of intimate dialogue with God within Augustine himself. About the force of this transformation each of the above mentioned Japanese scholars develops his own viewpoint, into the details of which I cannot enter here. For my part I would like to call attention to one point the importance of which has not yet been, it seems to me, fully recognized by commentators. 'Virtus et sapientia Dei' of this Psalm citation is virtually the same as that cited by St. Paul in I Cor. 1.24. We all know that in this passage the Apostle refers by

[3] Relevant Psalms are Ps. 47, 95, 144 and 146.

these words to Jesus Christ, the Saviour. On the other hand, we owe to Professor Anne-Marie La Bonnardière[4] the inestimably important observation that the verse, 1 Cor. 1.24, had a great importance for Augustine from the very beginning of his writing after his conversion, namely in his first books in Cassiciacum, and after that continuously in his subsequent Trinitarian thinking until his monumental work on the Trinity. As Professor La Bonnardière observes, this verse (I Cor. 1, 24) is the first citation of the Scriptures in all the works of Augustine after his conversion (*De Beata Vita* 4,33; *Contra Academicos* II,1,1.) and it plays always an important role in his meditation on the Trinity of God. From this observation we may safely assume that this verse must have been one of the most important passages in his reading of the Apostle directly before and at his conversion. If we admit this, it would be reasonable, I think, to suppose that in this second line Augustine understands by God's Power and Wisdom Jesus Christ, his Saviour, and that the magnitude of God he wants to praise in the first line is the mercy of God through Jesus Christ, with which he has been continuously imbued *in lacrimis confessionis* (cf. *Conf.* VII,21,27) from the time of his conversion.

If we are allowed to think so, we can conclude that in the opening two lines of the *Confessions* Augustine summarizes the whole experience of his conversion, and wants to praise the magnitude of the mercy of God revealed through Jesus Christ.

(III)

I analyze the structure of the whole opening passage as follows.

1st Paragraph
  paragraph of religion
    Magnus es, domine — non est numerus.
2nd Paragraph
  paragraph of theology
    et laudare te uult homo — donec requiescat in te.
3rd Paragraph
  paragraph of philosophy
    da mihi, domine, — sine praedicante?
4th Paragraph
  paragraph of method of inquiry
    et laudabunt dominum — per ministerium praedicatoris tui.

From the preceding interpretation of the first paragraph, namely the paragraph of religion, we can understand the transition to the following paragraph, namely

[4] Conference de Mlle Anne-Marie La Bonnardière, 'Recherches sur les antécédents, les sources et la rédaction du livre VI du *De Trinitate* de Saint Augustin', École Pratique des Hautes Etudes, V[e] section: *Sciences Religieuses, Annuaire*, tome LXXXIII (fasc. III), Comtes rendues des Conférences de l'année universitaire 1974-1975, pp. 202-211.

that of theology. This paragraph consists of fundamental concepts of Christian theology; *creatio*, *creator-creatura*, *homo*, *peccatum*, *mortalitas*, *superbia*. These universal concepts form the basis of Christian theology, where the fundamental cleavage between God, the Creator, and human beings, one of the creatures, is asserted because of their sin of *superbia*. Keeping these fundamental concepts of Christian theology, Augustine still affirms his firm conviction of the unbreakable connection of all human beings with God, the Creator, through the Divine act of Creation.

Now, if we read this paragraph of theology in the light of the above interpretation of the initial two lines, the meaning of that beloved sentence, 'quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te' can be brought into a slightly different new light. Namely, the meaning and effect of Creation declared in this sentence ('fecisti nos ad te') is not to be taken as belonging to the conceptual sphere of 'οἴκαδε' (back to home) in a Neoplatonist sense, but as belonging to that of the Trinitarian Christian Theology, in which the Divine Work of Salvation is already anticipated in the Divine Work of Creation through the Power and Wisdom of God, namely Jesus Christ. In other words, we are created by the Divine Word so that we are invited by God to become similar to the Form of God (i.e. the Son) by the power of the Holy Spirit (cf., II Cor. 3,18; I Cor. 13,12; Phil. 2,6-7). The exegesis of *Genesis* done from the viewpoint of salvation history in the thirteenth Book will support, I believe, this interpretation.

We conclude: in the opening passage of the *Confessions* Augustine succeeded in giving adequate expression to the religious attitude of human beings in general and in elevating it to a sublime transparent dimension where Christianity itself could prove its full range of truth and life.

The Devil in Augustine's Genesis Commentaries

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Saint Augustine has owned the Garden of Eden for over fifteen hundred years. Thanks to him, an ancient Semitic etiological myth has become the great drama of the Fall, the drama 'Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit Of that forbidden tree', to use Milton's words (*Paradise Lost* I.1-2).

Like all theologians, Augustine claimed not to be an innovator but rather to be explicating the biblical text. This paper will consider how Augustine treated the devil[1] in his Genesis commentaries. Although the devil and the Eden myth appear massively throughout the saint's works, this paper will restrict itself to what he himself considered his formal exegesis of Genesis[2].

Augustine wrote his first commentary on Genesis, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, in 388 or 389, shortly after his conversion to Catholic Christianity and his return from Italy to Africa. The commentary functions on several levels. First, Augustine is attacking a movement threatening to the Faith in North Africa. Second, he is making clear to his fellow Catholics that he has indeed broken with sect to which he had given nine years of his life — something he was still attempting to do in his final conflict with Julian of Eclanum. Third, he was psychologically ridding himself of the Manichees, proving to himself that he had broken free of their understanding of what was for him the key problem facing *homo religiosus*, evil.

As the *Confessions* illustrate, the Manichees used a crude literalism to interpret the Old Testament and thus to reduce it to absurdity, something Augustine accepted until liberated from that view by Ambrose (*Conf.* VI.iv.5-6). In this commentary Augustine relies heavily upon non-literal exegesis, arguing that the text was *inter alia* metonymy, analogy, and prophecy[3], although it is not devoid of history. This effectively reproaches the Manichees for being too crude to understand the text while effectively separating Augustine from them.

[1] In these commentaries, Augustine used the terms 'devil' and 'Satan' interchangeably, while demons were lesser evil angels under the command of the devil; this paper will follow his lead.

[2] Although there exists a massive literature on Augustine and evil, there is comparatively little on his views of the devil; cf. J.B. Russell, 'Satan and Saint Augustine', in *Satan: the Early Christian Tradition* (London, 1981), pp. 186-218, and Neil Forsyth, 'Augustine and Genesis' in *The Old Enemy: Satan and the Combat Myth* (Princeton, N.J., 1987), pp. 419-440.

[3] For a discussion of Augustine's method in this commentary, cf. Roland Teske's introduction to his translation of this commentary in *Fathers of the Church* 84 (1991), pp. 19-31.

The figure of Satan presents a special problem[4]. For the Manichean dualists, the Old Testament God was demonic. Against this, Augustine has to establish the historical reality of Satan, his actual existence, while not compromising the non-literal interpretation. Augustine states firmly that *Ideo autem nominibus visibilium rerum haec appellata sunt, propter parvulorum infirmitatem, qui minus idonei sunt invisibilia comprehendere*[5]. Is the devil just a name?

An early clue that the devil is more than a name occurs in I.17.27 when the exegete, who has just claimed that *habent enim consuetudinem divinae Scripturae de rebus humanis ad divinas res verba transferre*[6], gives an example by citing Luke 11:20, Jesus' casting out demons by the finger of God, *in digito Dei. Digitus* is the human word for the divine reality, but the demons in this verse actually exist.

When he begins his discussion of Adam and Eve, Augustine realizes the difficulty of his approach, and he tries to avoid it. The phrase *Quapropter etsi visibilis femina secundum historiam de corpore viri primo facta est a Domino Deo*[7] treats the historical creation of Eve, but *secundum historiam* does not primarily mean historical but rather an historical mode of interpretation. Eve exists, but is her factual existence relevant?

He goes on, ... *aut etiamsi locus est talis qui paradisus vocetur, in quo corporaliter Adam et mulier habitabant, etiam diaboli accessum corporaliter intelligere debemus? Non utique*[8]. Likely Augustine knows of Gnostic writers who claimed that the serpent had mated with Eve to produce Cain[9], and he wishes to avoid any hint of corporeal action by the serpent, who, he insists, corrupts by suggestion.

Augustine reinforces the non-corporeal understanding of the serpent. (II.25.38) God tells the serpent he will eat the earth (Genesis 3:14), which symbolizes earthly desire or the sin of curiosity; the serpent's seed signifies perverse suggestion; the serpent itself *haereticorum venena significat, et maxime istorum Manichaeorum, et quicumque Veteri Testamento adversantur*[10], another

[4] Augustine accepted the biblical identifications of Satan with the Eden serpent, Wisdom 2:24 (which book he accepted as canonical) and Revelation 12:9. By his day, almost all Christians took this for granted.

[5] *De Genesi Contra Manichaeos* I.5.9; *PL* 34, 178.

[6] *Ibid.* I.14.20; *PL* 34, 183.

[7] *Ibid.* II.12.17; *PL* 34, 205.

[8] *Ibid.* II.14.20; *PL* 34, 206.

[9] A Valentinian anthology entitled the Gospel of Philip, the manuscript of which dates *circa* 350 and elements of which may go back to the second century, says 'Cain was the son of the snake'; text in *The Gnostic Scriptures*, edited by Bentley Layton (Garden City, N.Y., 1987), p. 336. This volume (p. 197) includes a text from Epiphanius in which anonymous Gnostics (Archontics) say Cain was the son of the devil, although not specifically of the serpent. Cf. also Th. Sinnige, 'Gnostic Influence in the Early Works of Plotinus and in Augustine', in *Plotinus amid Gnostics and Christians*, edited by D. Runia (London, 1984), pp. 73-97.

[10] *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* II.25.38; *PL* 34, 216; for a variation on the theme of an animal's symbolizing the devil, cf. Antoon A.R. Bastiaensen, 'La perdrix, animal méchant figure du diable: Augustin héritier d'une tradition exégétique', in *Collectanea Augustiniana* 1, edited by B. Bruning *et al.* (1990), pp. 193-217.

reference to the Gnostics whose revulsion to the Hebrew Scriptures was well known. In sum, he wishes the serpent to exist in Eden historically but to have a primarily symbolic significance, a negative one.

Yet earlier in the text (I.23.40), discussing the Hexameron, Augustine used the serpent as a positive symbol: *Serpentes ergo et pecora quae terra producit gentes significant iam stabiliter evangelio crediturus*[11]. Even earlier (I.16.25-26) he rebuked the Manichees who criticize God for making animals harmful to humans — *non intellegunt quemadmodum omnia pulchra sunt conditori et artifici suo, qui omnibus utitur ad gubernationem universitatis ... video tamen omnia in suo genere pulchra esse, quamvis propter peccata nostra multa nobis videantur adversa*[12].

Augustine has scored a major polemical point here: the Manichean Elect cannot see the goodness of God's creation because of their sins. But this achievement should not mask a weakness of his own, that is, his anti-Manichean figurative interpretation later in the book denies the serpent the goodness he attributes to it and other noxious creatures by his anti-Manichean exegesis earlier in the book.

De Genesi contra Manichaeos is an early work which contains hints of the saint's mature thought — the vision of history in six ages, the goodness of creation in the view of the creator — but his view of the devil is at this stage inchoate. His polemical concerns overwhelm his exegetical ones.

Only a few years after this first commentary, Augustine returned to Genesis with *De Genesi ad litterem liber imperfectus*. He does not tell the reader why he wrote this book. Since he stopped at Genesis 1:26, possibly he was unsure himself. He does not discuss the devil in this work, but he does establish an important principle (III.9) — *ad litteram* may mean non-figurative but it does not have to mean historical, for example, *Potest etiam caelum et terra pro universa creatura positum videri, ut et hoc visibile aethereum firmamentum caelum appellatum sit, et illa creatura invisibilis superemintem potestatem...*[13].

Augustine's largest and most significant commentary on Genesis is *De Genesi ad litteram libri duodecim*. He began the work in 401 and finished it in 415, when he had already become involved in the Pelagian controversy and had begun work on *De Civitate Dei*. Like the commentary *contra Manichaeos*, this one covers only the first three chapters of Genesis.

In the earlier commentary, Augustine had to refute the Manichean belief in an evil God by distinguishing the devil from that God. This forced him to assert the historicity of the devil while simultaneously treating Genesis 1-3 in a non-literal way. In this commentary, he faces the problem of fitting the devil into a larger framework, this time predestination. The *Catholica* viewed the

[11] *Ibid.* I.23.40; *PL* 34, 192.

[12] *Ibid.* I.16.25-26; *PL* 34, 185;

[13] *De Genesi Ad Litteram Liber Imperfectus* III.9; *PL* 34, 223.

devil as one who sinned in heaven and brought sin to humans, but predestination ran the risk of swallowing the devil in a vast divine scenario.

Augustine again establishes that *ad litteram* does not equal *ad historiam*, although generally he treats the devil historically. This commentary advances the treatment of the devil significantly because Augustine does not just accept his presence in Eden but also strives to explain the devil's own sin, that is, prior to his tempting of Eve and Adam. Typically for Augustine, chronological questions dominate. *(Angeli) ex quo creati sunt, ipsa Verbi aeternitate sancta et pia contemplatione perfruuntur* in Book II[14], but in Book XI, trying to explain John 8:44, *Ille homicida erat ab intio*, he says (*diabolum*) *ab ipso primordio creaturae a suo creatore apostatasse*[15]. Further, *sed factus continuo se a luce veritatis avertit, superbia tumidus, et propriae potestatis delectatione corruptus: unde beatae atque angelicae vitae dulcedinem non gustavit*[16]. But how then did Satan know from what he was turning? And if he, a celestial being, encountered the Word of Truth, which he must have to have turned away from it, how could be have turned away?

Augustine recognizes the difficulty and admits that he cannot reconcile it. He indignantly refutes anonymous writers who claim God created the devil as evil, but, for himself, he must fall back on suppositions that God created two classes of angels, a supposition he carefully avoids accepting while simultaneously offering the reader no alterative[17]. Thus well before the great anti-Pelagian works of the 420s, he finds himself explaining why God created beings he knew would sin.

The difficulties inherent in the fall of Satan transfer to the fall of Adam and Eve. God knew that they would sin yet he created them anyway; furthermore, they, like Satan, used their free will to turn from God to earthly desires, something which could have happened without the devil. Their *audax curiositas* caused the sin because it was *avida experiri latentia, quidnam tacto vetito sequeretur, et noxia libertate liabenas prohibitionis*[18]. As modern commentators have observed, Augustine established an explanation for human sin which did not require the devil, although he maintained his biblically-based belief in the devil[19].

Modern exegesis accepts as a *datum* the notion that the exegete brings her or his own views to the text, and that applies here. Augustine's theological and polemical concerns obviated any chance of his creating a coherent diabology

[14] *De Genesi Ad Litteram Libri Duodecim* II.8.17; *PL* 34, 270.
[15] *Ibid.* XI.16.21; *PL* 34, 437-438.
[16] *Ibid.* XI.23.30; *PL* 34, 441.
[17] *Ibid.* XI.19.25-26; *PL* 34, 439.
[18] *Ibid.* XI.31.41; *PL* 34, 446.
[19] Russell, *Satan: the Early Christian Tradition*, pp. 201-202. My thanks to Dr. J. Patout Burns who informed me of arguments that Augustine had established a need for the devil by the time he wrote *De Civitate Dei*, although I confess that these do not appear completely convincing.

or rather a coherent diabology based, as he wanted it to be, solely on the biblical text[20]. His later approach to the question frankly moved beyond the purely exegetical.

But Augustine still contributed significantly to the development of diabology via exegesis alone.

First, as noted above, he rightly insisted that the fall of humanity cannot be separated from the fall of Satan. Indeed, both sins were the same, pride[21].

Second, he parallels the body of the devil to the body of Christ, the former containing the wicked and the latter the good. One hears here the voices of Tyconius the Donatist and of Ambrosiaster as well as that of the author of *De Civitate Dei*, although Augustine's prestige and, in Medieval eyes, his orthodoxy, guaranteed the parallel's acceptance. Augustine offers a firm, even organic, link between Satan and us, between his initial sin of pride and our own daily failings[22].

Third, he brings cohesion to the discussion of the serpent. In the earlier commentary against the Manichees, he was uncertain about the physical aspect of Eden, but no more. The physical could have figurative significance, but here the serpent does not signify the Manichees[23]. ... *in serpente ipse* (*diabolus*) *locutus est, utens eo velut organo, movensque eius naturam eo modo quo movere ille, et moveri illa potuit, ad exprimendos verborum sonos et signa corporalia, per quae mulier suadentis intelligeret voluntatem*[24].

The devil possesses the body of the serpent as he possesses the bodies of humans; God permits this but will somehow bring good out this evil; a just God does not curse the serpent but the devil who used it. Thanks to Augustine, no one in the Latin Middle Ages would question the somatic nature of the serpent.

Finally, Augustine's exegesis produced an interesting sidelight. Using the principle of *scriptura interpres scripturae*, he treats Job 40:14 in his discussion of the devil. He cites the verse as *Initium figmenti Domini, quod fecit ut illudatur ab angelis eius*[25]. Augustine attempts to explain the word *figmentum* as the devil, in order to avoid having God's angels mock a work of God. Yet this interpretation derives from his *Vetus Latina* reading, and it differs considerably from the Vulgate, which has *viarium* where Augustine has *figmenti*. (*Ipse est principium viarium Dei, qui fecit eum applicabit gladium eius*). There appears to have been no prior exegesis of this verse in Augustine's reading, but that is

[20] At the time he wrote *De Genesi ad Litteram*, he could not accept the theory of the two classes of angels because he could find no biblical basis for it: *mihi autem, fateor, unde hoc secundum Scripturas asseram, non interim occurit.* (XI.19.26; *PL* 34, 439).
[21] *Ibid.* XI.15.19; *PL* 34, 436-437.
[22] *Ibid.* XI.24.31; *PL* 34, 441-442.
[23] In fact, for readers interested in the figurative, Augustine recommends his earlier commentary; *ibid.* XI.36.49; *PL* 34, 449.
[24] *Ibid.* XI.27.34; *PL* 34, 443-444.
[25] *Ibid.* XI.22.29; *PL* 34, 440.

difficult to verify since the verse does not appear in Ambrose's work on Job and David nor in the fragment of Hilary of Poitiers' work on Job[26] nor even in Augustine's earlier *Adnotationes in Iob*. It does, however, appear later in *De Civitate Dei* where Augustine gives it a much longer treatment than in *De Genesi Ad Litteram*, again linking it to John 8:44[27].

Significantly, it does not appear in Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Iob*. Gregory uses the Vulgate reading[28], and later Medieval exegetes did likewise. Thus, regardless of the immense influence of Augustine in the Middle Ages and of this interpretation's place in two major works, his reading and thus exegesis of this verse had no lasting influence.

[26] Augustine knew Hilary's work, which now survives in fragments printed in *PL* 10, 724-724; he cites the work *De natura et gratia*, cap. 62.

[27] *De Civitate Dei* xi.15-17; edited by B. Dombart and A. Kalb (*CCSL* 48; 1955), pp. 335-337.

[28] *Moralia in Iob* lib. xxxii, cap. xxiii-xxiv; *PL* 76, 664C-668C.

St. Augustine and the Invention of Mysticism

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Revisionism is the septicaemia of the scholarly soul. We often feel a lingering malaise about our analytic categories, as well as an obligation to review them from time to time. Some of us would admit to culpable pleasure in this task, at least when the targets are suitably distant from ourselves. This morning's paper is a minor exercise in this genre. At our last meeting, I considered some philosophical problems associated with the notion of 'patristic mysticism'[1]. This morning I should like to reflect on the concept of 'mysticism' in reference to Augustine's *Confessions* in an attempt to weigh its continued historical utility. There are, of course, no ready criteria for such an assessment. I am reminded of the observation by Professor Norman Cantor, from his recent book, *Inventing the Middle Ages*,

> 'We cannot interpret medieval culture or any other historical culture except through the prism of the dominant concepts of our own thought worlds. When we look back, some of these interpretive concepts have become stale and out of date, and we're embarrassed then by our own reflexive trendiness; but there was a time when these concepts were productive and stimulating and were appropriately relished in their application'[2].

No doubt the application of 'mysticism' to patristic literature once seemed exciting and productive, opening up distant texts to modern appreciation. But there may also have been some loss inherent in this approach, and it is this question that is my topic today.

The basic question before us, then is historiographical: is the modern notion of 'mysticism' apposite to this early Christian text? In some respects the posing of this query might be indicative of the contemporary — some would say post-modern — reappraisal of modern thought. I would prefer to see it as merely the result of developing uncertainty among scholars of religion about the conceptual implications of the category itself. Several philosophers of religion, particularly Grace Jantzen[3], have recently uncovered the programmatic under-

[1] 'The Presence of Truth in the *Confessions*', *Studia Patristica* XXVII, pp. 329-336.

[2] Norman F. Cantor, *Inventing the Middle Ages* (New York, 1991), p. 37.

[3] Grace M. Jantzen, 'Mysticism and Experience', *Religious Studies* 25, pp. 295-315; cf. 'Could There be a Mystical Core of Religion?', *Religious Studies* 26, pp. 59-71; 'Conspicuous Sanctity and Religious Belief', William Abraham and Steven Holtzer (eds.), *The Rationality of Religious Belief: Essays in Honor of Basil Mitchell* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 121-140; '"Where Two Are to Become One", Mysticism and Monism', Godrey Vesey (ed.), *The Philosophy in Christianity* (Royal Institute of Philosophy Lectures 25; Cambridge, 1989), pp. 147-166. I have not yet seen her forthcoming book on these issues.

pinnings of the initial employment of 'mysticism' in the nineteenth century. What is interesting for our purposes is what might be called the 'psychologism' which is quite explicit in this development. 'Mysticism' was used to refer to a type of unusual and intense religious experience, a psychological event. A 'mystical experience' was — to use William James' classic definition — an experience that is among other things, 'ineffable, transient, and subjectively passive'[4]. This category was thus understood as a species of 'religious experience' whose provenance had been secured in the wake of Schleiermacher's apologetic efforts. A specially intense version of the more generic 'religious experience' doubtless seemed to be a natural move, one that has since become established in the conceptual vernacular. But does this admittedly rather modern notion, itself embedded in a larger apologetic program, help us with our reading of this distant, ancient text?

In the case of the *Confessions*, the answer is interestingly ambivalent. Perhaps more than any patristic text, the answer would appear to be affirmative. For the *Confessions* is replete with richly described autobiographical episodes which seem to portray the intense but momentary episodes of its author's immediate spiritual association with the divine. Indeed the issue for modern scholarship has been to decide how many such events are to be found in the text, and to determine their character in reference to other late antique exemplars. I have in mind authors well-known to this distinguished audience, in particular: Cayré, Butler, Burnaby, Henry, Bonner, Louth, among others[5]. Admittedly there have been valued naysayers as well, especially Ephraem Hendrikx. But the main discussion has been rooted within the comfortable parameters of modern conceptualization regarding religious and mystical experience. It is the ease of this fit that should caution us.

I would like — in contrast — to offer the following suggestion regarding the *Confessions*: The experiential model of mysticism works so well precisely because Augustine was himself so effective in initiating the Latin West's conception of contemplation, a notion charged with autobiographical immediacy. The modern psychological conception was subsequently constructed out of this Augustinian 'confessional' tradition. But our modern act of apparently straightforward exegesis bears within it the burden of obscuring the historical importance

[4] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Lecture XVI.

[5] Ephraem Hendrikx, *Augustins Verhältnis zur Mystik* (Würzburg, 1936) and 'Augustinus Verhältnis zur Mystik. Ein Rückblik', *Scientia Augustiniana* (Festschrift Adolar Zumkeller; Würzburg, 1975); F. Cayre, *La contemplation augustienne. Princeps de Spiritualité et de Théologie* (Paris, 1954); Cuthbert Butler, *Western Mysticism* (New York, 1923); John Burnaby, *Amor Dei. A Study of the Religion of St. Augustine* (London, 1938); Paul Henry, *La Vision d'Ostie: Sa place dans la vie et l'œuvre de Saint Augustin* (Paris, 1938); Gerald Bonner, 'The Spirituality of St. Augustine and Its Influence on Western Mysticism', *Sobornost*, 4 (1982), pp. 143-162 and 'Augustine's Conception of Deification', *J.Th.St.* n.s. 37 (1986), pp. 369-386; Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition* (Oxford, 1981).

of Augustine's framing of this very conception, of immediate contemplation of God which is cognitive but not salvific. This act of invention, conditioned of course by many antecedents, was the result of a complex religious environment, and it is this very theological and, indeed, spiritual force that is lost by our modern exegesis, with its effortless fit. To clarify and substantiate this thesis, I shall turn now to a brief discussion of book seven.

We are accustomed to reading the religious narrative of the *Confessions* as leading to a 'mystical experience' at Ostia in 9.10. This event follows the repeated attempts at Plotinian mysticism that are iterated in book seven. In Courcelle's account, these are 'vaines tentatives d'extases plotiniennes'[6]. This reading by Courcelle has established the terms of subsequent discussion, thus fixing as a principal, exegetical premise that Augustine's narrative recounts either successful or abortive mystical experiences. In his recent, magisterial commentary, James O'Donnell has modified Courcelle's account, although retaining the failed ecstasy thesis. For O'Donnell there are two Plotinian attempts, at 7.10.16 and 7.17.23. The initial one is a failure, but the second records an attempt successful 'on Plotinian terms as A(ugustine) understood them', although even this leaves Augustine disappointed[7]. But both the momentum of O'Donnell's commentary and the consensus already mentioned regarding the concept of mysticism suggest that book seven might well be read without recourse to Courcelle's Plotinian thesis. Then the specifically apologetical and theological character of the narrative are thrown into greater relief.

The theological point of book seven is clear enough. Augustine views contemplation as being only an epistemic act, in contrast to Plotinus, for whom *theoria* was both cognitive and salvific. What book seven recounts is not an inability to achieve Plotinian ecstasy, but rather disappointment at its (salvific) efficacy. It is salvation, not experience, that is at issue. Augustine presents the story of the pilgrim soul as one in which contemplation is found to be wanting. Book seven is indeed a record of failure: not a failure to achieve a psychological state, but instead to secure the soul's salvation through the transformed cognitive state of Plotinian contemplation. While *theoria* allowed the pilgrim soul to encounter the transcendent world, it failed to recover and secure the putatively natural association of the soul with that world. Hence the great Pauline theme follows the contemplative excursus and concludes the book: the soul needs a mediator; contemplation of transcendence alone is insufficient.

It is important to recognize how the 'failed ecstasy' reading distorts the text. One of its exegetical effects has been to break up the continuity of the narrative running from 7.10.16 through the end of 7.20.26. Moreover, its search for experiential failure misreads the apologetical intent of Augustine's argument. Plotinian contemplation is introduced as a conclusive antidote to Manichaean

[6] Pierre Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de saint Augustine* (Paris, 1950), pp. 157-67.

[7] James J. O'Donnell, *Augustine: Confessions* (Oxford, 1992), vol. II, pp. 434-437.

materialism. The narrative purpose of book seven thus requires that contemplation be a success, albeit an epistemic success. Platonic transcendentalism receives more than just notional assent; it is discovered by the contemplative soul to be true, and Manichaeism to be false. Hence 7.10.16, as well as the sections that follow it, should be seen, not as an abortive effort at ecstatic union with the One, but rather as a prolonged meditation of the incipience of transcendence in the soul, the quiet dawning of spiritual latency.

To clarify matters further, we might look at the famous ascension narrative of 7.17.23. The text, in the new Chadwick translation, reads as follows[8]:

> In the course of this inquiry why I made such value judgments as I was making, I found the unchangeable and authentic eternity of truth to transcend my mutable mind. And so step by step I ascended from bodies to the soul which perceives through the body, and from there to its inward force, to which bodily senses report external sensations, this being as high as beasts go. From there again I ascended to the power of reasoning to which is to be attributed the power of judging the deliverances of the body senses. This power, which in myself I found to be mutable, raised itself to the level of its own intelligence, and led my thinking out of the ruts of habit. It withdrew itself from the contradictory swarms of imaginative fantasies, so as to discover the light by which it was flooded. At that point it had no hesitation in declaring that the unchangeable is preferable to the changeable, and that on this ground it can know the unchangeable, since, unless it could somehow know this, there would be no certainty in preferring it to the mutable. So in the flash of a trembling glance it attained to that which is. At that moment I saw your 'invisible nature understood through the things which are made' (Rom. 1:20). But I did not possess the strength to keep my vision fixed. My weakness reasserted itself, and I returned to my customary condition. I carried with me only a loving memory and a desire for that of which I had the aroma but which I had not yet the capacity to eat.

It is important to notice that the passage is introduced with an epistemic query. It centers on the soul's momentary reach (*pervenit*) to that which is. The soul has left the confusion and mistaken judgments of sense perception. It has thereby slipped the bonds and vicissitudes of embodiment. In Plotinian terms the soul has attained intellect. As such, Augustine is in a position to determine — as it were — the spiritual scope of *theoria*. This is where the theme of failure comes in. The soul is able to achieve this moment of intellection briefly[9], '*in ictu trepidantis aspectus*'. But this is not failure on the threshold of mystical ecstasy. It is rather described as being the result of the soul's ethical state, for the soul lacks the moral strength to continue its grasp of the divine light of truth (*sed aciem figere non evalui*). But its moral infirmity (*infirmitas*) prevents if from remaining transcendent; the soul's moral status severs contemplative association with the eternal. The text does not, therefore, describe an experience that is amenable to a primarily psychological analysis. It is an

[8] Henry Chadwick, *Saint Augustine: Confessions* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 127-128.
[9] Cf. 9.10.25: 'hoc momentum intellegentiae'.

attempt to capture discursively an event in terms that are epistemic and moral. In this respect it is, in fact, consistent with noetic contemplation in the *Enneads*, in which the soul discerns the intelligibles. This event is treated there in some texts as limited in duration, and the *tolma* of the soul, the moral audacity that initially occasioned its descent into the body, limits its contemplative vision. Augustine, far from recording his failure to achieve Plotinian ecstasy, seems rather to be emphasizing his own approximation of one sort of *theoria* that he discovered in the *libri Platonicorum*. Only if one were to claim that contemplation of the One or of Intellect was consistently presented by Plotinus as continuous, habitual or perduring, and further that Augustine read the *Enneads* in this way, would it be possible to launch the failed Plotinian ecstasy thesis. But I do not think we have any foundation for the latter claim. As for the former, the *Enneads* contain both passages in which *theoria* is continuous or sustained for lengthy periods, and others in which it is brief and fleeting[10]. The *Vita Plotini* presents contemplation of the One as transient, while noetic grasp of the intelligible seems sustainable by the sage over lengthy periods of times, even when disturbed by importunate visitors[11]. I might perhaps admit to the suspicion that Augustine was particularly struck by the dramatic but brief contemplative episodes of the *Vita Plotini*, and this Porphyrian model was regnant in his reading of whichever *Enneads* he studied. It is ironic that Porphyry seems to stress these moments of contemplation as biographical warrant in support of his thesis that philosophy is sufficient for the soul's salvation. Augustine will use this same temporal characteristic to reject that very claim.

Book seven of the *Confessions* does not, therefore, suggest that Augustine has failed in his efforts to achieve Plotinian ecstasy; rather, the text indicates that Plotinian contemplation has failed him. For the Platonists — at least on Augustine's account — were prone to overestimate the soul's natural capacity for *theoria*, based on their doctrine of the soul's undescended aspect. But for Augustine, *theoria* cannot succeed salvifically because of the profound moral weakness of the soul. It is this theme that dominates the final sections of book seven: while contemplation has demonstrated to the pilgrim the reality of the transcendent world, it has also, in its brevity, underscored how little claim the fallen soul has on eternity. Contemplation is thus to be understood only as a supreme type of spiritual cognition, but not a means of salvation. Only a mediator, only the Christ, can secure for the soul a life in eternity. The great Augustinian critique of Platonism rests on this very point as do his characteristic images

[10] The momentary character of contemplation is described at VI.7.34.13 with the term *exaiphnes*, drawn from the *Symposium*. Other passages with varying temporal aspects are: IV.8.1, 1-11; VI.9.9, 46-60; and VI.9.10, 9-21.
[11] Porphyry suggests that Plotinus was able to go on with his noetic reflection without cessation at *Vita Plotini* 8. But *VP* 23 suggests a brief episode of union with the One that is repeatable, in Plotinus's case four times in the years Porphyry studied with him.

of contemplation: perception without access, vision without restoration, presumption without confession.

It is here that we find what might be called — at the risk of overstatement — the invention of mysticism: the annunciation of a Christian apologetic strategy which maintains that contemplation is only a momentary vision, never a means to salvation. Augustine's novel, autobiographical account established with persuasive clarity in the Latin West this limited appraisal of *theoria*, and the sharp separation between it and salvation. I do not mean that Augustine was utterly original in this regard, only that he was specially precise and successful in framing the orthodox Christian account of interiority. It is just this decisive moment of Christian self-articulation that is lost when we read book seven of the *Confessions* through the modern psychological notion of mysticism, which is its direct, if improverished heir. We take for granted what Augustine struggled to disclose. On the modern experiential model, some of the most interesting theological aspects of the *Confessions* are obscured from view, and our understanding of the salience of Christianity foreshortened.

The unpleasantness of a conclusion has been too long deferred. I fear that mine will seem rather invertebrate. Does the modern notion of mysticism help us in our appropriation of this distant text, from which the concept was itself ultimately derived? Yes, if it helps us recover the autobiographical immediacy of Augustine's text and, as a result, to take seriously the experience of transcendence related therein. Perhaps we still need to think at times in psychological terms, perhaps to image the pilgrim soul in the *Confessions* 'bound with the flawless band/Of inner solitude'. But there is much more that is lost, in particular the theological point of book seven, and with it the force of early Christian theology as it defined its core credenda in the struggle against pagan Hellenism. This is, even today, a serious deferment of understanding, yet another way in which modernist thinking has restricted our purchase on the Christian tradition through a subtle conceptual reductionism. It is this leveling that both historians and theologians must be determined to resist.

Reichtumskritik im 'pelagianischen' Schrifttum
Kritische Überlegungen zum Stand der Forschung

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1. Syrakus, Karthago, Diospolis*

414/415 bittet ein nicht näher bekannter Hilarius aus Syrakus brieflich Augustinus bzgl. der Lehren einiger Christen bei Syrakus ('quidam Christiani apud Syracusas') um instruktive Hilfe. Diese Christen behaupten nämlich,

> ... dass der Mensch ohne Sünde sein kann und die Gebote Gottes leicht befolgen kann, wenn er will; dass das vom Tod überraschte ungetaufte Kind, nicht mit Recht stirbt, da es ohne Sünde geboren wurde; dass ein Reicher, der in seinem Reichtum verharrt, nicht in das Reich Gottes gelangen kann, wenn er nicht all seinen Besitz verkauft haben wird, und auch wird es ihm nicht nützen, wenn er mit diesem Reichtum die Gebote erfüllen würde; dass man keinesfalls schwören darf; Und von der Kirche, welche diejenige sei, von der geschrieben ist, sie sei ohne Runzeln und Flecken, ob jene in der wir hier und jetzt zusammenkommen, oder jene die wir (für die Zukunft) erhoffen. Einige glauben, dass es diese Kirche ist, die jetzt von den Menschen besucht wird, und dass sie nicht ohne Sünde sein kann[1].

Hilarius berichtet von Christen, die das Postulat gänzlichen Reichtumsverzichts mit Lehrmeinungen verbinden, die z.T. der karthagischen Kirche bereits in der Auseinandersetzung mit Caelestius 411 Kopfzerbrechen verursachten und schon bald als sog. 'pelagianisch' galten. Die Urheber dieser Lehren bleiben unbekannt, Hilarius will oder kann keine Namen nennen, und diese Unkenntnis ist auch zum heutigen Zeitpunkt der Forschung nicht zu beheben.

Hingegen liegt seit 1890 ein Textkorpus von 6 Schriften eines (unbekannten) Autors vor (nach dem Editor *Corpus Caspari* genannt), dem eine Asketin — ebenfalls auf Sizilien und auch in der Zeit um 411-415 — den Weg wahren

* Vollständige Literaturangaben stehen am Schluss des Aufsatzes.

[1] Hilarius, in: Augustinus, ep. 156 (CSEL 44; 448,10-449,1): 'Proinde rogo, ut mei memor in sanctis orationibus tuis esse digneris atque inperitiam nostram informare de eo, quod quidam Christiani apud Syracusas exponunt dicentes posse esse hominem sine peccato et mandata dei facile custodire, si velit; infantem non baptizatum morte praeventum non posse perire merito, quoniam sine peccato nascitur; divitem manentem in divitiis suis regnum dei non posse ingredi, nisi omnia sua vendiderit, nec prodesse eidem posse, si forte ex ipsis divitiis fecerit mandata; non debere iurare omnino; et de ecclesia, quae sit, de qua scriptum est non habere rugam neque maculam, utrum haec sit, in qua nunc congregamur, an illa, quam speramus; quidam autem posuit ecclesiam hanc esse, in qua nunc frequentamus populos, et sine peccato esse non posse'.

Christentums wies, dessen Inhalte sich z.T. mit den von Hilarius referierten Positionen decken[2]. Inhaltliche Konstante dieser 6 Schriften ist u.a. die strenge Verurteilung des Reichtums, die insbesonders im Text *de divitiis*[3] monographisch durchexerziert wird.

Augustinus antwortet auf die Anfragen des Hilarius im Brief 157, den er zusammen mit jenem des Hilarius dem spanischen Priester Orosius gibt, der zur Aufgabe hat, Pelagius u.a. mit diesen 'sizilianischen Sätzen' in Jerusalem zu konfrontieren. Einem offiziösen Gespräch in Jerusalem folgt 415 in Diospolis ein offizielles Konzil, auf dem Pelagius freigesprochen wird, nachdem er zu einer Vielzahl von Lehren Stellung beziehen musste, so auch zum 'reichtumskritischen Satz'. Pelagius distanziert sich von diesem Satz und bestreitet dessen Autorschaft[4], was Augustinus 417 anlässlich eines Briefes an Paulinus von Nola u.a. zum Anlass nimmt, auch diesen Satz in sein antipelagianisches Libell aufzunehmen[5].

2. Die *communis opinio*

Diese wenigen Quellenverweise vermitteln den Eindruck, dass die Frage des Reichtums ein integraler Bestandteil der Theologien des Pelagius und der 'Pelagianer' war, und so ist denn auch etwa in einem summarischen Aufsatz zu Armut und Reichtum in der Alten Kirche von 1992 zu lesen:

> Wenn wir heute davon ausgehen wollten, dass eine materiell reiche Kirche eine fragwürdige Institution sei, so steht dagegen der Tatbestand, dass in der Kirchengeschichte des ersten Jahrtausends eine grundsätzlich ablehnende Einstellung zum Reichtum der Kirche keinen Platz hatte, es sei denn, man rechnet Pelagianer und Manichäer zur Kirche[6].

Ohne Fussnotenverweis wird hier selbstverständlich behauptet dass es a) 'Pelagianer', d.h. eine über eine Gestalt definierbare religiöse Gruppierung gegeben hat und b) dass diese Leute eine grundsätzlich ablehnende Einstellung zum Reichtum (der Kirche) hatten. Diese Behauptung einer spezifisch (heterodoxen) 'pelagianischen' Reichtumskritik ist — gerade in letzter Zeit[7] — keine Einzelmeinung, sondern scheint sich vielmehr als *communis opinio* zu etablieren.

[2] Vgl. Caspari 1890, 1-167 (Texte)/223-389 (Untersuchungen); die Schriften sind auch in PLS 1 (1375-1505/1687-1694) aufgenommen.

[3] Ich bereite als Teil meiner Dissertation über die Reichtumsproblematik im 'pelagianischen' Schrifttum eine erstmalige dt. Übersetzung und einen Kommentar dieser Schrift vor.

[4] Vgl. die Schilderung bei Wermelinger 1975, 29-31/57-87.

[5] Augustinus, ep. 186, 31-33 (CSEL 57; 70,13-73,23).

[6] Gessel 1992, 86, wobei nicht ganz klar ist, was der Autor mit 'Reichtum der Kirche' meint: wenn er den Reichtum der Institution Kirche darunter versteht, so ist zu sagen, dass dieser in überhaupt keiner der 'pelagianischen' Schriften ein Thema ist.

[7] Besonders Scaglioni 1986; z.B. auch Catellani 1992, 63 Anm. 22: 'Dall'altra si trattava di prendre le distanze da certe sette, più o meno eretiche, ad esempio manichei e pelagiani, che davano una valutazione estremamente negativa delle ricchezze...'; Krumeich 1993, 119; Pietri 1995, 458-459.

3. Summarischer Überblick der Forschungsgeschichte

Die Selbstverständlichkeit der Annahme einer 'pelagianischen Reichtumskritik' im eben angeführten Zitat kann nicht das abschliessende Resultat einer diesbezüglich intensiven Forschung sein: ausser dem Aufsatz von Scaglioni von 1986[8] gibt es nämlich keine Arbeit, die sich intensiv und exklusiv der Frage der Reichtumskritik innerhalb der 'pelagianischen' Texte annimmt. Ansonsten wird die Problematik vor allem — mehr oder weniger breit — in den Monographien zu Pelagius abgehandelt[9]. Diese stiefmütterliche Behandlung der Reichtumsfrage erklärt sich einerseits daraus, dass die Problematik im 'pelagianischen' Schrifttum insgesamt tatsächlich 'nur' *einen* Aspekt eines breiter gefassten asketischen Ideals repräsentiert. Als solcher hat sie jedoch ihren Platz und darf deshalb nicht — wie in nicht wenigen Arbeiten zu Pelagius/Pelagianismus[10] — gänzlich unbeachtet bleiben. Andererseits birgt gerade die relative Randständigkeit des Problems (noch mehr als sonst) die Gefahr in sich, die geleisteten Vorarbeiten unkritisch zu übernehmen. Diese Vorarbeiten konvergieren zu insgesamt 3 unterschiedlichen Ansätzen einer Annahme 'pelagianischer Reichtumskritik':

A: Geforderter, totaler Reichtumsverzicht als integraler Bestandteil des 'Pelagianismus', als veritables dogma Pelagii. Diese bis auf Baronius zurückgehende, im 19Jh. von Klasen[11] fortgeschriebene Auffassung wurde vor allem von De Plinval wiederholt vertreten. De Plinval hielt die Reichtumskritik für einen festen Bestandteil der Reformtheologie des Pelagius wie überhaupt der 'pelagianischen' Propaganda, indem er von einer regelrechten 'pelagianischen' Kampagne gegen den Reichtum ausging, die die Reichen verunsichert und auch in den sozial niederen Klassen Unterstützung gefunden haben soll[12]. De

[8] Scaglioni 1986, dessen eigentliches Anliegen die Auseinandersetzung der 'Pelagianer' mit Mt 19,16-30 ist, dabei aber allgemein ihre Haltung zum Reichtum (besonders aufgrund von *de divitiis*) aufzeigt.

[9] De Plinval 1943, 67-8/160-1/188-90; Ferguson 1956, 148-53; Prete 1961, 38-44/77-9; Pirenne 1961, 63/71; Bonner 1972, 39-40; Greshake 1972, 35-37.

[10] So z.B. Bohlin 1957; Garcia-Sanchez 1978; erstaunlicherweise Huber 1979; Valero 1980; Stortz 1984; Rees 1988; Lavender 1991.

[11] Klasen 1882, 50-52: 'Neu in diesen Sätzen ist die Lehre, dass Niemand einen Reichthum besitzen dürfe. Man hat gemeint, es sei dieser ein fremder Zusatz zum Pelagianismus, allein Augustin hat schon die durchaus richtige Antwort gegeben: dass hier nur ein Beispiel der geforderten Selbstgerechtigkeit vorhanden sei. ... Uebrigens gehen wir vielleicht nicht irre, wenn wir in diesem pelagianistischen Communismus auch einen Grund des grossen Anhanges finden, den die neue Lehre sich schnell erwarb'.

[12] De Plinval 1943, 188-190/220-223; Id. 1966, 589: 'A cette thèse des Pélagiens...'; Id. 1936, 439 u. in wörtlicher Übernahme 1943, 223: 'La polémique des richesses n'avait été qu'un épisode très vif mais rapide, l'un des à-côtés de sa campagne de réformation'; aber auch Id. 1966, 588: 'L'anathème jeté sur la possession des richesses paraît avoir été le thème le plus spectaculaire et le plus contagieux de l'apostolat de Pélage'; Id. 1941, 393: 'La campagne pélagienne ..., a exercé sur les riches un effet d'intimidation. Elle les a amenés à douter de la légitimité de leur condition'; Id. 1966, 589: 'Ce n'est pas seulement dans les milieux prolétaires que cette doctrine avait trouvé écho; même les classes aristocratiques avaient été ébranlées'.

Plinval hat mit diesem Bild eines von Pelagius ausgehenden bedingungslos geforderten Reichtumsverzichts, der als integraler Bestandteil 'pelagianischer' Ideologie propagandistisch verbreitet wurde, eine breit rezipierte Meinungstradition gefestigt[13], so dass bis heute pauschal z.B. vom 'Armutsradikalismus der Pelagianer'[14] gesprochen wird.

B: Radikale Reichtumskritik als Position einer 'pelagianischen' Splittergruppe auf Sizilien. Diese durch Ernst und Caspari[15] vertretene, bis zuletzt rezipierte[16] Forschungstendenz hält die Reichtumskritik, wie sie etwa in *de divitiis* und im 'sizilianischen Satz' ihren Niederschlag findet, als eine von Pelagius und Caelestius abweichende Radikalposition einer 'pelagianischen' Splittergruppe auf Sizilien, eine Position, die aber letztlich doch dem 'Pelagianismus' quasi systemimmanent sei.

C: Pelagianische Reichtumskritik als Teil eines sozial-reformerischen, britischen 'Pelagianismus': Myres[17] und Morris[18] haben — vor allem aufgrund des Textes *de divitiis*, den sie in der Tradition Casparis einem britischen Autor zuschrieben — die Existenz eines nach sozialer Gerechtigkeit strebenden, reichtumskritischen und (sozialistisch) reformerischen britischen 'Pelagianismus' angenommen, der u.a. für die 'pelagianischen' Unruhen auf der Insel in den Jahren um 429 verantwortlich gewesen sei und dort bis in die Bewegung der keltischen Mönche in der Mitte des 6. Jh. weiterexisitiert habe[19].

[13] Vgl. z.B. Ferguson 1956, 147-153; Rondet 1954, 214 u. 215; Christophe 1964, 199; Greshake 1972, 36; Arimoku 1983, 5; Scaglioni 1986, 361-398 (vgl. 361, Anm. 2, wo seine Abhängigkeit von De Plinval deutlich wird); Pietri 1995, 458-459.

[14] Krumeich 1993, 119.

[15] Ernst 1884, 234-248, bes. 248: 'Der Verfasser des Buches "De divitiis" war ... kein correcter Pelagianer und insbesondere kein correcter Cälestianer. ... Wir haben darum auch keinen Anlass, die Theorie unseres Anonymus — der überhaupt gern den "Freischärler" spielt und seine eigenen Wege geht — ohne weiteres anderen Pelagianern, speciell dem Cälestius und seinen Schülern in die Schuhe zu schieben'; Caspari 1890, 265-268, bes. 268 Anm. 1: 'Nach dem Allem dürfte es das Vorsichtigste sein anzunehmen, dass allein die sizilianischen Pelagianer, zu denen der Verfasser des Tractats "De divitiis" gehörte, die Ansicht gehegt, ein Reicher müsse, um in das Reich Gottes eingehen zu können sich eines Reichthums entäussern, indem sie über das, was Pelagius vom Reichthum gelehrt, hinausgingen'.

[16] Prete 1961, 39-40; Evans 1968a, 28; Id. 1968b, 77; Wermelinger 1975, 29-30; Fischer 1976, 39-43.

[17] Myres 1960, 27: 'The Pelagians were revolted at a social and political regime which permitted and encouraged such injustice'.

[18] Morris 1965, 50-51: 'But the crisp argumentation that wealth and property had arisen in the past through "oppression"; that the existence of the rich, the fact that society is divided into such "genera", is the cause of poverty, cruelty, and violence; and that society should be wholly reshaped, now and in this present substance, by abolishing the rich and redistributing their property to the poor — is by any textbook definition socialism'.

[19] Morris 1965, 57-58.

4. Kritik

Die drei (*A*, *B* und *C*) kurz referierten Annahmen einer spezifisch 'pelagianischen Reichtumskritik' sind zumindest in folgenden 5 Punkten zu kritisieren:

1. Die mangelnde Definition der historiographischen Kategorie 'Pelagianismus'/'pelagianisch': Wenn man das Begriffskonzept 'Pelagianismus'/'pelagianisch' gebraucht, muss es definiert werden. Die genannten Arbeiten (*A*, *B* und *C*) bieten trotz wiederholter Klage über die Diffusheit des Begriffs in der Regel keine solche Definition. Dies ist insofern von Bedeutung, als bei der Rede von einer 'pelagianischen Reichtumskritik' meist unbewiesene, der jeweiligen 'Pelagianismus'-Vorstellung dienende Annahmen getroffen werden, wie z.B.:

— materiell wird die Existenz einer Kriteriologie für die Beschreibung eines spezifisch 'pelagianischen' Schrifttums vorausgesetzt und somit wird
— inhaltlich von einer nicht näher definierten Homogenität dieser 'Pelagiana' ausgegangen
— soziologisch spricht man etwa von 'pelagianischer' Bewegung(en), (Splitter-) Gruppe(n) und
— auf kommunikationstheoretischer Ebene wird z.B. eine 'pelagianische' Propaganda angenommen

2. Mangelnde Quellengrundlage: Die Anzahl der herangezogenen Quellen für die Annahme einer spezifischen, homogenen 'pelagianischen Reichtumskritik' ist generell (vor allem aber bei *A*) ungenügend: sie reicht von der referenzfreien Behauptung[20] bis zu den am breitesten abgestützten Untersuchungen von De Plinval, Ferguson und Scaglioni, die jedoch in ihrer Auswahl wie Ausschöpfung der Quellen keineswegs vollständig sind, was z.B. schon nur die Erforschung des Paulusbriefkommentars des Pelagius zeigt[21].

3. Mangelnde Autoren- bzw. Quellenscheidung: Während die Forscher von *B* in quellenkritischer Hinsicht meist vorsichtiger verfahren, treffen jene von *A* explizit oder implizit folgende Annahmen: Sie identifizieren Pelagius mit dem Autor von *de divitiis* bzw. verwischen deren Unterschiedlichkeit (so etwa zuletzt auch Scaglioni)[22] und sie machen Pelagius für den durch Hilarius überlieferten

[20] So etwa Gessel 1992, 86; Krumeich 1993, 119.

[21] Auswahl: Ferguson 1956, der 29 Titel als Schriften des Pelagius auflistet (186-187), zieht zur Analyse der Reichtumsproblematik 7 'pelagianische' Schriften und den reichtumskritischen Satz des Hilarius-Briefes (ep. 156 mit seinen entsprechenden Aufnahmen bei Augustinus) heran. Am breitesten abgestützt ist Scaglioni 1986: 13 'pelagianische' Texte werden zitiert, dazu der sizilianische Satz in Augustinus ep. 156/157. Auschöpfung der Quellen z.B. bzgl. Pelagius, *exp.*: Ferguson 1956 zitiert 11 *exp.*-Stellen, während Scaglioni 1986 6-mal *exp.* heranzieht. Bei meiner Lektüre der Quellen bin ich demgegenüber sowohl bzgl. Auswahl wie Ausschöpfung viel zusätzlichem Material begegnet.

[22] Scaglioni 1986, 360, Anm. 1: 'Nella presente ricerca, quando si fa il nome di Pelagio, ci si riferisce normalmente anche agli scritti pelagiani, ossia a quegli scritti che non sono unanimemente attribuiti a Pelagio'.

'sizilianischen' reichtumskritischen Satz verantwortlich, so dass sie auch dessen Distanznahme auf Diospolis für unehrlich halten. Dagegen ist einzuwenden, dass *de divitiis* mit grösster Wahrscheinlichkeit nicht von Pelagius selbst stammt. Vom 'sizilianischen' Satz hat sich Pelagius auf dem Konzil von Diospolis distanziert, indem er dessen Autorschaft verneinte[23], wobei die Ehrlichkeit *dieser* Zurückweisung als sehr wahrscheinlich zu beurteilen ist[24]. *C* schliesslich geht seinerseits von der Annahme britischer Herkunft des Autors des *Corpus Caspari* aus, eine Annahme, die bereits Bonner und vor allem Nuvolone widerlegen konnten, womit der Ansatz *C* überhaupt in sich zusammenfällt[25], der auch noch durch andere Argumente m.E. gründlich widerlegt wurde[26].

4. Moderne Ideologisierung antiker Problematik: Die Auseinandersetzung mit ökonomischen Problemen der Alten Kirche ist seit dem späten 19 Jh. stark von den modernenen Denkkategorien Marxismus, Kommunismus, Sozialmus, Kapitalismus, Sozialreform etc. geprägt. Auch die entsprechenden Arbeiten (*A*, *B* und *C*) zu den 'pelagianischen' Texten (besonders bzgl. *de divitiis*) widerspiegeln z.T. eher die ideologischen Grabenkämpfe des 20. Jh., als dass sie die Problemlage des 5. Jh. beleuchten: das reicht vom negativen Urteil des 'pelagianistischen Communismus'[27] Ende des 19. und während des 20. Jh. (freilich auf dem Hintergrund des realexistierenden Sozialismus) bis zur positiven Einschätzung 'pelagianischer' Reichtumskritik (bezeichnenderweise) in den 70er Jahren als ein 'vom christlichen Glauben her begründete(s) sozialreformerische(s) und sozialkritische(s) Konzept'[28].

5. Mangelnde historischer Kontextualisierung: Die Annahme ideologischer Konzepte war der Fragestellung nach dem historischen Kontext der 'pelagianischen' Reichtumskritik nicht gerade förderlich. Erst De Plinval versuchte die reichtumskritischen Tendenzen im 'Pelagianismus' historisch aus einer allgemeinen Stimmung in der aristokratischen Gesellschaft zu erklären, die sich in den Jahren 395-418 in einem Debakel christlichen Grossgrundbesitzes manifestierte und zwar hervorgerufen durch eine Art klassenspezifischer Psychose[29]. Wenn auch in den Einzelheiten fraglich, so hat De Plinval vor allem mit der Annahme der römischen Aristokratie als gesellschaftlichem Sitz im Leben der Reichtumskritik im 'pelagianischen' Schrifttum den richtigen Weg eingeschlagen (wie später auch die Arbeiten von Liebeschütz und vor allem Brown oder Lavender allgemein bzgl. des 'Pelagianismus' bestätigten)[30], ausgetreten ist dieser Weg jedoch noch nicht.

[23] Vgl. Augustinus, gest. Pel. 24 (CSEL 42; 77,22-78,1).
[24] So auch schon Ernst 1884, 240; Evans 1968b, 77.
[25] Bonner 1972; Nuvolone 1983.
[26] Liebeschütz 1963 u. 1967, 444-445; Brown 1968, 11; Cameron 1968.
[27] Klasen 1882, 52.
[28] Greshake 1972, 36.
[29] De Plinval 1942, 388; mit Beispielen 388-89.
[30] Liebeschütz 1963 u. 1967; Brown 1967 u. 1970; Lavender 1991.

5. Ausblick

Die Kritik des Forschungsstandes hat gezeigt, dass die *communis opinio* der Existenz einer typisch 'pelagianischen Reichtumskritik' in jeder seiner 3 Spielarten methodisch wie vom Textmaterial her auf wackligen Füssen steht. Um die aufgezeigten Mängel zu beheben und ein aussagekräftiges Bild bzgl. Umfang und Funktion der Reichtumskritik im 'pelagianischen' Schrifttum zu erhalten, scheinen mir zumindest folgende 6 Schritte unumgänglich:
1. Definition oder Abschied vom Begriff 'Pelagianismus'. Ich halte eine recht präzise Definition für möglich und somit auch 2. eine Kriteriologie zur Begrenzung 'pelagianischen' Schrifttums. 3. Alle Schriften dieses 'pelagianischen' Korpus sind einzeln und nach Autoren gesondert nach reichtumskritischen Elementen durchzuforsten, wobei die Autorenzuschreibung so vorsichtig wie möglich vorzunehmen ist. Im gleichen Zug ist auch (so weit möglich) die Lebensweise der Autoren auf ihr Verhalten bzgl. Reichtum und Armut zu untersuchen. 4. Erst nachdem das Material aller Schriften und die entsprechenden biographischen Details erhoben wurden, lassen sich präzise Aussagen zu einer eventuellen charakteristischen Reichtumskritik in Lehre und Leben bei den 'pelagianischen' Autoren machen. 5. Die allfällige aufgefundene Reichtumskritik bzw. -kritiken müssen auf ihren jeweiligen sozialen und geistesgeschichtlichen Sitz im Leben überprüft werden, wobei sich eine Auseinandersetzung mit der christianisierten, asketisch gesinnten römischen Aristokratie Ende 4. Anfang 5. Jh. besonders aufdrängt. 6. Falls es eine spezifische, heterodoxe 'pelagianische' Reichtumskritik gegeben hat, müssten entsprechende Spuren in den 'antipelagianischen' Werken eines Augustinus, Hieronymus, Orosius, Marius Mercator wie auch in den 'antipelagianischen' Entscheidungen der Kirche zu finden sein. Es ist deshalb angebracht, auch diese Schriften und Dokumente nach Reflexen 'pelagianischer' Reichtkumskritik zu durchleuchten.

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Geschichte und Alltag: Zu einigen Themen der neugefundenen Augustinus-Predigten aus der Mainzer Stadtbibliothek

Richard KLEIN, Erlangen

Zwei spektakuläre Ereignisse hatte die Augustinus-Forschung in den letzten zwanzig Jahren zu verzeichnen. Das eine war Ende der siebziger Jahre die Auffindung zweier Handschriften in den Bibliotheken Paris und Marseille durch den österreichischen Gelehrten J. Divjak, welche insgesamt 27 bisher unbekannte Briefe des Bischofs von Hippo enthielten[1]; das zweite wichtige Ereignis war die Entdeckung von 26 Augustinus-Predigten, welche dem französischen Forscher F. Dolbeau im Jahre 1990/91 in der Mainzer Stadtbibliothek gelungen ist. Wie man damals zunächst in einer Reihe von deutschen Zeitungen, bald aber auch in einem kurzen Bericht des Entdeckers selbst lesen konnte, war dieser Neufund möglich geworden, weil über die in der Mainzer Stadtbibliothek befindlichen Handschriften ein neuer, erstmals zuverlässiger Katalog erstellt wurde. Bei dessen Durchsicht bemerkte der Directeur de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris, daß in der Handschrift I 9 eine Reihe von angeblich unechten Augustinus-Predigten aufgeführt waren, deren Anfangszeilen sich jedoch in jenem Indiculum wiederfanden, welches Possidius seiner Augustinusbiographie im Anhang beigegeben hat, um die echten Produkte seines Bischofs kenntlich zu machen. Damit war der Beweis erbracht, daß es sich bei den zum einen aus einer Sammlung des karolingischen Klosters Lorsch, zum anderen aus der Grande Chartreuse in Grenoble stammenden Stücken in der Tat um authentische Dokumente des als Prediger hochgeschätzten afrikanischen Bischofs handelte[2]. Freilich befindet sich die in der ehemaligen Mainzer Kartause zusammengestellte Handschrift in einem ziemlich schlechten

[1] Sie liegen in zwei Editionen vor; 1. *Epistolae ex duobus codicibus nuper in lucem prolatae*, rec. J. Divjak (CSEL 88; Wien, 1981); 2. *Œuvres de saint Augustin* 46 B, 6e série, Lettres 1*-29* (Études Augustiniennes; Paris, 1987) Text von J. Divjak, Übersetzung und Kommentar von verschiedenen Autoren. Dazu wichtig: *Les lettres de saint Augustin découvertes par Joh. Divjak. Communications présentées au colloque des 20 et 21 Septembre 1982* (Études Augustiniennes; Paris, 1983).

[2] Eine erste zusammenfassende Information lieferte F. Dolbeau: 'Sermons inédits de S. Augustin dans un manuscrit de Mayence (Stadtbibliothek I 9)', *REAug* 36 (1990), 355ff. Die Entdeckung gelang ihm nach G. List-G. Powitz: *Die Handschriften der Stadtbibliothek Mainz*, Bd. 1, Hs. I 1 - Hs I 150 (Wiesbaden, 1990), 31 ff. Eine kurze Vorstellung des Inhalts der Predigten bietet R. Klein, *Gymnasium* 100 (1993), 370 ff.; 102 (1995), 242 ff. und 103 (1996), 25 ff.

Zustand, so daß eine édition intégrale der beiden Sammlungen wohl noch eine Zeitlang auf sich warten lassen wird. Um so dankbarer begrüßt man es, daß F. Dolbeau in knapp vier Jahren sämtliche 26 sermones in einer édition préliminaire vorgelegt hat — zumeist in der Revue des Études Augustiniennes oder in der Revue Bénedictine —, welchen er jeweils eine ausführliche Beschreibung zu Überlieferung, Inhalt und nähere Umstände beigegeben hat[3]. So ist es bereits jetzt möglich, daraus über das kirchenpolitische Geschehen wie auch über das Alltagsleben der römischen Bewohner Nordafrikas wertvolle Erkenntnisse zu gewinnen, die allerdings zumeist punktuellen Charakter haben, da die Predigten sich lediglich auf einen Zeitraum von ca. 397 bis 404 erstrecken.

I.

Betrachtet man in Rahmen der Thematik '*Andersgläubige*' zunächst die Donatistenfrage, so zeigen zwei Predigten das Bestreben des Bischofs, mit den Abtrünnigen auf gütlichem Wege zu einer Einigung zu gelangen. Gewiß, er läßt auch in jenen Jahren vor den ersten harten Gesetzen seit 405 keinen Zweifel daran, wo der rechte Glaube zu finden ist, so etwa wenn er in D 2 darauf verweist, daß die Ankläger des Caecilianus in konstantinischer Zeit längst als traditores entlarvt seien[4]. Mit dem eindringlichen Appell an die geliebten Brüder, vom Gift des Ungehorsams, des Zorns und des Unrechts abzulassen und zur Tugend der Liebe zurückzukehren, zeigt der Verfasser sein Bemühen um eine Beendigung der Zwietracht ebenso an wie in dem gleichzeitig anzusetzenden sermo D 27, wo er sogar die bereits vollzogene Einigung zwischen Katholiken und Donatisten jedenfalls für Hippo preist[5]. Freilich sollte sich jene ehrliche Freude, die sich dadurch erklärt, daß der gegnerische Bischof Maximinus zu ihm in die Kirche kam, bald als trügerisch erweisen. Hatte er in der Predigt D 24 noch eine gewisse Zurückhaltung erkennen lassen, aber doch den auf Nordafrika beschränkten Abtrünnigen — die nicht hören wollen, was sie

[3] Eine Auflistung sämtlicher 26 Predigten nach ihrer Anordnung in der Mainzer Handschrift (Mayence) wie auch nach ihrem Entdecker (D = Dolbeau) gibt G. Madec: *REAug* 38 (1992) 390f. (D 1, die Fragmente eines Glaubenssymbols, überliefert von Sedulius Scotus, sind nicht in der Mainzer Handschrift enthalten). Die Liste wurde, um die Anfangszeile ergänzt, übernommen von R. Klein, *Gymnasium* 102 (1995), 261f. Die Predigten jetzt zusammengefaßt in: Augustin d'Hippone, *Vingt-six sermons au* peuple *d'Afrique*, ed. par T. Dolbeau (Collection des Études Augustiniennes, ser. ant. 147; Paris, 1996).

[4] D 2,22 (*REAug* 38 (1992), 59 u. 78) unter Berufung auf publica archiva; zur Sache jetzt B. Kriegbaum: 'Caecilianus Carthaginiensis episcopus', *Augustinus-Lexikon* (*AL*) I (Basel, 1994), 686f.

[5] D 27,1 (*REAug* 37, (1991), 303): Nihil est enim dulcius quam studium fratrum, sed nihil est periculosius quam dissensio populorum; ibid. 2: Besuch des Maximinus in der Kirche von Hippo. Es wird hier verzichtet, jeweils auf die einschlägigen Augustinus-Biographien etwa von F. van der Meer, P. Brown, neuerdings von H. Chadwick, E. Dassmann u.a. zu verweisen.

sehen, und nicht sehen wollen, was sie kennen — die einzige wahre und universale katholische Kirche gegenübergestellt[6], so spart er in D 26 wie in vielen anderen Briefen, Predigten und Traktaten nicht mit polemischen Ausfällen gegen die Gottlosigkeit der häretischen Widersacher. Er wirft ihnen sogar vor, daß sie statt Christus ihren Begründer Donat als Mittler zwischen Gott und den Gläubigen preisen[7]. Wieder an anderer Stelle stellt er klar, daß es der unmittelbare Konkurrenzkampf war, der den Haß der beiden Parteien entfachte. Da die Donatisten zum großen Unwillen Augustins ebenfalls ein Petrus- und Paulusfest feierten, nennt er sie in D 4 Räuber an der Herde Christi, welche wie schlechten Sklaven dem Diebesgut das falsche Zeichen ihres Herrn aufdrückten, das heißt ihre Anhänger noch einmal tauften. Wenn wir sogar vernehmen, daß der Bischof einem Anschlag der donatistischen Circumcellionen auf sein Leben nur mit Mühe entging, so zeigt dies erneut, wie erbittert der Streit in dieser Phase bis zu dem großen Konzil von Karthago im Jahre 411 geführt wurde[8].

Gegenüber dieser in den neuen Predigten immer wieder aufscheinenden Thematik nimmt der Disput mit den Arianern einen weit geringeren Stellenwert ein. Lediglich im sermo D 22 über die drei Stäbe Jakobs (Gen. 30,37) werden sie genannt, und zwar deswegen, weil sie mit ihrer Abstufung zwischen Gott Vater und Gott Sohn den Satz aus dem Eingang des Johannesevangeliums über das Fleisch gewordene Wort Gottes (1,14) verfälschten und damit die Schwachen unter den Gläubigen in eine nicht geringe Verwirrung stürzten[9]. Ebenso spärlich wie die Bemerkungen über die Arianer sind die Sätze über die Juden; dabei ergibt sich an der ersten Stelle in D 19, wo der Bischof das Herrenwort 'Ich bin das Brot des Lebens' in den Mittelpunkt stellt, daß er wie auch in seinem übrigen Schrifttum ein Bild aus dem Sklavenleben verwendet, um den Unterschied zwischen den allzu gehorsamen Hütern des Gesetzes und den Kindern der Freiheit zu verdeutlichen. Die Juden, so

[6] D 24,4 (*REAug* 37 (1991), 45): At vero haeretici, ab istius orbis compage separati, nec audire volunt quod legunt nec videre quod norunt. Die Predigt wird zwischen 400 und 405 angesetzt.

[7] D 26,45 (*RecAug* 26, (1992), 125): Donatum donatistae pro Christo habent. Si audiant aliquem paganum detrahentem Christo, patientius forsitan ferunt quam si audiant detrahentem Donato; F. Dolbeau verweist hier auf eine Reihe von wichtigen Artikeln, z.B; auf G. Rémy: 'La théologie de la médiation selon S. Augustin. Son actualité', *Revue Thomiste* 91 (1991), 580ff.

[8] Dieses Attentat der Circumcellionen ist wohl in das Jahr 403 zu datieren, es wird auch ench. 5,17 und von Possidius, vit. Aug. 12,1f. erwähnt. Der Sklavenvergleich D 4,2 (*REAug* 39 (1993), 413): Possident ergo oves, non iam dicam suas, sed quas volunt suas, servi perditi; furtis suis characterem dominicum imposuerunt; zu dem Wort 'character' vgl. jetzt E. Dassmann: *AL* I 835ff. Zu dem vermeintlichen Abschluß des Donatistenstreits auf dem Konzil von Karthago im J. 411 kurz J.-L. Meyer: *Le dossier du donatisme*, tome II: *De Julien l'Apostat à Saint Jean Damascène (361-750)* (Berlin, 1989), 173ff.

[9] D 22,12 (*REAug* 40 (1994), 183): Turbavit fratres infirmos ecclesiae quaestio arianorum, sed in domini misericordia superavit catholica fides. Augustinus stellt ihnen den Johannesvers 10,30 entgegen: 'Ego et pater unum sumus'. Zum Arianerproblem jetzt wiederum M.G. Mara: 'Arriani, Arrius', *AL* I 450ff.

meint er, erfüllen das göttliche Gesetz aus sklavischer Angst vor der Verdammnis, nicht wie die Christen durch das Feuer der Liebe[10]. In der folgenden Predigt D 20 stellt er schließlich die Angehörigen der beiden Religionen in einer Weise einander gegenüber, daß die Juden nur das glauben, was sie sehen, die Christen dagegen im Vertrauen auf die Worte des Herrn glauben, ohne zu sehen. Leider bricht der Text an dieser Stelle ab, so daß die folgenden Erläuterungen nicht mehr einbezogen werden können[11].

II.

Richtet man des weiteren den Blick auf das *Heidenproblem*, das in den neuen Predigten einen breiten Raum einnimmt, so fällt zunächst die direkte Konfrontation zwischen den beiden Gruppen auf. Wie bekannt, spielen Tempelschließung und Zerstörung von Götterbildern in den Werken Augustins eine nicht unerhebliche Rolle, dies um so mehr, weil die blutigen Unruhen in Sufes und Calama, welche der mutwilligen Niederreißung heidnischer Kultsymbole durch eifernde Christen folgten, ein deutliches Indiz dafür sind, daß die Vitalität der alten Götterkulte wesentlich größer war, als manche Kirchenväter zuzugeben bereit sind[12]. Auch wenn der Bischof von Hippo einer sinnlosen Zerstörung von Tempeln an keiner Stelle das Wort redet, so kennt er gegenüber der Verehrung von Idolen keine Rücksicht. Dies bestätigt sich in der Predigt D 24, wo er zwar einen allzu eifrigen Ikonoklasmus seiner Glaubensgefährten zügelt, jedoch den Altgläubigen entgegenhält, daß bereits die Propheten die Vernichtung der Idole angekündigt hätten. Er weiß, daß manche Heiden aus Angst vor den kaiserlichen Gesetzen ihre vertrauten simulacra unter der Erde oder in schwer zugänglichen Felsenhöhlen verbergen, aber er vertraut darauf, daß diese von den Neubekehrten bald selbst zerstört würden[13].

[10] D 19,11 (*RBen* 104 (1994), 65): (Quid est), nisi quia et ipsam legem sic habeant Iudaei, ut opera facerent legis timore damnationis, non igne dilectionis? Vgl. dazu allgemein B. Blumenkranz: *Die Judenpredigt Augustins* (Études Augustiniennes, Paris 1973; Nachdruck von 1946).

[11] D 20,5 (ibid. 71f.): Unum defuit Iudaeis, alterum nobis. Adfuit illis videre, sed defuit credere (mit Hinweis auf das Herrenwort an den Apostel Thomas Ioh. 20,29: 'Selig, die nicht sehen und doch glauben'); es fehlt auch nicht die Unterwerfung der Juden durch die Römer und ihre Zerstreuung auf der ganzen Welt (D 23,15).

[12] In der Colonia Sufetana stürzten (im J. 399) eifernde Christen ein Herculesstandbild um, was zu einer Empörung der Heiden und zum Tod von 60 Christen führte (ep. 50; *civ. dei* 2,4; 6 u. 7,24ff.), neun Jahre später versuchten aufgebrachte Heiden in Calama eine christliche Kirche zu stürmen (ep. 91,8; 104,5). Dazu F. Thélamon: 'Déstruction du paganisme d'après Rufin et Augustin', *CrSt* 11 (1990), 523ff.

[13] D 24,11 (*REAug* 37 (1991), 51): Sed deus per illos voluit ea perdere, quos noluit perire (mit Verweis auf Exodus 23,23f.). Daraus ergibt sich, daß diese Rede auf jeden Fall nach der strengen kaiserlichen Verfügung vom 20. Aug. 399 anzusetzen ist (CTh XVI 10,17: Schutz der Tempel, Beseitigung der Götterbilder). Vom Verbergen der Bilder spricht der Prediger ibid. 8 (ibid. 48): ... idola abscondunt in terra, abscondunt in spelunca, abscondunt in caverna petrae.

Ähnlich klingt die Äußerung in der Predigt D 4, wo der Verfasser zunächst ebenfalls einräumt, daß die restlichen Heiden ihre der Vernichtung noch entgangenen Götterbilder weiterhin verborgen halten; denn auch hier fügt er siegesgewiß hinzu, wenn ein stationarius sie aufspüre, verzichteten ihre Besitzer auf jede Gegenwehr. Ja noch mehr, sie leugneten sogar, an kultischen Feiern teilgenommen zu haben. Voller Stolz stellt er ihnen das mutige Verhalten entgegen, das die christlichen Märtyrer im Angesicht ihrer heidnischen Verfolger gezeigt hätten[14]. Die gleiche Gewißheit, daß die eigene Religion die Ohnmacht der alten Götter besiegen werde, wird erkennbar in einem zeitgeschichtlichen Beispiel, das der Bischof wie schon andernorts auch diesmal wieder aufgreift (D 22 und D 25). Es handelt sich um den Honoriusbesuch in Rom im Jahre 403/4, der sich von früheren Kaiserbesuchen in der ewigen Stadt erheblich unterschied; denn nunmehr eilte der gläubige Herrscher nicht mehr zum Mausoleum des Hadrian, um dort nach dem Vorbild seiner Vorgänger dem divinisierten Herrscher seine Reverenz zu erweisen. Jetzt verzichtete der Kaiser auf alle göttlichen Ehren, im Gegenteil, er legte sein Diadem ab und betete in aller Demut am Grab des Petrus, eines einfachen Fischers, dessen humilitas er sich zum Vorbild nahm. So hat das templum Hadriani seinen Rang als Mittelpunkt des Imperiums an das sepulcrum Petri abgetreten[15].

Es reichte jedoch nicht aus, wollten die Christen gegenüber den gebildeten Heiden glaubwürdig bleiben, allein deren Angst vor den staatlichen Gesetzen bloßzustellen und selbstbewußt auf die Konversion der Kaiser zu verweisen. Auch Augustinus spürte schon vor dem Schicksalsjahr 410, daß die Gefährdung des Reiches im Innern wie auch von außen vor allem in paganen Kreisen erhebliche Zweifel an der hochgepriesenen Macht des Christengottes weckte. Daher benützt er in der Predigt D 5, die er über die Ankunft des Herrn am Jüngsten Tag vor einer großen Zuhörerschaft in Karthago hielt, die Gelegenheit, jene Klagen und Vorwürfe ins rechte Licht zu rücken. Er gesteht seinen Zuhörern zu, daß die Geschichte der Menschheit nunmehr in das Stadium ihres Alters eingetreten sei und man den Untergang erwarten müsse. Er leugnet also nicht, wie etwa früher der Apologet Arnob oder jetzt der Dichter Prudentius,

[14] D 4,7f. (*REAug* 39 (1993), 418; vgl. auch 405f.). Aus civ. dei 18,54 ist bekannt, daß die comites Iovius und Gaudentius im J. 407 unnachsichtig gegen Statuen vorgingen. Das Gesetz wurde im J. 408 noch einmal erneuert (CTh XVI 10,19). Augustinus kommt in seinem übrigen Schrifttum wiederholt auf die Zerstörung von Idolen zu sprechen, z.B. contr. Faust., cons. evang., contr. epist. Par.; vgl. dazu T.C.G. Thornton: 'The Destruction of Idols — Sinful or meritorious?' *JThSt* 37 (1986), 121ff.

[15] Die Datierung der beiden Predigten kann nicht allzu lange nach dem Kaiserbesuch in Rom (Winter 303/4) liegen (D 22,4; *REAug* 40 (1994), 175; D 24,25f.; ibid. 37 (1991), 75f.). Der Bischof kommt noch öfter auf dieses Ereignis zu sprechen, das die Zeitgenossen sehr beeindruckt haben muß, z.B. ep. 232,2; en. in ps. 65,4 usw.; zur Datierung vgl. S. Döpp: *Zeitgeschichte in Dichtungen Claudians* (Wiesbaden, 1980), 211ff.

den sichtbaren Niedergang, aber fällt auch nicht in Niedergeschlagenheit und Verzweiflung wie der Gallier Salvian. Er legt seinen Zuhörern vielmehr dar, daß die Geschichte der Menschheit seit der Vertreibung aus dem Paradies eine Kette von Unglücksfällen und Krankheiten sei, die nötig seien, um die Menschen zu ermahnen, ihr Heil nicht in irdischem Glück zu suchen[16]. In dieser eindringlichen Mahnung zur Umkehr klingt bereits die geschichtstheologische Konzeption des großen Werkes 'De civitate dei' an, die in sermo D 23 noch deutlicher zum Vorschein kommt; denn nunmehr ist es sein Bestreben, ähnlich wie in der ersten Hälfte des 'Gottesstaates', die stets propagierte Gerechtigkeit des Eroberervolkes als bloßen Eigennutz zu entlarven. Schließlich gelingt es ihm wie in der Predigt D 6, den bekannten Vorwurf der Heiden zu entkräften, daß Kriegs- und Notzeiten als eine Folge des Verbots der alten Götterkulte zu erklären seien. Freilich hat sich die Erwartung, daß sich aus D 23 weitere Fragmente von Ciceros Schrift 'De re publica' gewinnen lassen, nicht erfüllt, da der Bischof nur ungenau und verkürzt zitiert[17].

Mit den hier angedeuteten Punkten erschöpfen sich jedoch die Auskünfte nicht, welche in den Mainzer Predigten über die Heiden enthalten sind. Über jene unmittelbaren Auseinandersetzungen hinaus ist auf die auch von Christen noch immer gepflegten heidnischen Praktiken einzugehen, welche Augustinus wiederholt mit heftigem Tadel aufgreift. Obwohl die seit alters überkommenen Zauberrituale durch kaiserliche Gesetze seit geraumer Zeit verboten waren, sind noch immer, wie der Bischof in der Predigt D 18 über den Märtyrer Quadratus kundtut, etwa Beschwörungskünste bei schwerer Krankheit lebendig, denen man weiterhin mehr vertraut als der Zuflucht zu den durch ihr Glaubenszeugnis geadelten Märtyrern. So wie der Oberhirte von Hippo an dieser Stelle voller Abscheu die unerlaubten, teuflischen, verabscheuungswerten und mit

[16] D 5,14 (*REAug* 39 (1993), 84; vgl. auch 63f.): Fratres, cottidie murmuratur adversus deum: 'Mala tempora et dura tempora'. Nugae vapulant, unde loquebamur: Mala tempora, dura tempora; et tamen eduntur munera. Für die eindringliche Mahnung zur Umkehr benützt der Prediger das Bild von den zwei Wegen (Matth. 7,13f.). Zur Untergangsstimmung in der Spätantike noch immer grundlegend J. Geffcken: *Der Ausgang des griechisch-römischen Heidentums* (Darmstadt, 1963; Nachdruck von 1929), 90ff.

[17] Es handelt sich um den Satz D 23,7 (*Philologia sacra. Biblische und patristische Studien für H.J. Frede und W. Thiele zu ihrem 70. Geburtstag*, hrsg. von R. Gryson (Freiburg, 1993), 542f.; (vgl. auch 533): Nam et hoc putaverunt quidam iustitiam non esse natura, sed opinione constitui, id est hoc esse iustum — immo vocari iustum — quod homines iustum esse voluerunt pacto quodam societatis humanae, non aliqua natura iustitiae; vgl. auch H. Hagendahl: *Augustine and the Latin Classics* (Göteborg, 1967), 112ff. Zu den heidnischen Vorwürfen gegen den Niedergang des Reiches in den christiana tempora und der Antwort des Bischofs, die Heiden sollten in ihren eigenen Schriften lesen, vgl. D 6,12f. (*REAug* 39 (1993), 103ff.; vgl. auch 94f.): Eine Zeit, in der Amphitheater und Theater verfallen, sei besser als eine Zeit, in der diese gebaut werden!), vgl. jetzt G. Madec: '«Tempora christiana». Expression du triomphalisme chrétien ou récrimination païenne?' in: *Scientia Augustiniana. Festschr. für A. Zumkeller* (Würzburg, 1975), 112ff.

dem Kirchenbann zu belegenden incantationes seiner Glaubensgefährten brandmarkt[18], reagiert er in der Predigt D 23 mit aller Heftigkeit, als er vernimmt, daß man in christlichen Kreisen die überkommene Astrologie mit der Führung der drei Weisen aus dem Morgenland durch einen Stern rechtfertigen zu können glaubt. Schließlich sahen die Neubekehrten eine ähnliche Legitimation für die vertrauten heidnischen Bräuche in der Gabe des Weihrauchs, welche die Magier dem neugeborenen Messias darbrachten. Augustinus hilft sich im ersten Fall mit dem Auftrag der Engel, den er der astronomischen Beobachtung der drei Weisen voranstellt, im zweiten Fall sieht er seine wichtigste Stütze darin, daß er das Überbringen der Magiergeschenke in aller Schärfe vom Verbrennen der heidnischen Dämonenopfer abgrenzt[19]. Aber auch noch in anderen Punkten mußte er sich mit den Gebildeten unter seinen christlichen Zuhörern auseinandersetzen, die auf heidnische Einflüsterungen hörten. Wie die Predigt D 6 belegt, reichte es den Gesprächspartnern und Fragestellern nicht, wenn er nach dem Vorbild früherer Apologeten die Kultbilder als wertlose Gegenstände aus Holz oder Stein entlarvte, deren Vernichtung mit dem Niedergang der gegenwärtigen Zeiten nichts zu tun habe. Er duldet es auch nicht, daß man zwischen dem rituellen Gestus des Anbetens eines Götterbildes und der Verehrung dessen schied, was durch das Symbol lediglich angedeutet werde. Numina und Dämonen sind und bleiben für ihn unreine Geister, die den Menschen verführen, wie er es in seiner Schrift 'De divinatione daemonum' in aller Klarheit ausführte. Selbst mit der Verehrung einer Kaiserstatue bzw. mit der Benennung sacrilegus für einen, der dem Herrscherbild nicht die gebührende Reverenz erwies, kann er sich nicht anfreunden[20]. Schließlich muß er sich in der Predigt D 26 noch einmal mit dem gleichen Problem befassen, als ihm gebildete Heiden begegneten, welche die Anbetung von Statuen damit rechtfertigten, daß sie die Götter als Naturelemente verstanden, etwa Neptun als Wasser oder Vulcanus als Feuer, eine Interpretation, die einst schon der Antiquar Terentius Varro in seinen Antiquitates angeboten hatte. Auch hier zeigt sich der Bischof zu keinerlei Zugeständnissen bereit, wie dies auch aus seiner Schrift

[18] D 18,7 (*AB* 110 (1992), 301; vgl. auch 293f.): Incantationes illicitae, diabolicae, detestandae atque anathemandae. Der Bischof kann sich hier auf ein kaiserliches Gesetz vom J. 392 berufen, nach dem Astrologie, Haruspizin und Wunderheilungen mit Hilfe heidnischer Zauberformeln streng verboten waren (CTh XVI 10,12).

[19] D 23,16 (*Philologia Sacra* 550f.; vgl. 548); ibid. 13 über die vorausgehende Verkündigung der Engel: A quibus audierunt? Profecto ab angelis, aliqua admonitione revelationis. Hier ist er bestrebt, die Beobachtung der Sterne als bedeutungslose, orientalische Sitte herunterzuspielen, da im Bericht des Matthaeus 2,2 von einem vorausgehenden Auftrag der Engel nicht die Rede ist. Zum Weihrauch ibid. 18 (ibid. 553): Magi tus dederunt, non incenderant ... Haec, inquam, offerebantur deo secundum vetus testamentum, sed mutavit hoc novo testamento.

[20] D 6,8 (*REAug* 39 (1993), 101; vgl. auch 92): 'Quid ergo colitis?' Respondent: 'Numina simulacrorum. Adoramus quidem quod videmus, colimus autem quod non videmus'. Die allegorische Verehrung von Statuen geht auf den Mittelplatonimus zurück und war bes. im Osten weit verbreitet (vgl. J. Pépin: *Mythe et allégorie. Les origines grecques et les contestations judéo-chrétiennes* (Paris 1976²), 351ff.). Die Zurückhaltung gegen das Wort sacrilegus bezieht sich auf die Verehrung von Kaiserstatuen; denn auch der Kaiser sei ein Mensch (7).

gegen den Manichäer Faustus hervorgeht. Selbst die Anbetung von Säulen und Steinen in einer christlichen Kirche bleibt für ihn ein unerträglicher Greuel[21].

III.

In einem weiteren Abschnitt ist auf einige *innergemeindliche* Themen einzugehen, welche in den neu ans Licht getretenen Dokumenten sichtbar werden. Als erstes ist ein Problem zu nennen, das Bischöfen wie Priestern in der Frühzeit des Christentums erhebliche Schwierigkeiten bereitete. Es war der Aufschub der Taufe häufig bis ans Lebensende, da man der durch das Sakrament gewonnenen Gnade nicht mehr verlustig gehen wollte. Die Folge war nicht selten eine laxe Moralauffassung, da die Taufanwärter die Gewähr einer himmlischen Belohnung noch immer vor sich zu haben glaubten. Daher redet der Bischof von Hippo in der Predigt D 14 seinen Zuhörern, insbesondere den Katechumenen, ernsthaft ins Gewissen, ihr Leben grundlegend zu ändern und den Empfang des Taufsakramentes nicht leichtfertig auf einen späteren Zeitpunkt aufzusparen. Niemand, so meinte er, kenne Tag und Stunde seines Todes und die den Christen versprochene göttliche Barmherzigkeit liege außerhalb jeder menschlichen Berechnung[22]. Darin sieht er auch eine glaubwürdige Entgegnung auf einen gravierenden Einwand mancher Heiden; denn bekanntlich zögerten diese nicht, die ihnen so warm empfohlene fides christiana in höchstem Maße unmoralisch zu nennen, weil ihre Anhänger für alle Vergehen mit einer gewissen Sicherheit auf die Nachsicht ihres Gottes hoffen konnten. Wie erinnerlich, sieht noch der altgläubige Historiker Zosimus darin das entscheidende Stimulans für die Bekehrung Konstantins des Großen; denn nur so habe dieser für die frevelhafte Hinrichtung seiner Gattin Fausta und seines Sohnes Crispus auf Verzeihung hoffen können. Ob der Bischof seine Erfolgschancen verbesserte, wenn er in D 16 offenherzig von der eigenen Umkehr und Taufe in Mailand berichtet, mag bezweifelt werden[23]. Ein sozialer Teilaspekt dieser Problematik ist der Versuch von Katechumenen, also noch nicht getauften Kirchenbesuchern, sich sehr früh mit Hilfe ihres Reichtums ein Grab im geheiligten Boden des Kirchengebäudes zu sichern. Es gehe nicht an, so antwortet er

[21] D 26,17 und bes. 35 (*RecAug* 26 (1992), 103 und bes. 117): Non simulacra colo, sed quod significant simulacra. Dazu F. Dolbeau a.a.O. 86: 'La théologie des éléments, qu'il réfute ici correspond, grosso modo, à une thèse platonico-stoicienne, vulgarisée en latin par Varron (mit Verweis auf Min. Fel. 19,10, wo auf den Stoiker Zenon, und auf Aug. civ. dei 8,5, wo auf Varro Bezug genommen wird).

[22] D 14,7 (*RBen* 103 (1993), 319; vgl. auch 311f.): Deus enim promisit indulgentiam, mathematicus forte tibi promisit crastinum diem. Observa, miser: fallitur mathematicus, et damnat te deus...; zum Taufaufschub allgemein vgl. K. Baus-E. Ewig: *Die Reichskirche nach Konstantin d. Gr.* (Handb. d. Kirchengesch. II 1; Freiburg, 1973), 304f.

[23] D 16 (ibid. 327ff.) und Conf. 9,4,8-11; zu der von Zosimus vertretenen Interpretation der Konstantinbekehrung vgl. S.G. Hall: *TRE* XIX (1990), 497.

in Predigt D 7 auf dieses ungebührliche Verlangen, Wohlhabenden und Einflußreichen ein marmornes sepulcrum zu gewähren, während man den Armen eine ähnliche Bitte versage. Bezeuge nicht das biblische Beispiel des Lazarus, so fährt er fort, daß das Begräbnis des Leibes für das Schicksal der Seele ohne Belang sei?[24]

Nur andeutungsweise kann auf den Inhalt der beiden Predigten D 12 und 13 eingegangen werden, welche eine *innergemeindliche Diskussion* über den Wert von Ehe und Jungfräulichkeit zum Inhalt haben. Augustinus entscheidet sich hierbei entgegen der Meinung der Manichäer, welche die eheliche Gemeinschaft selbst liberorum procreandorum causa abwerteten, aber auch gegen die Anhänger des Hieronymusgegners Jovinian, des Verächters der Jungfräulichkeit, für einen mittleren Weg, wie er ihn auch in seinen Schriften 'De bono coniugali' und 'De sancta virginitate' vertritt. Freilich kann er nicht umhin, den Märtyrern wie etwa Perpetua und Felicitas bei ihrer Höherschätzung der Gottesliebe eine Ausnahmesituation zuzubilligen[25]. Als weiteres innergemeindliches Problem sei die Auslegung dunkler Stellen der Heiligen Schriften angesprochen, wie es sich Augustinus in mehreren dieser Predigten angelegen sein läßt. Er tut dies wiederum im Hinblick auf die Manichäer, welche mit dem Hinweis auf gewisse Widersprüche zwischen dem Alten und dem Neuen Testament das erstere gänzlich verwarfen. Dies läßt sich z.B. in der Predigt D 17 beobachten, wo er einer Wunderheilung Christi am Beispiel der Stelle Luk. 13,11-13 über die verkrümmte, 18 Jahre darniederliegende Frau sowie über die zu Beginn des Kapitels genannten 18 Opfer unter dem Turm von Siloah zusammen mit dem 3 Jahre unfruchtbaren Feigenbaum einen geistligen Sinn unterlegt. Er identifiziert nämlich die Frau mit der sündigen, nach einer gewissen Zeit erlösten Menschheit und den Turm von Siloah mit dem Kreuz Christi, während er die Dreizahl als die drei Epochen der Menschheit interpretiert, die Zeit vor dem Gesetz, unter dem Gesetz und unter der Gnade[26]. Tut sich Augustinus, um eine weitere Interpretation aufzugreifen, in D 11 noch relativ leicht, den scheinbaren Gegensatz zwischen Gottes- und Nächstenliebe zu erklären, indem er die erstere in eine direkte Abhängigkeit zur zweiten

[24] D 7,3 (*REAug* 37 (1991), 295): Quid profuit fortasse et marmoratum sepulcrum animae apud inferos, guttam de digito extremo sitienti et non accipienti? vgl. allgemein dazu F. van der Meer: *Augustinus der Seelsorger* (Köln, ²1954), 166ff.

[25] D 12 (*RBen* 102 (1992), 267ff.) und D 13 (ibid. 282ff.). Er führt die Diskussion am Beispiel von Matth. 19,3-12 und 1 Kor. 7,3-7; 27-33 sowie von Luk. 14,26 und Eph. 6,2; vgl. dazu E. Schmitt: *Le mariage chrétien dans l'œuvre de saint Augustin* (Paris, 1983), 32ff.

[26] D 17 (*RBen* 104 (1994), 34ff.) Die Zahl 18 wird noch weiter aufgeschlüsselt, in dreimal sechs (6 Tage der Schöpfung vor der göttlichen Ruhe), so daß die Opfer des Turms 18 Jahre, d.h. dreimal sechs Jahre verstreichen lassen, ohne sich zu bekehren. Augustinus sieht sich zu einem solchen 'enseignement spirituel' durch konkrete Anfragen aus seiner Gemeinde veranlaßt (5); sein Ziel ist es zu beweisen: Scriptura divina non potest mentiri, os veritatis non potest menitiri (3). Die Schlußbemerkung über nonnulli male intellegentes, welche zwischen der mansuetudo evangelii und der asperitas legis einen Widerspruch erkennen wollen, weist auf die Manichäer.

bringt[27], so wird ihm der offenkundige Tadel des Petrus durch den Völkerapostel Paulus im Galaterbrief 2,11 ff. zu einem nicht ganz leicht zu lösenden Problem. Dies beweist bekanntlich die lang andauernde Kontroverse mit dem Bibelübersetzer Hieronymus. In der Predigt D 10 wählt er nicht den Ausweg, daß Petrus nur ein Scheingefecht geführt habe, als er an den jüdischen Ritualvorschriften festhalten wollte, er meint vielmehr, dieser sei einer Täuschung gelegen. So sei der Apostel durch sein Nachgeben gegenüber einem Untergebenen zu einem Vorbild christlicher Demut geworden. Auf diese Weise kann der Interpret sowohl an der Untadeligkeit des Petrus als auch an der Unantastbarkeit des biblischen Textes festhalten[28].

IV.

Schließlich soll diese Vorstellung nicht abgeschlossen werden, ohne wenigstens einige Beispiele aus dem *Alltagsleben* aufzugreifen, auf die Augustinus auch in den bisher unbekannten Dokumenten nicht verzichtet. Beginnt man mit der Gemeinschaft im Haus, so fällt auf, daß er mehrfach Bilder aus dem Zusammenleben von Herren und Sklaven aufgreift, die seine Einstellung zur Sklaverei erneut sichtbar werden lassen. Wenn er in der Predigt D 21 das Herrschaftsgefüge von Herren, Sklaven und Sklaven der Sklaven (als Besitz von servi peculiares) benützt, um die dreifache Abhängigkeit von Gott, menschlichem Geist und Körper zu demonstrieren, so kann er das nur tun, weil er wie auch sonst, die rechtliche und soziale Abhängigkeit einer gewissen Bevölkerungsgruppe als Teil der göttlichen Schöpfung, der irdischen Friedensordnung und als Folge der naturgegebenen Unterschiede der Menschen nicht in Frage stellt[29]. Wenn er weiterhin auf die geistlose Erfüllung von Aufträgen durch

[27] D 11 (*RBen* 102 (1992), 63ff.); er orientiert sich hierbei an Ps. 10,6: Qui enim diligit iniquitatem, odit animam suam.

[28] D 10,3 (ibid. 53): Egit enim Petrus ut semel reprehenderetur, cum ab eo reprehensor aequo animo ferretur; exemplum non praebuit, sicut Christus, omnimodae perfectionis, sed totius praebuit exemplum humilitatis. Über das Verständnis dieser Stelle aus dem Galaterbrief führte Augustinus einen längeren Disput mit Hieronymus, der dieser Auseinandersetzung zwischen den beiden Aposteln den nötigen Ernst absprach; vgl. R. Hennings: *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus und ihr Streit um den Kanon des Alten Testaments und die Auslegung von Gal. 2,11-14* (Diss. Heidelberg, 1991).

[29] D 21,5 (*REAug* 37 (1991), 275): Quemadmodum si tres homines ponamus: unum hominem habentem servum, habentem et dominum, quomodo plerumque evenit, ut servi peculiosi habeant servos. Es geht hierbei um die servi peculiares (oder medii), die in den Digesten als peculiatus bezeichnet werden (Dig. 19,1,13,4 und 21,1,18,2), und um die servi vicarii, die auf der untersten Stufe der sozialen Hierarchie stehen; vgl. H.G. Heumann-Seuckel: *Handlexikon zu den Quellen des römischen Rechts* (Graz, 1971), 412.

Sklaven und deren stete Furcht anspielt, so durfte er damit erneut auf Resonanz bei seinen Hörern rechnen, die auch im Falle einer bescheidenen Haushaltsführung in der Regel einige Unfreie zu ihrer Familie zählten[30]. Wiederum dem häuslichen Leben ist in der Predigt D 15 die schöne Passage entnommen, wo er das Gesetz mit einem Erzieher vergleicht, der seinen Schutzbefohlenen zu seinem wahren Lehrer und Herrn hinführt, in diesem Fall zu Christus selbst. Auch ein solches Bild wird nur verständlich, wenn man sich vor Augen hält, daß in den Häusern der Wohlhabenderen Pädagogen und Ammen zum Dienstpersonal gehörten[31]. Mit einer anderen Parallele, die in der gleichen Predigt zu finden ist, lenkt der Verfasser den Blick über das Haus hinaus ins öffentliche Leben. Um die himmlische Belohnung der Märtyrer jedem anschaulich vor Augen zu führen, greift er auf die Privilegien zurück, welche die Angehörigen des Heeres nach ihrem anstrengenden, aktiven Dienst erwarteten. Auch dieses Nebeneinander ist nur dadurch zu verstehen, daß er vor sich manche altgediente Soldaten weiß, welche sich nach ihrer etwa 20jährigen Militärzeit, versehen mit einer reichen Prämie, in der Stadt niedergelassen hatten und seitdem zur Oberschicht gehörten[32]. Schließlich verwundert es nicht, daß sich Augustinus manchen Rückgriff auf die Kunst der Ärzte nicht entgehen läßt, die er mit der Erlösungstat Christi in eine Linie setzt. So greift er, um nur einen Beleg aus der Predigt D 22 auszuwählen, dort, wo er auf die Berufung vor allem der Armen und Unwissenden zu sprechen kommt (weil Christus so die Krankheit des menschlichen Stolzes heilen wollte), zu einer ähnlichen Methode des Arztes. Auch dieser behandle, so meint er, eine Krankheit oft mit einer gegensätzlichen Methode, Kaltes mit Hilfe des Warmen und umgekehrt, Trockenes mit Feuchtem und wiederum Feuchtes mit Trockenem. Wenn man also sehe, daß die Kunst der Medizin einen Kranken mit dem Gegenteil zu kurieren versuche, brauche man sich nicht zu wundern, wenn die an Hochmut leidende Menschheit durch Gottes Erniedrigung in der Krippe geheilt wurde[33]. Ähnlich

[30] Z.B. D 19,5 (*RBen* 104 (1994), 60): Timor servilis; 16,7 (*RBen* 103 (1993), 331): Vel non murmuret contra castigatorem, cum videat se plagis dignum ut misericordiam mereatur; D 18,4 (*AB* 110 (1992), 299: Die menschliche Schwäche bedarf des Sklaven, aber der Herr hat für ihn zu sorgen (Gott allein braucht keine Diener); ähnlich D 23,10 (*Philologia sacra* 555f.): Dienst für den Herrn — Sorge für den Sklaven; D 2,13 (*REAug*. 38 (1992), 73): Ein unbotmäßiger Sklave ist ein perversor ordinis (ille enim magis audiendus qui maiorem habet potestatem, ille qui legitimam); ibid. 19: Auch ein noch so treuer Sklave darf seine Herrin nicht beschuldigen usw.

[31] D 15,2 (*AB* 110 (1992), 283): Lex, ut ait apostolus (Gal. 3,24), tamquam paedagogus est. Paedagogus non instruit, sed ad magistrum ducit. Instructus munitusque a magistro, iam non erit sub paedagogo.

[32] Ibid. 4 (ibid. 284): Considerate labores militantium, arma portantium, quae pericula subeant, quam dura et ardua tolerant, in frigoribus, in aestubus, fame, siti, vulneribus, mortibus (solche Sätze deuten noch immer auf ein hohes Ansehen des Soldatenstandes in dieser Zeit). Ihr Trost ist: Ecce finitur labor, post paucos annos succedet otium, bene nobis erit, sumptus non deerunt, immunitas aderit … Dazu kurz A. Demandt: *Die Spätantike. Römische Geschichte von Diocletian bis Justinian 284-565 n.Chr.* (München, 1989), 265.

[33] D 22,4 (*REAug* 40 (1994), 174f.; vgl. auch 156); ähnlich bereits doctr. christ. I 14,13 u.ö.

dient in der Predigt D 23 die Heilmethode des Arztes dem Sprecher zur Erklärung dafür, warum das Verbrennen der heidnischen Dämonenopfer durch die christliche Gabe des Weihrauchs abgelöst wurde. Wie Christus selbst halte der kluge Arzt bereits am Mittag ein anderes Mittel bereit als am Morgen. Nicht die Kunst habe sich geändert, sondern die Art der Krankheit, welche eine unterschiedliche Therapie verlange[34]. Letztendlich läßt sich der Prediger wie an vielen anderen Stellen seines Schrifttums nicht einen Seitenhieb auf die Vorliebe der Gläubigen für Zirkus- und Gladiatorenspiele entgehen. In der Predigt D 11 über die Gottes- und Nächstenliebe findet er kein besseres Beispiel für die falsche Liebe als den Fanatismus der Zirkusbesucher für gewisse Gespanne und Rennfahrer. In drei rhetorisch kunstvoll ausgestalteten Kapiteln vermittelt er voller Entrüstung einen Einblick in das Verhalten seiner Gemeindemitglieder bei den beliebten Wagenrennen und Tierhetzen, die häufig eine größere Anziehungskraft entwickelten als Predigten und Gottesdienste. Er geißelt diese foedissima et turpia studia in kurzen, stoßartig herausgepreßten Sätzen, welche die Verzückung der Zuschauer treffend wiedergeben: Diligis aurigam; instigas omnes quos diligis, ut tecum spectent tecum ament tecum clament, tecum insaniant … Amatores aurigae in spectaculo toti pendent, non sunt nisi in illo quem vident … Non est secum[35].

Faßt man zusammen, so wird deutlich, daß die neugefundenen Predigten eine breite Palette von Themen abdecken, wie sie aus den übrigen sermones und epistulae des Bischofs bekannt sind. Sie zeigen aber auch den Prediger als geschickten Redner, der es versteht, durch Einsatz rhetorischer Mittel seine Zuhörer zu fesseln und so seine Anliegen wirksam durchzusetzen. Selbst wenn man in Rechnung stellt, daß manche Textpassage durch Stenographen und spätere Abschreiber verändert wurde, läßt sich verstehen, warum Augustinus in D 22 nicht ohne Stolz verkündet, daß viele seiner Zuhörer im Glauben hinreichend gefestigt seien, aber trotzdem zu ihm in die Kirche kämen, weil sie sich von seiner Beredsamkeit so sehr angezogen fühlten[36].

[34] D 23,16 (*Philologia sacra* 551): Der Vergleichspunkt ist die Veränderung der Opfergabe zwischen Juden bzw. Heiden und den Christen; vgl. auch D 25,20 (*REAug* 37 (1991), 72): Morbi sunt magni, sed maior est medicus (mit Bezug auf Christus); vgl. jetzt allgemein G. Madec: 'Christus, unter der Rubrik e. Medicus', *AL* I 873f. und N. Benseddik: 'La pratique médicale en Afrique au temps d'Augustin', in: *Africa romana. Atti del VI convegno di studio* 2 (Sassari, 1989), 663ff.

[35] D 11,8f. (*RBen* 102 (1992), 70f.). Ähnlich eindrucksvoll schildert Augustinus den Sog der Massen bei Gladiatorenspielen, den sein Freund Alypius in Rom erlebte (conf. 6,13). Auch die übrigen Predigten Augustins, aber auch die Psalmenerklärungen u.a. sind voll von solchen Klagen. Belege jetzt bei W. Weismann: Amphitheatrum, AL I 300ff.

[36] D 22,1 (*REAug* 40 (1994), 171): … nec desunt qui etiam id in quo firmi sunt propter nos ipsos a nobis audire velint. Die Art, wie der Prediger mit seinem lebhaft ihn begleitenden Publikum umgeht (Aufforderung zum Schweigen, Lob für rasches Auffassen, gemeinsame Rückerinnerung, Anreiz zum Widerspruch), vergleicht F. Dolbeau zu Recht mit der eines modernen Conférenciers (ibid. 160).

Some Critiques on Augustine's View of Sexuality Revisited

M. Lamberigts, Leuven

In her well-known work *Eunuchen für das Himmelreich*, the German theologian, U. Ranke-Heinemann, begins her chapter on Augustine with the following words: 'Derjenige, der die Lust- und Sexualfeindlichkeit mit dem Christentum zur einer systematischen Einheit verschmolz, war der größte der Kirchenväter, der heilige Augustinus (†430)'[1]. With these words, she gives radical expression to the unease which still exists concerning Augustine's view of sexuality[2], unease which, though already present in Augustine's own time, persistently recurs today. Indeed, in his dispute with the bishop of Hippo, the Pelagian Julian of Aeclanum, a younger contemporary of Augustine, condemned Augustine's view of original sin and his related view of sexuality, often with rather pointed arguments[3]. It is partially thanks to Augustine that we not only have numerous fragments of several of Julian's letters and one of his works, but also the first six books of his *Ad Florum*[4] in their entirety. One should not be surprised therefore that the bishop of Aeclanum's reproaches are referred to

[1] U. Ranke-Heinemann, *Eunuchen für das Himmelreich. Katholische Kirche und Sexualität* (Hamburg, 1988), p. 81.

[2] Cf. also K. Flasch, *Augustin: Einführung in sein Denken* (Stuttgart, 1980), pp. 209-212, and, although more nuanced, J. van Oort, 'Mani, Augustinus en de seksuele begeerte', in G. Quispel, *Gnosis. De derde component van de Europese cultuurtraditie* (Utrecht, 1988), pp. 119-129, p. 119.

[3] A. Bruckner's, *Julian von Eclanum. Sein Leben und seine Lehre. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Pelagianismus* (Texte und Untersuchungen, 15,3; Leipzig, 1897), remains the most thorough biography of Julian. For a brief introduction to this intriguing figure see, for example, my article 'Julian of Aeclanum: a Plea for a Good Creator', in *Augustiniana* 38 (1988), pp. 5-24, pp. 5-8 (with additional bibliography).

[4] The constantly recurring contention that we only have fragmentary information on Julian's contribution to the controversy with Augustine is not entirely correct. In this regard see, for example, E.A. Clark, 'Vitiated Seeds and Holy Vessels: Augustine's Manichean Past', in Id., *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith: Essays on Late Ancient Christianity* (Studies in Women and Religion, 20; Lewiston-Queenston, 1986), pp. 291-349, pp. 291-292. As far as Augustine's approach is concerned, J. Mausbach, *Die Ethik des heiligen Augustinus* II (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1929[2]), pp. 18-19, notes the following: 'Es gibt kaum eine polemische Schrift in der Weltliteratur, die den Argumenten des Gegners so ehrlich und weitherzig Raum gönnt, wie Augustins letztes Werk gegen Julian'; see also S. Kopp, *Aurelius Augustinus. Schriften gegen die Semipelagianer* (Sankt Augustinus. Der Lehrer der Gnade; Würzburg, 1955), p. 25.

time and again by more recent critics[5]. In this presentation, I would like to limit myself to Augustine's reply to Julian's critique in connection with *concupiscentia carnis*[6].

For Julian himself, the *concupiscentia carnis* is not a deficiency of nature, but rather a quality[7]. As a matter of fact, he refers to it as *naturalis*[8] and is convinced that it can be directed and controlled by the human spirit[9]. Furthermore, it is for him the pre-eminent means willed by God without which no successful procreation can take place: without *concupiscentia* no procreation! For this reason alone, Julian consistently refuses to describe the *concupiscentia carnis* as a consequence of the fall[10]. Given that Augustine sometimes qualifies this desire as *diabolica*, Julian concludes that one can no longer describe the *nuptiae corporales* as willed by God and one must condemn it accordingly[11]. Julian, however, sees a close relationship between marriage, procreation and *concupiscentia*, on the basis of which he finds it impossible to agree with Augustine's view on *concupiscentia carnis*. He proposes, therefore, that for Augustine, the devil alone must be the founder of marriage, creator of the genitalia, agitator of men, fructifier of women and creator of children[12]. It is also clear for Julian that the old Augustine remained very much a Manichean[13].

[5] Cf. Ranke-Heinemann, *o.c.*, p. 92: 'Denn sosehr Augustinus recht hatte, sich gegen die Manichaër zu wenden, so unrecht hatte er weitgehend in seinem Kampf gegen den pelagianischen Bischof Julian von Eclanum'. A well founded survey of Julian's various criticisms of Augustine can be found in Clark, *a.c.*, passim.

[6] For Julian also the *concupiscentia carnis* cannot be reduced to sexual desire. Cf., for example, *Ad Turbantium*, frg. 144a, *CCSL* 88, p. 370.

[7] With regard to Julian's understanding of the first human being and his sin, see M. Lamberigts, 'Julien d'Éclane et Augustin d'Hippone: deux conceptions d'Adam', in B. Bruning-M. Lamberigts-J. Van Houtem (éds.), *Collectanea Augustiniana: Mélanges T.J. Van Bavel* (BETL, 92A; Leuven, 1990) = *Augustiniana* 40 (1990), pp. 373-410), especially pp. 373-382.

[8] Cf., for example, *Ad Florum* V,5, *PL* 45, col. 1435.

[9] 'Quoniam ex imparibus bonis compositi sumus, animum corpori debere dominari, quorum alterum nobis cum diis, alterum cum beluis (...) esse commune; et ideo id quod est melius, id est animum, virtute praeditum (...) et membris corporis bene et cupiditatibus imperare'; *Ad Turbantium*, frg. 116, *CCSL* 88, p. 366; see also frg. 233, *CCSL* 88, p. 383.

[10] Cf. Lamberigts, *a.c.*, pp. 16-19.

[11] Cf. *Epistula ad Romanos*, frg. 2, *CCSL* 88, p. 396.

[12] All these reproaches can be found together in *Ad Turbantium*, frg. 257, *CCSL*, p. 386; in addition, see *Epistula ad Romanos*, frg. 3, *CCSL*, p. 397; *Ad Turbantium*, frg. 36, *CCSL* 88, p. 349; *Ad Florum* II,228, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 329.

[13] See, for example, *Ad Turbantium*, frg. 1, *CCSL* 88, pp. 340-341; frg. 15, *CCSL* 88, p. 343; frg. 62, *CCSL* 88, p. 356; frg. 66b, *CCSL* 88, p. 357; frg. 78, *CCSL* 88, p. 360; frg. 184, *CCSL* 88, p. 377; frg. 186, *CCSL* 88, p. 186 etc. Lack of space prevents us from taking a more in depth look at Julian's understanding of Manicheism. Suffice to say that during a visit to Carthage he met the Manichean Honoratus, a figure who was not unfamiliar to Augustine; cf. *Ad Florum* V,26, *PL* 45, col. 1464. Concerning Honoratus, see A. Mandouze, *Prosopographie de l'Afrique chrétienne (303-533)* (Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire, 1; Paris, 1982), p. 564. Besides this, Julian appears to have been familiar with the work of Serapion of Thmuis against the Manicheans; see N. Cipriani, 'L'Autore dei testi pseudobasiliani riportati nel C. Iulianum (I,16-

In his later years Augustine responded repeatedly and at length to the objections formulated by Julian and was therefore quite familiar with this critique of his work. It goes without saying, therefore, that in the time allotted to me I should reflect on Augustine's reply[14]. In so doing I will focus exclusively on Augustine's response to criticism of his view of *concupiscentia carnis* as such[15]. It is not my intention to offer thereby an apology for the bishop of Hippo, but rather, in a manner of speaking, give the accused the right to reply to Julian and some recent critics.

Before closely examining Augustine's reply to Julian's critique of *concupiscentia*, it is be important for us to recall that Augustine himself maintained, even for fallen humanity, the ever existing reality of human freedom. Since the fall of Adam, the human person had lost the theological *libertas boni*. Augustine, however, would not accept that humanity had lost the *liberum arbitrium*. Even for him, free will is born along with the person and is non-forfeitable. It is a will through which all people desire to be happy[16], and Augustine will emphasise

17) e la polemica agostiniana di Giuliano d'Eclano', in *Congresso internationale su S. Agostino nel XVI centenario della conversione* (15-20 settembre 1986). *Atti*. I. *Cronaco del Congresso. Sessioni generali. Sezione di studio* I (Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum, 24; Rome, 1987), pp. 439-449. Finally, Julian even brought up a Manichean text entitled *Epistula ad Menoch* during the discussion; cf. *Ad Florum*, III,166ff., *CSEL* 85,1, pp. 469ff.; in this regard see G.J.D. Aalders, 'L'Épître à Menoch, attribuée à Mani', in *Vigiliae Christianae* 14 (1960) 245-249. With regard to Julian's reproaches, see Clark, *a.c.*, especially pp. 304-315.

[14] Augustine's works *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* (2 books); *Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum* (4 books); *Contra Iulianum* (6 books) and *Opus imperfectum* (6 books) are the result of his controversy with Julian of Aeclanum.

[15] I do not intend to discuss the relationship between *concupiscentia carnis* and legal marriage, within which couples make good use of something bad if they do so for the purpose of procreating children whom they desire with a view to their spiritual rebirth. Nor is it my intention to examine Augustine's extremely important idea of marriage as a *societas*; in this regard see D.G. Hunter, 'Augustinian Pessimism? A New Look at Augustine's Teaching on Sex, Marriage and Celibacy', in *Augustinian Studies* 25 (1994), pp. 153-177.

[16] 'Hominis vero liberum arbitrium congenitum et omnino inamissibile si quaerimus, illud est quo beati omnes esse volunt, etiam hi qui ea nolunt, quae ad beatitudinem ducunt'; *Opus imperfectum* VI,11, *PL* 45, col. 1520; 'Qua beati esse omnes volumus, et nolle non possumus: sed haec ut beatus sit quisque non sufficit, nec ut vivat recte per quod beatus sit: quia non ita est homini congenita libertas immutabilis voluntatis qua *velit possitque bene agere*, sicut congenita est qua velit beatus esse; quod omnes volunt, et qui recte agere nolunt'; *Opus imperfectum* VI,12, *PL* 45, col. 1524; cf. also VI,26, *PL* 45, col. 1565-1566; *Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum* I,5, *CSEL* 60, p. 425; II,9, *CSEL* 60, p. 468; see also *De civitate Dei* XXII,30, *CCSL* 48, pp. 862ff. An enormous amount of literature exists on the distinction between *libertas* and *liberum arbitrium*. M. Huftier's 'Libre arbitre, liberté et péché chez saint Augustin', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 33 (1966) 187-218 remains the most basic study; cf. also F. Clodius, 'El libre albedrío según el "Opus imperfectum" de san Agustín', in *Anales de la Facultad de Teologia* 13 (1961), pp. 5-51; F.-J. Thonnard, 'La notion de nature chez saint Augustin. Ses progrès dans la polémique antipélagienne', in *Revue des études augustiniennes* 11 (1965), pp. 239-265; A. Mengarelli, 'La libertà nelle opere antipelagiane di S. Agostino', in *Sapienza* 29 (1976), pp. 73-81; F.J. Weismann, 'The Problematic of Freedom in St. Augustine: Towards a New Hermeneutics', in *Revue des études augustiniennes* 35 (1989), pp. 104-119. See also H. Staffner, 'Die Lehre des

time and again that this congenital, non-forfeitable and unchangeable will belongs to the very essence of human beings[17]. Augustine defended his own position on this point so often that it appears rather strange when one reads that the bishop of Hippo considered free will to have been completely lost due to the fall[18]. I emphasize this point because it will be useful later when I hope to prove that Augustine denies that nothing at all can be done about *concupiscentia*, but states on the contrary that a person, *sub gratia*, is in a position to grow in transcending and conquering the *concupiscentia carnis*.

Where Augustine's view of the *concupiscentia carnis* is concerned, it must be underlined that, in the absence of any additional appreciatory predicate, it continues to carry a negative connotation[19]. In the same context, Augustine does not, for example, distinguish himself from the New Testament use of ἐπιθυμία or ἡδονή, both of which frequently carry a negative connotation[20]. Augustine considered himself indebted to the Bible on this point[21].

hl. Augustinus über das Wesen der Erbsünde', in *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 79 (1957), pp. 385-416, who emphasises on p. 397 that, for Augustine, the human person cannot find happiness within himself precisely because he is made for God. See also in this regard *De civitate Dei* XII,9, *CCSL* 48, pp. 363-364; XIII,2, *CCSL* 48, pp. 385-386; XIX,25, *CCSL* 48, p. 696. I have the impression that an author such as Flasch, *o.c.*, pp. 189-190, does not do justice to the above mentioned texts, among others, when he proposes that the human person is not free. Moreover, he pays too little attention to the theological perspective within which Augustine speaks of the relationship *libertas-liberum arbitrium*. By neglecting the datum of faith that Christ alone can save, Flasch gives a presentation of Augustine's view of freedom which fundamentally distorts Augustine's own thought on the matter; cf. the pertinent critique of G. Madec, 'Sur une nouvelle introduction à la pensée d'Augustin', in *Revue des études augustiniennes* 27 (1982), pp. 100-111, esp. p. 109.

[17] Cf. *Opus imperfectum* V,38, *PL* 45, col. 1474; VI,12, *PL* 45, col. 1524; VI,25, *PL* 45, col. 1565.

[18] This position continues to be defended by authors such as E. Pagels, *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* (New York, 1988), pp. 99; 105; 107; 109; 120. See also my reaction to this position in 'Augustine, Julian of Aeclanum and E. Pagels' Adam, Eve, and the Serpent', in *Augustiniana* 39 (1989), pp. 393-435, especially pp. 396-407.

[19] It might be interesting to note in passing that I have never found technical terms such as *concupiscentia sexualis* or *libido sexualis* in Augustine, at least not in his anti-Pelagian writings. The two references to *libido sexuum* in *Opus imperfectum* II,88, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 224 and IV,43, *PL* 45, col. 1362 both belong to texts of Julian quoted by Augustine. J. van Oort's proposed reference to *concupiscentia sexualis* in *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* II,4, *CSEL* 60, p. 73 ('Augustine on Sexual Concupiscence and Original Sin', in E. Livingstone (ed.), *Studia Patristica*, vol. XXII (Leuven, 1989), p. 383) is simply incorrect. With regard to Augustine's use of *concupiscentia* and *libido*, see, for example, G. Bonner, 'Libido and Concupiscentia in St. Augustine', in Id., *God's Decree and Man's Destiny. Studies on the Thought of Augustine of Hippo* (London, 1987), number IX (= *Studia Patristica* 6 (TU, 81; 1962), pp. 303-314); Id., art. 'Concupiscentia', in C. Mayer (ed.), *Augustinus-Lexikon*, I,7/8 (Basel, 1994), col. 1113-1122 (with additional literature); J.M. Rist, *Augustine. Ancient Thought Baptized* (Cambridge, 1995²), esp. pp. 320-327.

[20] See G. Stählin, 'ἡδονή', in *Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* II (Stuttgart, 1960²), pp. 911-928, especially pp. 920-928; F. Büchsel, art. 'θυμός', in *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* III (Stuttgart, 1957²), pp. 168-172. K.E. Børresen, 'Patristic "Feminism": The Case of Augustine', in *Augustinian Studies* 25 (1994), pp. 139-152, pp. 148-149 rightly points out that it is not enough to read 'sola pars scripturae'.

[21] Cf. Bonner, *a.c.* (1994), col. 1114-1115.

This becomes very clear in fact in his interpretation of the story of the first human beings and their fall in Genesis 1-3, wherein the opposition between Gen 2,25: 'And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed' and 3,7: 'Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves' can be found[22]. The original absence of the feeling of shame due to *concupiscentia carnis* has, with Augustine, a theological connotation: absence of sin[23]. Such *concupiscentia carnis* — without the feeling of shame — could also have existed before the fall among the first human beings albeit in harmony with the will[24]. Augustine deemed it quite possible that a certain form of *concupiscentia carnis*, such as eating and drinking, might have been present in paradise if it took care of the well-being of the body or if it helped in procreation[25]. Therefore, one needs to view Augustine's comments on *concupiscentia carnis* not so much as an exposition on sexuality in itself but rather as a part of the flesh-spirit antinomy with which Paul was also familiar[26]. Augustine's point, in other words, is that due to the disobedience of the first human beings, the original harmony has been fundamentally disrupted, as the opposition between Gen 2,25 and 3,7 sufficiently shows. The experience of confusion and shame is a consequence of human disobedience before the creator. The disobedience of the flesh reveals what it means when a person no longer obeys God[27].

[22] For the version of the bible with which Augustine would have been familiar see B. Fischer (ed.), *Genesis* (Vetus Latina, 2. Genesis; Freiburg, 1951), pp. 55-56; 62.

[23] 'Audimus enim scripturae manifestissimum testimonium, contra quod vos obsurdescitis, cum obmutescere deberetis. Quis enim audiens, quod illi primi homines nudi erant et non pudebat eos, non videat, unde sit factum, ut post peccatum puderet eos nudos esse et ea membra, quorum puderet, festinarent succinctoriis qualibuscumque velare?'; *Opus imperfectum* III,74, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 404.

[24] Cf. *Contra Iulianum* III,57, *PL* 44, col. 732; see also *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* II,59, *CSEL* 42, pp. 317-318; *Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum* I,34-35, *CSEL* 60, pp. 450-452; *Opus imperfectum* I,68, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 75 etc. See also, for example, A. Zumkeller, *Aurelius Augustinus. Schriften gegen die Pelagianer* III (Sankt Augustinus. Der Lehrer der Gnade; Würzburg, 1977), p. 471; E.A. Clark, *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith. Essays on Late Ancient Christianity* (Studies in Women and Religion, 20; Lewiston-Queenston, 1986), p. 293.

[25] 'Ut omni modo rationali subdita voluntati, non alias adesset, nisi cum per illam vel saluti esset corporis, vel stirpis propagini consulendum'; *Contra Iulianum* IV,69, *PL* 44, col. 773.

[26] See P. Frederiksen, 'Beyond the Body/Soul Dichotomy. Augustine on Paul against the Manichees and the Pelagians', in *Recherches augustiniennes* 23 (1988), pp. 87-114, esp. 105-114.

[27] 'Iniustum enim erat ut obtemperaretur a servo suo, id est a corpore suo ei qui non obtemperat domino suo'; *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* I,7, *CSEL* 42, p. 218; see also I,24, *CSEL* 42, p. 237; II,14, *CSEL* 42, p. 266. It should be pointed out, however, that for Augustine and his predecessors it was an evident fact that human beings should be obedient to God: it was their duty and they would find happiness in it. As far as Augustine and the majority of the Church Fathers were concerned it was also logical that disobedience to God in whatever form it took had to lead to punishment. Cf., in this regard, the well documented conclusion of J. Gross, *Entstehungsgeschichte des Erbsündendogmas. Von der Bibel bis Augustinus* (Geschichte des Erbsündendogmas. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Problems vom Ursprung des Übels, I; Munich-Basel, 1960), pp. 254-255. The fact that the distance between Augustine and his predecessors on *concupiscentia* is not as great as many might think is clearly revealed by P. Burnell, 'Concupiscence and Moral Freedom in Augustine and before Augustine', in *Augustinian Studies* 26 (1995), pp. 49-63.

The rebellion of the flesh or the desire that goes its own way, are *indications* that after the fall, control over oneself was no longer free of difficulty[28], and it was precisely this lack of control which caused shame: the human person, as a rational being, knew that he was guilty of the loss of harmony in himself[29]. It seems clear to me, therefore, that the *concupiscentia carnis*, related to fallen humanity because of a theological motif, has a negative undertone, as is also the case, for instance, with fear, greed, obstinacy and lust for power[30]. This theological interpretation is confirmed in fact by its antithesis, the *bona concupiscentia*, which is interpreted by Augustine, with the bible in hand, as *concupiscentia spiritus* (Gal 5,17b) or as *concupiscentia sapientiae* (Wis 6,21)[31] and is in essence a longing for God's gift of love[32]. In addition, if we take into account the already mentioned fact that Augustine also speaks of a *concupiscentia naturalis* as a longing for happiness, it then seems clear that one must understand *concupiscentia carnis* (in its negative sense) as a longing that is not directed to God but to oneself, in other words, as a longing that pulls the person away from God. It does not follow, therefore, that we can reduce *concupiscentia carnis* as such to sexual longings, even if the temptation to do so, in light of Augustine's discussion with Julian, is quite strong. In this case one might too easily forget that this point was set into the agenda by Julian himself at the very beginning of the debate[33] and that in his *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* I Augustine was forced in a certain sense to follow a programme pre-ordained by his opponent[34].

I think, therefore, that one can best translate *concupiscentia carnis* as 'sinful longing'[35]. In my view, such a translation is confirmed by the fact that in this

[28] 'Velut sui iuris libido commoveat'; *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* I,7, *CSEL* 42, p. 219; cf. also *Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum* I,32, *CSEL* 60, p. 450.

[29] See, for example, *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* II,14, *CSEL* 42, p. 266; II,36, *CSEL* 42, p. 290; II,52, *CSEL* 42, pp. 308-309; *Contra Iulianum* IV,82, *PL* 44, col. 781. Cf. also F.-J. Thonnard, *Pudeur, révolte des sens et lois psychologiques* (Études augustinienne 23; Paris, 1974), pp. 671-675.

[30] 'Est igitur libido ulciscendi, quae ira dicitur; est libido habendi pecuniam, quae avaritia; est libido quomodocumque vincendi, quae pervicacia; est libido gloriandi, quae iactantia nuncupatur. Sunt multae variaeque libidines, quarum nonnullae habent etiam vocabula propria, quaedam vero non habent'; *De civitate Dei* XIV,15, *CCSL* 48, p. 438; cf. also Zumkeller, *o.c.*, pp. 413-414.

[31] Cf. *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* II,23, *CSEL* 42, p. 275; II,52, *CSEL* 42, p. 308; *Contra Iulianum* IV,17, *PL* 44, col. 746; *De civitate Dei* XIV,7, *CCSL* 48, p. 422; see also A.-M. La Bonnardière, *Biblia Augustiniana. A.T. Le livre de la Sagesse* (Études augustiniennes; Paris, 1970), pp. 103; 280.

[32] Cf. *Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum* II,17, *CSEL* 60, p. 479; II,21, *CSEL* 60, p. 482.

[33] Cf. *Epistula Iuliani ad Valerium comitem*, frg. 2, *CCSL* 88, p. 335.

[34] Cf. Augustine's protest in *Opus imperfectum* IV,28, *PL* 45, col. 1352: 'Ita hoc dicis, quasi nos concupiscentiam carnis in solam voluptatem genitalium dicamus aestuare. Prorsus in quocumque corporis sensu caro contra spiritum concupiscit, ipsa cognoscitur; et quoniam si non adversus eam spiritus fortius concupiscat, ad mala pertrahit, malum esse convincitur'. Cf. also, in a non-polemical context, *De civitate Dei* XIV,15-16, *CCSL* 48, pp. 436-439.

[35] Augustine makes a clear distinction between perception as such and perception which has its origins in a sinful desire; see esp. *Contra Iulianum* IV,65, *PL* 44, col. 769-770; cf. also VI,56,

longing the whole human being is involved (*sensus, mens et caro*)[36] and that the problem lies precisely in the fact that this longing opposes the *bonum rationis*, the reason why only humans are confronted with this difficulty[37]. Because the human being is a rational creature, he needs to intervene in the process of agitation brought on by *concupiscentia*, because it strives not only for what is permissible, but also for what is not permissible[38]. It is precisely this lack of desire to conform oneself to reason that Augustine repeatedly refers to as negative in his polemic with Julian[39]. If one takes Augustine's comments seriously, then it becomes clear that whoever would continue to brand him a Manichaen would have to show that his emphasis on the fact that the phenomenon affects the whole human being, can be reconciled with the radical dualism propagated by the Manicheans.

PL 44, col. 856; *Opus imperfectum* IV,29, *PL* 45, col. 1353; IV,47-48, *PL* 45, col. 1366; IV,53, *PL* 45, col. 1370. See also E. Schmitt, *Le mariage chrétien dans l'œuvre de saint Augustin* (Études augustiniennes; Paris, 1983), pp. 102-104.

[36] Cf. *Opus imperfectum* IV,69, *PL* 45, col. 1379; see also *Contra Iulianum* V,28, *PL* 44, col. 802; V,16, *PL* 44, col. 793; VI,41, *PL* 44, col. 845 etc. See also N. Cipriani, 'Una teoria neoplatonica alla base dell' etica sessuale di S. Agostino', in *Augustinianum* 14 (1974), pp. 351-361.

[37] It is a problem for a rational human being, but not, for example, for an animal in which the *bonum rationis* is absent: 'Hoc de libidine pecorum dici potest, quibus ideo non est malum, *quia non habent rationis bonum*'; *Opus imperfectum* IV,58, *PL* 45, col. 1374; cf. also II,122, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 253; IV,37, *PL* 45, col. 1357; IV,38, *PL* 45, col. 1359; IV,39, *PL* 45, col. 1359-1360; IV,43, *PL* 45, col. 1362-1363; IV,56, *PL* 45, col. 1372; V,8, *PL* 45, col. 1436; V,20, *PL* 45, col. 1453; *Contra Iulianum* IV,74, *PL* 44, col. 776. See also Y. De Montcheuil, 'La polémique de saint Augustin contre Julien d'Éclane d'après l'*Opus imperfectum*', in *Recherches de science religieuse* 44 (1956), pp. 193-218, p. 215; F. Refoulé, 'Misère des enfants et péché originel d'après saint Augustin', in *Revue thomiste* 63 (1963) 341-362, p. 352; A.-M. Dubarle, *Le péché originel. Perspectives théologiques* (Cogitatio Fidei, 118; Paris, 1983), pp. 37-38.

[38] 'Eius quippe impetus non sua sponte moderatus est: a nullo namque illicito sese abstinet, si membra desiderio eius inserviant. Ac per hoc eius motus, non in ipso, cuius inquietus est motus, sed in refrenante ac bene utente laudatur'; *Contra Iulianum* IV,2, *PL* 44, col. 737; 'Concupiscentia vero carnis indifferenter illicita et licita cupiuntur, quae non concupiscendo, sed intelligendo diiudicantur'; *Opus imperfectum* IV,69, *PL* 45, col. 1379; cf. also *Contra Iulianum* IV,7, *PL* 44, col. 739; VI,50, *PL* 44, col. 852.

[39] See, for example, *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* I,1, *CSEL* 42, p. 212; I,6, *CSEL* 42, pp. 217-218; I,7, *CSEL* 42, pp. 218-219; I,8, *CSEL* 42, pp. 219-220; I,9, *CSEL* 42, p. 221; I,13, *CSEL* 42, p. 226; I,18, *CSEL* 42, p. 230; I,19, *CSEL* 42, p. 232; I,24, *CSEL* 42, p. 237; I,27, *CSEL* 42, p. 239; II,14, *CSEL* 42, p. 266; II,16, *CSEL* 42, p. 269; II,17, *CSEL* 42, p. 270; II,18, *CSEL* 42, p. 271; II,20, *CSEL* 42, p. 272; II,22, *CSEL* 42, p. 275; II,23, *CSEL* 42, p. 275; II,26, *CSEL* 42, p. 279; II,29, *CSEL* 42, p. 283; II,36, *CSEL* 42, p. 290; II,37, *CSEL* 42, p. 291; II,42, *CSEL* 42, p. 296; II,52, *CSEL* 42, pp. 308-309; II,53, *CSEL* 42, p. 310; II,54, *CSEL* 42, p. 312; II,55, *CSEL* 42, p. 312; II,59, *CSEL* 42, p. 316; *Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum* I,33, *CSEL* 60, p. 450; *Contra Iulianum* III,26-27, *PL* 44, col. 715-716; III,38, *PL* 44, col. 722; III,42, *PL* 44, col. 723; IV,40, *PL* 44, col. 741; V,30, *PL* 44, col. 803; *Opus imperfectum* III,184, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 483; IV,37, *PL* 45, col. 1357; IV,43, *PL* 45, col. 1363; IV,63, *PL* 45, col. 1376. Cf. also De Montcheuil, *a.c.*, pp. 205-206; F.-J. Thonnard, *Pudeur, révolte des sens et lois psychologiques* (Études augustinienne 23; Paris, 1974), pp. 671 ff..

In addition, Augustine has frequently been blamed, most recently by Elaine Pagels, for suggesting that the very experience of a sexual impulse is sin[40]. It appears to me, however, that even here one would not be doing justice to Augustine. If Augustine defines the *concupiscentia carnis* as *lex peccati*, then he means that it prompts one to sin. In order to be able to talk of an actual sin, however, human consent is still necessary. If the sinful longing is still referred to as sin, then this is only in a figurative sense: it is called a sin because it originates from sin and longs to commit sin[41]. *Concupiscentia carnis* is no more and no less than an impulse towards committing sin, but the sin is only committed when a human being gives his consent[42]. When the person says no, he is moved by a *spiritus concupiscere* and there can be no talk of sin[43].

This brings me to a further reproach already expressed by Julian, namely that the human person would be unable to resist this *concupiscentia carnis*, that it would transcend his free will and even put it under a certain risk. Such reproaches can still be read today[44]. Johannes van Oort, for example, asserts with certainty that Augustine 'again and again' described the *concupiscentia carnis* as a *motus immoderatus* or *inordinatus* and that *the* characteristic of sexual desire for Augustine is its uncontrolability and irresistibility[45]. It is true that Augustine speaks of *concupiscentia carnis* as a movement or impulse with a negative connotation[46], but in his polemic with Julian, the very idea he most distances himself from, sometimes quite vehemently, is precisely that the *concupiscentia* cannot be resisted[47].

[40] Pagels, *o.c.*, p. 111; van Oort, *a.c.*, p. 386.

[41] 'Sic autem vocatur peccatum, quia peccato facta est, cum iam in regeneratis non sit ipsa peccatum, sicut vocatur lingua locutio, quam facit lingua, et manus vocatur scriptura, quam facit manus; itemque sic vocatur peccatum, quia peccatum, si vincit, facit, sicut vocatur frigus pigrum, non quod a pigris fiat, sed quod pigris faciat'; *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* I,25, *CSEL* 42, p. 238. The *concupiscentia carnis* is (nothing more than) a *lex peccati*: 'Quia suadet peccata atque (...) iubet, et si ei mente servatur, sine excusatione peccatur. Peccatum dicitur, quia peccato facta est appetitque peccare'; *Opus imperfectum* I,71, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 84.

[42] See the clear examples in *Contra Iulianum* IV,66-67, *PL* 44, col. 770-771; cf. also *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* II,58, *CSEL* 42, p. 316; *Opus imperfectum* VI,3, *PL* 45, col. 1511; VI,6, *PL* 45, col. 1511.

[43] Cf., for example, *Contra Iulianum* IV,66, *PL* 44, col. 771.

[44] See Pagels, *o.c.*, p. 113: 'And since he (= Augustine) insists everyone, even the most advanced ascetic, confronts the same continual insurrections within, Augustine concludes that humanity has wholly lost its original capacity for selfgovernment'.

[45] See van Oort, *a.c.*, p. 384; Id., 'Augustine and Mani on concupiscentia sexualis', in J. de Boeft-J. van Oort (eds.), *Augustiniana Traiectina. Communications présentées au Colloque International d'Utrecht (13-14 novembre 1986)* (Études augustiniennes; Paris, 1987), pp. 137-152, esp. p. 149.

[46] See, for example, *Opus imperfectum* IV,29, *PL* 45, col. 1353 'Concupiscentia vero carnis motus est malus'.

[47] I wonder whether one cannot speak of a widely circulated philosophical conviction when one speaks of the *motus inordinatus* of the *concupiscentia carnis*. In *De civitate Dei* XIV,19, *CCSL* 48, p. 441, for example, we read: 'Hinc est quod et illi philosophi, qui veritati proprius accesserunt, iram atque libidinem vitiosas animi partes esse confessi sunt, eo quod *turbide atque*

Augustine tirelessly repeats that it is only because the human spirit offers resistance to this sinful longing, that the longing itself does not lead to sin[48]. He resolutely rejects the reproach that his vision of an unconquerable *concupiscentia carnis*[49], opens the door to immoral behaviour. More than this, Augustine considers it both a possibility and duty of the human person to resist this sinful longing[50]. Such a struggle against sinful longing is even seen as a basic condition for making progress as a believer[51]. For Augustine, grace plays a crucial role in the struggle, since it works in a liberating[52] and helping[53] way for the human person who, on ground of a dynamic interplay between his own efforts and God's help, will be all the more pleasing to God the more he struggles against sinful desires[54]. The human person is able to do this because he has received the gift of love[55] and because he is moved by a *spiritalis delectatio*[56]. On these grounds he will gradually be able to lessen the power of the sinful longing in a process of ever-growing renewal[57], until he receives definitive

inordinate moverentur', and the philosophers Augustine had in mind were clearly neo-Platonists. Even Plato himself is familiar with the idea; cf. *De legibus* II, 660b; VIII, 840e. See also the relevant remarks in T.J. Van Bavel, 'Augustinus' houding tegenover seksualiteit', in *Kleio. Tijdschrift voor oude talen en antieke cultuur* 22 (1993), pp. 176-185, pp. 180-181.

[48] See, for example, *Contra Iulianum* II,33, *PL* 44, col. 696-697; IV,34, *PL* 44, col. 756; IV,73, *PL* 44, col. 775; *Opus imperfectum* III,185, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 484; III,187, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 490; III,212, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 504; IV,10, *PL* 45, col. 1344; IV,57, *PL* 45, col. 1373; IV,61, *PL* 45, col. 1375; IV,67, *PL* 45, col. 1378; V,15, *PL* 45, col. 1436; V,16, *PL* 45, col. 1449 etc.. The list could easily be much longer. In any event it is clear that Augustine is quite serious in considering that a human person can succesfully withstand this sinful desire.

[49] 'Invictam sane numquam ego voluptatem carnis (...) dixi'; *Contra Iulianum* V,32, *PL* 44, col. 804; cf. also III,39, *PL* 44, 722; V,24, *PL* 44, col. 799; V,27, *PL* 44, col. 801.

[50] 'Lex quippe ista peccati, quae in membris est corporis mortis huius, et remissa est regeneratione spirituali, et manet in carne mortali: remissa scilicet, quia reatus eius solutus est sacramento, quo renascuntur fideles; manet autem, quia operatur desideria, *contra quae dimicant et fideles*'; *Contra Iulianum* II,5, *PL* 44, col. 675; see also e.g. VI,47, *PL* 44, col. 849-850; VI,53, *PL* 44, 853; VI,62, *PL* 44, col. 860-861.

[51] See, for example, *Contra Iulianum* II,3, *PL* 44, col. 673; III,49, *PL* 44, col. 727.

[52] Cf. *Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum* I,18, *CSEL* 60, p. 440.

[53] See, for example, *Contra Iulianum* II,5, *PL* 44, col. 676; II,9, *PL* 44, col. 680; V,65, *PL 44*, col. 820; VI,20, *PL* 44, 829; *Opus imperfectum* I,70, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 78; II,218, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 330; IV,57, *PL* 45, col. 1373; VI,8, *PL* 45, col. 1514.

[54] 'Adversus eam confligant etiam baptizati, tanto fortius atque vehementius, quanto magis placere student oculis eius, cuius gratia adiuvantur, ne in tali certamine superentur'; *Contra Iulianum* II,5, *PL* 44, col. 676.

[55] *Contra Iulianum* V,32, *PL* 44, col. 804; V,56, *PL* 44, col. 815; VI,41, *PL* 44, col. 845-846; VI,71, *PL* 44, col. 866; *Opus imperfectum* II,71, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 215; II,137, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 262; II,140, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 264; II,233, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 347; VI,15, *PL* 45, col. 1535.

[56] *Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum* I,17, *CSEL* 60, p. 440.

[57] 'Proficiente renovatione interioris hominis de die in diem'; *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* I,28, *CSEL* 42, p. 240; 'Et si nobis admeliora proficientibus magis magisque minuuntur'; *Contra Iulianum* II,7, *PL* 44, col. 678; cf. also *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* I,30, *CSEL* 42, p. 242; I,32, *CSEL* 42, p. 244; I,33, *CSEL* 42, p. 245; I,56, *CSEL* 42, p. 248; *Contra Iulianum* VI,41, *PL* 44, col. 845; VI,50, *PL* 44, col. 852; VI,56, *PL* 44, col. 856; VI,60, *PL* 44, col. 859; *Opus imperfectum* III,71, *CSEL* 85,1, p. 403; IV,57, *PL* 45, col. 1373; VI,8, *PL* 45, col. 1514.

healing, as a reward, in the life to come[58]; something altogether different from destruction along with matter, as the Manicheans claim[59]. It should be noted that Augustine does not refrain from announcing, somewhat laconically, that quite a substantial number of his contemporaries did succeed in their struggle against the *concupiscentia carnis*[60]. Likewise, even the way in which Augustine describes the very possibility of struggling and making progress in the struggle — which in my opinion is insufficiently recognised by his critics — teaches us clearly that we need to situate the *concupiscentia carnis* within a theological-ethical context.

It should also be clear from my presentation that the fallen human person has not fully lost his freedom and that he is not fallen as a powerless creature, remaining prey to a *concupiscentia carnis* that is always a sin. Rather, the human person, as a believer assisted by grace, can transcend the *concupiscentia carnis* and make daily progress against it in his struggle. Finally, it should be equally clear that for Augustine, contrary to what the Manicheans claim, the *concupiscentia carnis* is not a part of evil matter, but involves the whole human person. As such, for Augustine, it is much more than a material instrument, without complication at the service of procreation, as Julian himself opined[61]. At least on this point one could say that Augustine was neither a Pelagian nor a Manichee[62].

[58] 'Hoc autem malum non in baptismate ponitur: sed baptizatis per gratiam regenerationis ab eius obligatione iam liberis, ne ad illicita pertrahat, salubriter vincitur. Ut autem resurrectionis tempore non sit omnino in vivente corpore nec dolente, *praemium* est eorum qui contra eam fideliter certaverant, qui languore sanato, immortalitate beatissima vestientur'; *Contra Iulianum* VI,50, *PL* 44, col. 852; see also IV,3, *PL* 44, col. 738; *Opus imperfectum* VI,7, *PL* 45, col. 1512.

[59] See van Oort, *a.c.*, pp. 385-386.

[60] See *Opus imperfectum* VI,7, *PL* 45, col. 1513.

[61] See Gross's opinion in this regard, *o.c.*, p. 312: 'Wie immer man dieses psychologische Rätsel lösen mag, in einem Punkte wenigstens hat Augustinus nach seiner Bekehrung seine Meinung nie geändert und sich mit vollem Recht gegen die Pelagianer auf die Ueberlieferung berufen: stets hat er im Tode und in der Sündhaftigkeit der geschichtlichen Menschheit Straffolgen der Ursünde gesehen. Die Leugnung dieser grosskirchlichen Tradition durch die Pelagianer dürfte einer der Hauptursachen ihres Misserfolges gewesen sein'.

[62] Cf. G.R. Evans, 'Neither a Pelagian nor a Manichee', in *Vigiliae Christianae* 35 (1981), pp. 232-244.

Augustine on Dialectic: Defender and Defensive

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The compatibility of Christian faith with intellectual culture has been a perennial issue since St. Paul warned the Colossians against 'philosophy and empty deceit' (Col 2:8) and asked the Corinthians, 'Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?' (1 Cor 1:20).

Among the Fathers, the art of dialectic was the object of sharp attacks. Ambrose's statement, 'Sed non in dialectica conplacuit deo "salvum facere populum suum"'[1], is renowned, but hardly unique. Tertullian wrote: 'Wretched Aristotle! who taught them dialectic, the artifice of constructing and destroying, fickle in its opinions, forced in its conjectures, stubborn in its arguments, labored in its contentions, tiresome even to itself, rehashing everything to avoid concluding anything'[2], and rejected 'a Stoic or a Platonic or a dialectic Christianity'[3]. Origen takes the plague of mosquitoes in Egypt to mean the art of dialectic, 'which bores into souls with minute and subtle stings of words and surrounds them so cunningly that the one deceived neither sees nor understands whence the deception comes'[4]. Gregory of Nyssa rejects dialectic as a way to affirm Christian dogmas[5].

In contrast, Clement of Alexandria held that dialectic served both as a defense against heresy and as an aid to understanding the Scriptures[6]. Cassiodorus, too, praised dialectic as a help in understanding the Bible[7]. No other Father, however, praised dialectic as highly as Augustine did; he called it the 'disciplina disciplinarum'[8], wrote that perfect dialectic is 'ipsa scientia veritatis'[9], and held that either dialectic is wisdom itself, or wisdom cannot exist without dialectic[10].

Augustine's thought on dialectic has been studied recently and thoroughly by Jean Pépin in his *Saint Augustin et la dialectique*, published in 1976[11]. But

[1] Ambrose, *De fide* 1, 5, 42 (CSEL 78, 17-18), citing Mt 1:21.
[2] Tertullian, *De praescriptione haereticorum* 7, 6 (CCL 1, 192).
[3] Ibid. 7, 11 (CCL 1, 193).
[4] Origen, *Homilies on Exodus* 4, 6 (trans. Heine, FC 71, p. 269 (altered)).
[5] Gregory of Nyssa, *De anima et resurrectione* (PG 46, 52B).
[6] See Jean Pépin, 'La vraie dialectique selon Clément d'Alexandrie', in *Epektasis. Mélanges J. Daniélou* (Paris, 1972), pp. 375-83.
[7] Cassiodorus, *Institutes* 1, 27, 1. Book II, 3 is a treatise on dialectic.
[8] *De ordine* 2, 13, 38.
[9] *Contra Academicos* 3, 13, 29.
[10] *Contra Academicos* 3, 17, 37.
[11] Jean Pépin, *Saint Augustin et la dialectique* (The Saint Augustine Lecture 1972; Villanova, 1976).

newly-available means of searching Augustine's writings can aid word-studies, and sometimes lead to a new perspective. Forms of the word 'dialectic' are found in Augustine's works about 125 times. Ten of these instances are in the little treatise *De dialectica*, which is now generally considered genuine, but is not the place where Augustine makes his more interesting statements about dialectic. Of the remaining 115 instances, all but twenty are found in three works: over 60 in the *Contra Cresconium*, and more than 30 in the two works against Julian of Eclanum. These last three works offer an interesting contrast. Cresconius tried to banish dialectic from Christian thought, and Augustine defends it skillfully. Julian tried to flaunt his skill in dialectic, so that Augustine now needs, not to defend dialectic, but to criticize its abuse. Using the results of an electronic search, I would like to study the statements Augustine made about dialectic in the course of his controvesies with Donatists and Pelagians, and offer a modest corrective to one of Pépin's conclusions.

Augustine defines dialectic several times, in more or less the same terms: 'peritia disputandi'[12], 'sollertia disputandi'[13], 'disciplina disputandi'[14], 'disciplina disputationis'[15], and 'scientia bonae disputationis'[16]. Authentic dialectic distinguishes the true from the false, and hence is the 'scientia veritatis'[17]. The *De magistro* is a dramatic instance of Augustine training his son in the art of dialectic.

Early in the fifth century Cresconius, the Donatist grammarian, had written Augustine a long letter, intended as a thoroughgoing refutation of Augustine's response to the letter the Donatist bishop Petilian wrote to his congregation. In 405 Augustine responded to Cresconius, in four books.

Cresconius falls in with Tertullian's attitude to dialectic: Jerusalem has no need of Athens, and dialectic has no place in Christian doctrine. Several of the specific points that Cresconius and the Donatist bishops tried to score against dialectic can be read out of the *Contra Cresconium*. The bishops had written that Augustine, as a *homo dialecticus*, was to be shunned rather than refuted (*C. Cres.* 1, 13, 16). Cresconius himself reproached Augustine for his use of dialectic, which, he said, is not an appropriate tool for dealing with Christian truth (*C. Cres.* 1, 13, 16). Cresconius praised those who refused to enter into discussion with Augustine (*C. Cres.* 1, 13, 16), and even called dialectic a *crimen* (*C. Cres.* 1, 14, 17; 1, 18, 22)[18].

Augustine's answer has one practical, and three theoretical, points.

[12] *Contra Cresconium* 1, 13, 16; cf. *Confessions* 10, 9, 16.
[13] *De ciuitate dei* 8, 7.
[14] *Contra Cresconium* 2, 2, 3.
[15] Cf. *De doctrina christiana* 2, 31, 48; *Soliloquia* 2, 11, 19. 21.
[16] *De ordine* 2, 18, 47.
[17] *Contra Academicos* 3, 13, 29; cf. *Contra Cresconium* 1, 15, 19.
[18] For further accusations against dialectic, see *Contra Cresconium* 1, 18, 22; 2, 18, 23; 3, 60, 66; 3, 68, 78.

Practically, Augustine points out that Cresconius himself uses dialectic, the *peritia disputandi*, for he disputes with Augustine and writes elegantly and eloquently, even subtly and artfully — and that is dialectic (*C. Cres.* 1, 13, 16). (Augustine had found this form of argument in Cicero's *Hortensius*, which contended that every man had to be a philosopher: either he wished to be a philosopher, or he had to use philosophy to show why he was not a philosopher.) So Cresconius must argue dialectically to reject dialectic. Moreover, dialectic is the art of definition. In a cleverly satirical application of the art, Augustine concludes that Cresconius's definition of a *dialecticus* must be 'one whom the legal experts of the Donatist party don't want to speak to' (*C. Cres.* 1, 19, 23).

Theoretically, Augustine refutes Cresconius from Scripture, from philosophy, and from Christian doctrine.

When he turns to the Scriptures, Augustine points out that the native Latin word for *dialectica* would be *disputatoria*, as *disputatio* translates διαλογή or διάλεξις (*C. Cres.* 1, 14, 17). Hence anyone of whom the Scriptures use the word *disputare* was a dialectician. Paul himself was a dialectician, as the Latin Bible shows (*C. Cres.* 1, 14, 18). Acts, for example, says that Paul was disputing with the Jews in the synagogue (Acts 17:17), and was engaged in disputation when Eutychus fell from the window (Acts 20:9; *C. Cres.* 1, 14, 18). Paul willingly faced dialecticians on the Areopagus (Acts 17:18-23; *C. Cres.* 1, 12, 15). He did not fear Stoic dialecticians, or avoid them (*C. Cres.* 1, 12, 15; 1, 14, 17). Christ, too, was a dialectician; when asked about paying tribute to Caesar, he answered with a distinction (Mt 22:21; Lk 20:25; *C. Cres.* 1, 17, 21). His opponents sought to deceive, so they were not dialecticians; but Christ sought the truth, and forced his opponents to admit the truth (*C. Cres.* 1, 17, 21-18, 22). His enemies might even have called him a *dialecticus* rather than a Samaritan (*C. Cres.* 1, 17, 21)[19]. God himself is a dialectician, Augustine suggests, for we read in Isaiah: 'venite, disputemus, dicit Dominus' (Is 1:18; *C. Cres.* 1, 14, 18).

In an important paragraph (*C. Cres.* 1, 15, 19), Augustine distinguishes between true and false dialecticians. True dialectic distinguishes the true from the false. Those who cannot do so, and yet wish to appear to be dialecticians, deceive the unwary by their questions, and then either ridicule them for their patently false conclusions or deceive them by hidden error. The true dialectician is the champion of the truth, both in himself and in others.

Finally, Christian doctrine has nothing to fear from dialectic, since its only task is to show that truth follows from true premises, and falsehood from false premises (*C. Cres.* 1, 20, 25; v. 1, 14, 19).

Thus, in brief compass, Augustine has defined dialectic as the art of seeking the truth and vindicated its role in Christian theology: Christian faith can only profit from dialectic, because it can profit from the truth.

[19] Conversely, if dialecticians were deceivers, Christ could have called the hypocrites dialecticians; *Contra Cresconium* 1, 18, 22.

Julian of Eclanum is a very different sort of opponent. Born around 380, he became bishop of Eclanum in 416. In 418 he was exiled for his adherence to Pelagius's teachings. Augustine wrote the *Contra Iulianum* in 422, and the *Opus imperfectum in Iulianum* in 428. The two works can be treated together, since Augustine maintains the same attitude toward dialectic in both.

Pépin writes of a revision of Augustine's attitude toward dialectic, beginning around 423 with the *Enchiridion*, continuing in Book 22 of the *City of God*, and fully manifested in the two works against Julian[20]; one can detect, he writes, a growing disillusionment with dialectic on Augustine's part, and even a break ('rupture') with dialectic[21]. But the evidence does not appear to justify such a statement.

One of Augustine's favorite weapons against Julian is satire. Augustine mocks Julian as an *egregius dialecticus* (*C. Iul.* 3, 6, 13), an *acutus dialecticus* (*Op. imp.* 5, 23) and a *grossus dialecticus* (*Op. imp.* 2, 159). Augustine makes good use of the fact that Julian had been tried by a court of bishops but wants to appeal to dialecticians. Julian would, Augustine writes, like a council of Peripatetics to pass a dialectical sentence on him (*C. Iul.* 2, 10, 37). Julian seeks dialecticians as judges (*C. Iul.* 6, 11, 36), perhaps from among the Peripatetics or Stoics, to acquit him (*C. Iul.* 6, 20, 64); he seeks dialectical, and avoids ecclesiastical, judges (*Op. imp.* 2, 36).

Julian's fault is that his confidence in dialectic exceeds his skill. Calling on his stock of metaphors, Augustine writes that Julian wraps himself in the cloak of dialectic to deceive the unwary, but the truth will lay him bare (*C. Iul.* 6, 18, 55); Julian advances to battle thinking he is carrying the sharp spears of dialectic, but in fact he hurls daggers made of soft lead (*C. Iul.* 3, 7, 16); Julian wields the weapons of dialectic unskillfully, and wounds his own partisans (*C. Iul.* 6, 18, 54).

More serious, though, is Julian's misuse of dialectic. Julian boasted of his dialectical skills, a boast that Augustine found unwarranted. Augustine's attacks are relentless. Julian answers questions no one asked (*C. Iul.* 3, 7, 14), thus violating an essential rule of dialectical discourse. Dialectically, Julian says nothing; but the fault lies, not with the discipline of dialectic, but with Julian (*C. Iul.* 3, 7, 16). Augustine catches him in a logical error, and points this fact out (*Op. imp.* 1, 88). Julian says he mastered Aristotle's *Categories* and the keen art of dialectic; but he shows no skill in using them (*C. Iul.* 3, 2, 7). Julian appears to discourse dialectically and philosophically about God's justice, but fails to make his point (*Op. imp.* 6, 12). He tries to confuse the inexperienced by dialectic (*C. Iul.* 6, 19, 60). If Julian's objections were valid, Augustine writes, then he would be using dialectic to fault Christ (*C. Iul.* 6, 19, 58).

[20] Pépin, *Saint Augustin et la dialectique*, p. 244.
[21] Ibid. p. 243.

Augustine's main point, though, is that Julian's abuse of dialectic leads him into error. A good example of Augustine's attacks on the way Julian abuses dialectic is found in Book 5 of the *Contra Iulianum*. Julian, Augustine writes, learned an axiom from dialectic, but misapplied it (*C. Iul.* 5, 14, 51). He is attacking Augustine's teaching on original sin and invokes the principle, 'An accident cannot exist apart from its subject'. 'Dialectic has taught you an impressive truth', Augustine taunts. But Julian's application, that parents' guilt cannot pass to their children, does not follow. Qualities pass to offspring not by migrating but by affecting them causally, as Ethiopian parents beget black children. Corporeal things can even affect the incorporeal, as Jacob's rods affected the ewes' souls. Augustine continues to defend dialectic: dialectic is not wrong, and the principle Julian cites is true; 'sed tu non intelligis'.

Julian constructed his *Ad Turbantium* as a series of syllogisms that would refute and embarrass Augustine. In Book 3 of his refutation, the *Contra Iulianum*, Augustine remarks that Julian tried to teach dialecticians how to construct syllogisms (*C. Iul.* 3, 7, 14). Julian wrote that Augustine argued this way: Every union of bodies is evil. But children are born of such a union. Therefore children are evil. Augustine easily denies the major; otherwise, mixing water with wine would be evil. Here too, Julian abuses dialectic.

In his next syllogism (*C. Iul.* 3, 7, 16), Julian had Augustine argue this: The distinction of sexes exists for the union of bodies. But the union of bodies is always evil. Therefore the distinction of sexes is a deformity (*deformis conditio*). In this case, Augustine accepts the major proposition and says that he does not hold the minor — but even if he did, the conclusion would not follow; for dogs mate indiscriminately, but are not *deformes*. Augustine again insists, at some length, that the fault lies not with dialectic but with Julian's ignorance and abuse of dialectic.

Other examples could be given, but the point is made: Augustine did not abandon or reject dialectic at the end of his life, nor did he doubt its worth. He rather used it as skillfully as ever, to refute Julian's bad logic and unfounded boasting.

In Cresconius, Augustine met an opponent who had some skill in dialectic but opposed it to Christian faith. In Julian of Eclanum, Augustine met an opponent who considered himself highly skilled in dialectic, and wished to use it to the fullest in analysing Christian faith; but Augustine shows him that he badly overestimates his skill. In his refutations of Julian, Augustine did not reject dialectic, but sharply objected to its unskilled or misleading use. The aged Augustine is not quite the embittered and credulous old man that Peter Brown and others make him out to be.

Mt 6:13 in Augustine's Later Works

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De Bruyne once drew attention to Augustine's discussion of the text of Mt 6:13 in his *serm. dom. mont.*[1]. Van Bavel later warned us not to conclude from that discussion that Augustine was preeminently concerned about textual criticism. Surely, he says, the version saying *ne nos inferas in temptationem*, which was used by the community of Hippo in the liturgy, became Augustine's 'official text' of Mt 6:13 after 393, the date of *serm. dom. mont.*, but, he adds, it did not by any means remain the only one[2]. A look at Augustine's writings as a whole also shows that, while the expression *inferas* can be found more than 280 times quoted or alluded to in connection with Mt 6:13, the alternative version *inducas*, too, occurs more than 260 times after 393. More than 300 years ago the great Bossuet suggested a reason why Augustine continued using different versions of the verse. Of course, he says, Augustine was concerned about textual criticism and also about community practice and liturgy, but more important to him was the *causa gratiae*, his theology on grace and original sin[3]. Taking up this thesis I shall try to outline Augustine's use of the different versions of Mt 6:13 in the context of the development of his theology of grace and original sin, especially in his later works.

Mt 6:13 in Works Before 429

In *serm. dom. mont.* (393) questions of textual criticism, as De Bruyne suggested, may have still been predominant. There Augustine mentions three versions of the text of Mt 26:13: 1) the most widespread: *ne nos inducas in temptationem*, 2) the one used by the community of Hippo in the liturgy: *ne nos inferas in temptationem*, 3) the one which he may have known from as early as his time as a neophyte in Milan: *ne patiaris nos induci in temptationem*.

[1] D. De Bruyne, 'Saint Augustin Reviseur de la Bible', in *MA* 2 (Rome 1931), 599. Cf. *serm. dom. mont* 2.30 (CCL 35, 119f.).

[2] T. van Bavel, 'Inferas-inducas. A propos de Mtth. 6,13 dans les œuvres de saint Augustin', in *RB* 49 (1959), pp. 348-351.

[3] J.-B. Bossuet, *Défense de la tradition et des saints Pères* (1694), in *Œuvres*, vol. 24 (Paris, 1828), 588f. Cf. J. Lössl, 'Auf den Spuren des *intellectus gratiae*' in *Philophronesis für Norbert Brox* (Graz, 1995), pp. 188-227, 200.

However, already in *s.* 352 between 396 and 400, when he quoted the third version, his preeminent concern was no longer textual criticism but spiritual theology and the theology of grace[4]. The verse Mt 6:13, he says, is the essential part of the Lord's prayer. A person who prays the words *ne nos inferas in temptationem* has to keep in mind that God would not only never cause temptation but never even allow it to happen (*ne patiaris nos induci in temptationem*). Only then the belief in God's active grace working in this prayer would be correct and grace actually be given the chance to work in the respective person. In his note on De Bruyne's remarks, Van Bavel does not mention this aspect (cf. p. 350). For Augustine, however, it was precisely this (spiritual soteriological) aspect which became more and more important.

In *pecc. mer.* 2.4 (CSEL 60, 74) of 412, going a step further than in *s.* 352, he says: It is not God who tempts us, but our concupiscence. He still mentions the problem of the text, but the way he does so shows that he is inclined not to concentrate on the diversity of texts but on their common meaning. In *epist.* 157.2 (CSEL 44, 451) of 414/5 he even goes so far as to quote just one version of the text in order to explain the other: *dictum est enim 'ne nos inferas in temptationem' quod intelligitur 'ne nos inferi deserendo permittas'*, thus showing how the Bible explains itself. In *tr.* 53 on John's Gospel of about the same time he points out why he thinks that such an explanation is necessary: Grace, he says, must not be asserted by denying free will. Those, however, who on the other hand try to suppress (*conetur auferre*) the importance of Mt 6:13 or interpret it as an excuse to sin, deny either God's active grace or human free will[5]. In *en. ps.* 118 he etymologizes on this aspect: *ne auferas*, do not take away, he says, means, *ne auferi sinas*, do not allow it to be taken away[6]. If we pray with the words *ne nos inferas in temptationem*, he adds, we believe not that God might actively lead us into temptation but that God is able and willing to remove from us the possibility of being led into temptation.

[4] *S.* 352.2.7 (PL 39, 1557f.). Cf. A. Kunzelmann, 'Die Chronologie der sermones des Hl. Augustin', in *MA* 2 (Rome 1931), p. 491. Van Bavel 1959, p. 350.

[5] *Tr.* 53.8 (CCL 36, 455f.): *ne audeat quisquam liberum arbitrium sic defendere, ut nobis orationem qua dicimus 'ne nos inferas in temptationem' conetur auferre; rursus, ne quisquam neget uoluntatis arbitrium, et audeat excusare peccatum.* In the immediate context this remark is, of course, an allusion to the teaching of Pelagius, as Augustine understood it. Augustine welcomes the variety of texts of Mt 6:13 in order to show that the Bible itself supports his exegesis of the verse. His interests, however, reach beyond a mere refutation of Pelagius' teaching. They are directed towards a definite understanding of the message of the Bible.

[6] *En. ps.* 118.13.3 (CCL 40, 1706): *quod autem ait 'ne auferas' intellegendum est 'ne auferi sinas'; propter quod orando dicimus 'ne nos inferas in temptationem'.*

Mt 6:13 in *dono perseu.* and *c. Iul. op. imp.*

In one of his last works, *dono perseu.* of 429, he says basically the same: The meaning of *ne nos inferas in temptationem* is *ne nos inferi sinas in temptationem*, which, as he adds, is equivalent to the version *ne patiaris nos induci in temptationem*, which he may have known since the time of his baptism, later rediscovered in some African editions of the Gospel and in writings of Cyprian, and which he had quoted as early as in *serm. dom. mont.*[7]. By combining all three versions of Mt 6:13, relating them to one another, he was making a point not so much of textual criticism, but of the theology of grace. It is not God, he stressed, that *infert uel inducit in temptationem*, but concupiscence.

This tendency to utilise and finally drop all textual critical distinctions in favour of stressing the doctrinal aspect becomes most obvious in *c. Iul. op. imp.*, Augustine's last, unfinished, work. There, in book 4.82 (PL 45, 1385), we find another *inducas*-version of Mt 6:13, significantly in connection with Ps 50:7 (*in iniquitatibus conceptus sum*). The expression *ne nos inducas in temptationem*, Augustine says, refers to original sin as the necessity for us to sin. It causes us humans to continue to sin, even though we may not want to. To recognize oneself as conceived in sin (Ps 50:7) is equivalent to grasping the meaning of Mt 6:13. This insight, Augustine continues, is only possible through grace. A whole series of *inferas*-versions in book 1 illustrates this link between grace and insight (*intellectus*). In 1.67 (CSEL 85/1, 71) Mt 6:13 is combined with Rom 7:19 (*quod nolo malum hoc ago*), James 1:14 (*a concupiscentia sua abstractus et illectus*) and Rom 7:18 (*scio quia non habitat in me hoc est in carne mea bonum*): 'Whoever says, "the evil I do not want to do, I do" (Rom 7:19), must not pray, "forgive us our sins" (Mt 6:12), but, "do not lead us into temptation" (Mt 6:13); for "everyone is tempted by concupiscence" (James 1:14) and "I know that the good does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh" (Rom 7:18)'.

The sharp distinction between original sin and individual sins is a central motif of this last response of Augustine to Julian of Aeclanum and Mt 6:13 plays a central role in its development. Only grace, Augustine says, can liberate from sin, to expel which the church daily raises her voice to God, *ne nos inferas in temptationem* (1.90 (85/1, 104)). In 1.93 (85/1, 106) he again points to the epistemological aspect of this thought: Someone, who joins the church praying *ne nos inferas in temptationem*, he says, won't be ignorant or the slave of cupidity (*nulla decipietur inscitia, nulla cupiditate uincetur*). Augustine understands Mt 6:13 as a prayer that functions as a gateway to gratuitous insight, a starting point of insight as grace, an intellectual starting point of salvation. Julian rejects this intellectual universalism in Augustine's teaching on grace. He wants to limit

[7] *Dono perseu.* 6.12 (PL 45, 1000): *quod itaque dicimus deo 'ne nos inferas in temptationem', quid dicimus nisi 'ne nos inferi sinas'?*

the term sin to individual acts (*nullum peccatum in rebus penitus inuenitur*). Augustine, however, sees a complex, in which humanity as a whole is caught, thus being in need of being liberated by the grace of God. In the Lord's prayer, he repeats, we not only learn to pray *dimitte nobis debita nostra*, forgive us our individual sins, but also *ne nos inferas in temptationem, sed libera nos a malo*, do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil — meaning the evil that causes us to be led into temptation, the dark and complex reality of concupiscence (1.104 (85/1, 121)).

By assuming such a reality and stressing its existence against Julian's view of an uncorrupted human nature, Augustine, according to Julian, seems to have contracted the error of the Manichees and allowed a fundamental contradiction to enter his thought. Mt 6:13 plays an important role in Augustine's effort to overcome this apparent contradiction. In 1.105 (85/1, 123) Augustine distinguishes between the original and the moral aspect of sin (*peccata originalia/peccata moralia*). Separated from the grace of Jesus Christ, he says, there is no possibility for a sinner not to sin. The moral aspect signifies that there are always sins which have been committed, the original aspect signifies that there will always be sins which will be committed, as the sinner continues to live in the given state. Grace, however, he continues, has the power to change this whole complex fundamentally. In the state of grace the sins already committed are forgiven, those not yet committed are prevented through perseverance. By praying the Lord's prayer, Augustine says, the faithful witness to their hope of being in that state of grace. The words *dimitte nobis debita nostra* (Mt 6:12) refer to moral sins, the words *ne nos inferas in temptationem, sed libera nos a malo* (Mt 6:13) to original sins (*peccata originalia*).

In 1.106 (85/1, 124), Augustine stresses that this view is not fatalistic. In the contrary, he says, it is precisely in the state of ultimate despair that real hope can emerge. Both, despair and hope, are signs of grace (cf. Rom 7:24f.). Just to correct one's individual behaviour (at the level of moral sins), as Julian had suggested, is not sufficient for achieving salvation in an universal, biblical sense. Situating Mt 6:13 in the context of James 1:14, mentioned earlier, and Ps 24:17 (*de necessitatibus meis erue me*) he concludes: only someone who has tasted the despair of not knowing a way out of the necessity of sinning, can wholeheartedly pray *ne nos inducas in temptationem, sed libera nos a malo*[8].

To conclude: it is not sufficient to interpret Augustine's frequent discussion of the text of Mt 6:13, particularly in his later works, as a matter of textual criticism or liturgical use. Augustine rather uses the different versions of the verse as explaining one another in order to refer to vital points of his teaching on grace and original sin. It is also not primarily against Pelagius and Julian that Augustine developed this teaching. The positions of his opponents merely

[8] There are some more references which repeat these points in one or other way: 1.108; 2.227 (CSEL 85/1, 127f.342f.); 4.89; 6.15 (PL 45, 1390.1534).

provoked him to pinpoint his own arguments. At a very fundamentel level his exegesis of Mt 6:13 remained the same from *serm. dom. mont.* to *c. Iul. op. imp.* He interpreted the verse primarily as a central part of the Lord's prayer, situated it in the church's eucharistic celebration, and characterized it as a moral, spiritual, and intellectual (and in that respect also in a deep sense universal) starting point of salvation[9].

[9] I should like to thank Fr. Norman Tanner, S.J., of Campion Hall for kindly making suggestions how to improve the language and style of this paper. The shortcomings remaining in this respect are entirely my own fault.

'Not painted from another picture': Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 33.76

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Iamvero eos qui ad exemplum salutis nostrae ac primitias, a Filio Dei potentissimo, aeterno, incommutabili susceptum hominem, eumdemque natum esse de virgine, caeteraque huius historiae miracula irrident, sic contemnemus, tanquam eos pueros, qui cum pictorem propositis tabulis, quas intueratur, pingentem viderint, non putent posse hominem pingi, nisi aliam picturam, qui pingit, aspexerit.

This passage comes unexpectedly in *De quantitate animae*, a treatise devoted to the nature of the human soul and its ascent to the vision of God. It is of interest not only for this meteor-like quality, but because it is, to my knowledge, one of only two references Augustine makes to the Manichaeans' practice of illustrating their teachings, and one of his most direct slaps at their docetic christology. I shall try briefly here to explain (1) Augustine's reason for choosing this simile of the painter, (2) the use he makes of it, (3) the reason for its insertion at this particular juncture in the treatise, and (4) the relation, if any, to his inchoate image theology in 387, when *De quantitate animae* was written.

On the first point, the simile itself: those who mockingly deny the Incarnation are like boys who think that one painting must be copied from another because such imitation is all that they have witnessed. The reference is to the Manichaeans. Mani was remembered among his followers as a painter[1]. He undertook to accompany his treatise, *The Living Gospel*, with 'an actual pictorial representation of his complex teaching on cosmogony'[2], with the double intention of guarding against allegorical interpretation and serving as a visual aid for his missionaries. It followed from these intentions that most, if not all, manuscripts of *The Living Gospel* were illustrated, and that these secondary pictures were derivative, copied from Mani's original paintings. *The Living Gospel* reached Rome in the late third century, and we can be sure that both the text and the practice of illustration were known to Augustine. Almost certainly, this reference in *De quantitate animae* is to the copying he observed while a Manichaean, and it would be recognized as such by his readers.

De quantitate animae 33.76 is not the only time Augustine uses 'painting' as a metaphor for 'making'. Earlier in the same treatise Evodius suggests that,

[1] Jes P. Asmussen, *Studies in Manichaeism* (Copenhagen, 1965), p. 10.

[2] S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China: a Historical Survey* (Manchester, 1985), p. 139.

(J)ust as God, being immortal, makes something immortal in his own likeness, so we, being (also) immortal (having been made so by God), in making something in our own likeness ought also to make something immortal[3].

Augustine replies that Evodius would have a point only if he could paint a picture in the likeness of what he believes is immortal in (him), but that now 'his painting discloses (only) the likeness of the body, which is certainly mortal'[4] Augustine here refers implicitly to divine creation as the work of an artist, but the point is hardly more than incidental. The burden of his reply is that the spiritual cannot be depicted.

About a decade later, in *De Trinitate*, pressing the point that the Father and Son are one, and equal not only in substance, but also in operation, Augustine writes that:

(The Son) does what he sees the Father doing because he is from the Father. He does not (merely) do other things in a similar way, like a painter copying panels because he has seen pictures painted from another in such a way[5].

Here Augustine is arguing that the Son does the same work as the Father, and in the same creative way (not as merely imitating someone else's work as some painters do) precisely because he is from the Father. In *De Trinitate*, Augustine is making an anti-Arian argument, but in 387 his attention is focused elsewhere.

What point, then, is he making in this slighting reference in *De quantitate animae* to painters who are merely copyists? The context is a description of the joys that the soul will experience when it reaches the seventh stage of its ascent (which will be not a stage, but a dwelling place), and where it will rejoice in 'the very vision and contemplation of truth'[6]. There the soul will be able to see the difference between the goodness of creation and that of 'those things which truly are', and to see that between the two no comparison is possible[7]. And, there the soul will know (*agnoscemus*) how true are the doctrines it has been commanded by the church to believe (*credenda imperata sint*)[8].

Which particular ecclesial doctrines, mandated for belief, has Augustine in mind? Two especially and explicitly despised by the Manichaeans — the

[3] *De quantitate animae* 2.3. 'Non equidem hoc diserim. Sed quaemadmodum ipse immortalis immortale quiddam fecit ad similitudinem suam, sic et nos immortales a Deo facti ad similitudinem nostram quod facimus, immortale esse deberet'.

[4] Ibid. 'Recte diceres, si ad eius imaginem pingeres tabulam, quod in te immortale esse crederis: nunc vero in ea exprimis similitudinem corporis, quod profecto mortale est'.

[5] *De Trinitate* 2.1.3. 'Sed ideo *non a se* quia non est *a se*; et ideo *quod viderit patrem* quia *de patre* est. Neque enim alia similiter, sicut pictor alias tabulas pingit, quemadmodum alias ab alio pictas vidit'.

[6] *De quantitate animae* 33.76. 'Iamvero in ipsa visione atque contemplatione veritatis ... quaedam mansio'.

[7] Ibid. 'Licet tamen dignoscere quantum inter haec (vanitantes), et ea quae vere sunt, distet; et quemadmodum tamen etiam ista omnia Deo auctore creata sint, et in illorum comparatione nulla sint'.

[8] Ibid. 'Tunc agnoscemus quam vera nobis credenda imperata sint, quamque optime ac saluberrime apud matrem ecclesiam nutriti fuerimus'.

resurrection of the human body and the incarnation of the Son of God. With respect to the resurrection of the body, Augustine writes:

> When this bodily nature submits to divine laws, we shall see such changes and alterations in it that even the very resurrection of the flesh (*carnis*), which is now believed sometimes reluctantly and sometimes not at all, we will then hold as certain. Even the rising of the sun again after it has set will not be more sure[9].

It is in this context of the ultimate transformation of the fleshly body that Augustine turns to the incarnation. The potential glorification of the human body, he assures Evodius, removes much of the difficulty surrounding the assumption by the Son of God of a human soul *and body*. In fact (and it is here that the passage under discussion comes):

> We shall then truly scoff at those who (now) laugh at (the teaching) that a man was assumed by the all-powerful Son of God, eternal and transcendent, that he was born of a virgin, and the other marvels of that history, that he was the example and first-fruits of our salvation. We shall despise (those who laugh) as no better than boys who, because they have seen a painter (painting) from panels displayed under his eye, think that it is not possible for a man to be a painted unless the painter studies another picture[10].

Augustine's direct target is the unreal Christ of the Manichaeans, the painted Christ of *The Living Gospel*. While students of Manichaeanism differ somewhat in their descriptions of its christology, they are unamious in judging it docetic. In Manichaeanism, 'the Son of God must not be identified with Mary's Son'[11]. But it is precisely that identification that Augustine is making here — 'the Son of God, eternal and transcendent, was born of a virgin'. He was a true and complete man, not a facsimile nor a picture. It is from this true man that other human persons are painted.

Beyond rejecting Manichaean docetism, Augustine has, in this passage, another end in view. It was not only important, but necessary, for Augustine to insist on the reality of Christ's bodily humanity, because that humanity is the model for human salvation. In the passage discussed here, 'the man assumed by God' (it is interesting that the name of Christ does not occur in the treatise) is presented as 'the example of our salvation'. These words reflect Augustine's understanding of Christ's saving work in 387 (and until ca 395) as strongly,

[9] Ibid. 'Videbimus etiam naturae huius corporeae tantas commutationes et vicissitudines, dum divinis legibus servit, ut etiam ipsam resurrectionem carnis, quae partim tardius, partim omnino non creditur, ita certam teneamus, ut certius nobis non sit, solem, cum occiderit, oriturum'.

[10] Ibid. 'Iamvero eos qui ad exemplum salutis nostrae ac primitias, a Filio Dei potentissimo, aeterno, incommutabili susceptum hominem, cumdemque natum esse de virgine, caeteraque huius historiae miracula irrident, sic contemnemus, tamquam eos pueros, qui cum pictorem propositis tabulis, quas intueratur, pingentem viderint, non putent posse hominem pingi, nisi aliam picturam, qui pingit, aspexerit'.

[11] J.P. Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature* (Delmar, N.Y., 1975), p. 106.

almost exclusively, exemplary and paedagogical. (The most detailed expression of this understanding is found in *De vera religione*, 391.)

In noting this, I arrive at the answer to the third question posed at the beginning of the paper: why does this passage (this christological meteor) occur at this particular point in *De quantitate animae*? It is because Augustine has just finished his description of the ascent of the soul. That ascent begins with an outline of the basic powers of the soul (animating, sensitive, and reminiscent), and proceeds to the fourth degree when 'the soul dares to rank itself not only before its own body, ... but even before the whole material world itself'. It is here 'that moral goodness begins'[12], the soul is purified and begins 'to advance toward God, ... to the contemplation of Truth itself'[13]. If Augustine is to convince his readers both that this spiritual itinerary is possible for humankind and that Christ is its 'example', it is essential that they understand Christ to be truly and completely human. He, too, must have made that ascent in reality, not merely in appearance.

Furthermore, in this passage Christ is not only 'the exemplar of our salvation', but he is also its 'firstfruits'. It is in his role of firstfruits that Christ is the *source* of humankind's spiritual reformation. Christ as firstfruits and source of human salvation brings us, in a roundabout way, to the fourth question posed at the beginning of this paper: does this simile of the painter bear any relation to Augustine's developing understanding of the divine image in humankind, embryonic as it was in 387? It is the most difficult question of the four and any answer must be conjectural.

It should be pointed out that there were Christian precedents both for God as a painter and the human body as image of the divine. We find, for example, in Nyssen: 'God painted the portrait (of human persons) to resemble his own beauty, by the addition of virtues, as it were, with colours'[14]. And, while Ambrose usually identified the soul as that which was made to the image of God, he had preached in Augustine's hearing:

> Man, you have been depicted by your Lord God. You are a good artifact and picture. Do not destroy this picture, radiant not with dye, but with truth, fashioned not in wax, but in grace. Woman, you wipe out this picture if you daub your face with white powder and bedizen it with artificial rouge[15].

[12] *De quantitate animae* 33.73. 'Suscipe igitur atque insili quarto gradui, ex quo bonitas incipit'.

[13] Ibid. 33.74. 'Tunc vero ingenti quadam et incredibili fiducia pergit in Deum, id est, in ipsam contemplationem veritatis'.

[14] *De op.* 5.1. See also 6.7.42: 'Precious is that picture which in its brilliance is in accord with that divine reflection'.

[15] *Haex.* 6.8.47. 'Pictus es ergo, o homo, pictus a Domino Deo tuo, bonum habes artificem atque pictorem. Noli bonam delere picturam, non fuco sed veritate fulgentem, non cera expressam sed gratia. Deles picturam, mulier, si vultum tuum materiali candide oblinas, si adquisito robore perfundas'. It is thought that this sermon was preached in Holy Week of either 386 or 387. See Herman Somers, 'Image de Dieu: les sources de l'exégèse augustinienne', *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 7 (1961), pp. 105-125, and J.J. Savage, *Saint Ambrose. Haexameron, Paradise, and Cain and Abel* (Fathers of the Church; New York, 1961), p. vi.

Ambrose's injunction against make-up makes it clear that here he is talking of both human body and soul as painted by the divine artist.

Extensive work has been done on Augustine's changing understanding, in the first few years following his baptism, of the human person as created in the image and likeness of God. There is no need to review those studies here, but one point from them appears relevant to this fourth question.

Augustine argues in *De Genesi ad litteram, imperfectus liber* (393), that, 'image', used correctly in any context, is a more restricted term than 'likeness' because, to be truly an image, the likeness must have its origin in that to which it is like. Thus, children are images of the parent, but siblings not of each other. Roland Teske has pointed out that, in the context of the divine image, Augustine in his early writings understood the divine image to signify origination from the Father, and that, therefore, 'we find God's image and likeness identified with the Son'. 'Man's being', he continues, 'made unto the image and likeness of God is his being made unto and according to the Son'[16].

If Augustine in 387 held the same position as he did six years later (and this is a large 'if') — that is, that image implies origination, it is possible that, in his painting simile, he is making a similar statement about the originating and imaging relationship between the man, Christ (not in this case to the divine Son) and humankind brought to salvation. In the treatise, *De moribus*, almost exactly contemporaneous with *De quantitate animae*, Augustine identifies 'putting on the new man' with 'bearing the image of Christ'. In this treatise Augustine also explains that to love Christ as the Power, Virtue, Wisdom, and Truth of God leads to the vision of the Father. This vision is stabilised by full and perfect love of God, and the soul is then 'conformed to the image of his Son' (Romans 8.29)[17]. Thus, it is by participation in the 'new man' of Christ that others reach the culmination of the soul's ascent which Augustine is describing in *De quantitate animae*.

In the year following *De quantitate animae* Augustine wrote *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*. There he challenges outright the Manichaean denial that the human person is made to the divine image. That denial is based on an anthropomorphic reading of the Bible, Augustine charges. Throughout the Hebrew scriptures 'body' is predicated of God as a metaphor for the divine spiritual powers. God has no body in the human sense; it is in relation to the intellect and will that the human person is said to be in God's image. This had been the usual interpretation before Augustine, and it will be his ongoing one. How does it relate to this passage in *De quantitate animae*, where humankind, saved from sin and brought to contemplation of God, is presented as painted to the image of the man, Christ? Did Augustine between 387 and 388, radically

[16] Roland J. Teske, 'The image and likeness of God in St Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram liber imperfectus*', *Augustianum* 10 (1990), p. 445.

[17] *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum* 1.13.22.

change his image theology? No, the answer lies, I think, in Augustine's different focuses in the two treatises.

In *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* his target is the Manichaean accusation that orthodox Christians understand God anthropomorphically, and the point is made that we image God spiritually, not physically. But in *De quantitate animae* Augustine is attacking the docetic Manichaean Christ, and so the insistence there is on his true humanity as example and firstfruits of our own renewed humanity. He is 'the new man' whom we, as his disciples, are enabled to put on.

In summary: I have argued, first, that Augustine uses this simile of the painter as particularly apposite for the Manichaeans, his constant target in these years. Secondly, he uses it to ridicule their refusal to credit the incarnation. It is inserted at this particular place in *De quantitate animae*, at first sight abruptedly, to remind his readers that Christ is the examplar for humankind in our ascent to God, and that that example is worthless unless Christ too had overcome the seductions of the material world. Finally, there is a parallel to Augustine's inchoate theology of the divine image in that it is in the man, Christ, that the possibility of completing the spiritual ascent originates.

Augustine on Romans 7:24-25a

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In his little work entitled *Saint Augustine and His Influence Through the Ages* Henri Marrou speaks of certain scriptural passages as 'particularly' Augustine's, noting that they 'may help to define what is original in his thought'[1]. The concluding verses of *Romans* 7 fit precisely into this description. While it is unquestionable that all of *Romans* 7 was pivotal for Augustine, a careful following of *Romans* 7:24-25a throughout his works reveals not only the originality of Augustine's scriptural endeavors, but also highlights the rhetorical sensitivity that the bishop of Hippo brought to his encounter with the Biblical text. *Romans* 7:24-25a, either in whole or in part, appears in over eighty individual works that span Augustine's entire writing and preaching career and thus provides both an extensive as well as intensive view of the particularities of the North African at work.

The Latin text Augustine had before him suggests potential richness.

24. *Miser* (*infelix*)[2] *ego homo.*
Quis me liberabit de corpore mortis huius?
25a. *Gratia Dei per Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum.*

The three lines of the text form a kind of triptych, functioning together as a whole but each panel will also have its own unique development. The final words — *gratia Dei per Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum* — are unique to the Latin-speaking West. Latin commentators had a 'grace' conclusion to bring the tension and conflict of *Romans* 7 to resolution. In contrast, commentators of the Greek-speaking East had a simple doxology — *thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord*[3]. Did this variation, placed in such a strategic location, intensify the West's grace consciousness?

This present communication can only touch upon some aspects of what a much-more detailed exploration of this text has uncovered. Three distinct moments will be briefly highlighted, concluding with some general considerations.

[1] Henri Marrou, *Saint Augustine and His Influence Through the Ages*, trans. Patrick Hepburne-Scott (New York, 1957), p. 84.

[2] The text as used by Augustine appears as both *miser ego homo* and *infelix ego homo*. Augustine most often adopts the '*miser*' reading but the '*infelix*' reading is not far behind. Augustine will also freely move back and forth between *Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum* and *Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum*.

[3] χάρις τῷ θεῷ.

Phase I.390-401 C.E.

It is in the *De Musica* that the text first appears. Augustine's approach to Scripture at this early stage is still quite rudimentary, the first efforts of a neophyte. Book Six, completed in Thagaste in c. 390 C.E.[4], proposes an ascent[5] — *per corporalia ad incorporalia*: the liberal arts serve as ascetic vehicle, facilitating an upward movement away from the bodily to the incorporeal. The final book also explodes with direct scriptural references. It is here that Augustine's very first formal citation of *Romans* 7:24-25a occurs. Augustine is speaking of the labors involved in ascent.

> ... for one now mortal and fragile (*mortali iam et fragili*), it (the body) is dominated with great difficulty and attention (*cum magna difficultate atque attentione dominatur*)[6].

This struggle becomes even more complex when the ascent becomes a turning back to God (*conuertenti se autem ad Dominum*), as the penalty of sin (*poena peccati*) renders the soul no longer apt (*idonea*) for resisting its own wanton movements (*ad opprimendos lasciuos motus suos*). We pick up with the text:

> For it (the *anima*) sins in its strength (*ualentior enim peccata*), but after sinning, having been made weaker as a result of divine law (*et post peccatum diuina lege facta imbecillior*), it is less able to undo (*auferre*) what it has done. 'Unhappy human being that I am (*infelix ego homo*), who will deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord'. Accordingly, a movement of the soul (*motus igitur animae*), conserving its force (*seruans impetum suum*) and not yet extinct, is said to be in the memory (*in memoria*). And, when the mind is intent on something else, it is as if that previous movement were not in the mind and were lost, except before it dies away, it be renewed by some affinity of similar things (*quadam similium uicinitate renouetur*)[7].

Two things are to be noted. First, Augustine's inaugural employment of the text inserts it into a process fraught with tension. Ascent *ad incorporalia* is neither effortless nor automatic. Second, at this early stage the scriptural text serves, by all appearances, as an 'outside agent', called upon but not really forming an essential part of the argument. There is an almost artificial insertion of Paul's words into the discussion, without benefit of introduction, comment, or formal integration. It serves quite well as an example of the *motus animae* Augustine speaks of at the end of the passage. The text sparks the *memoria*, leading to the renewed ascent of the *anima*.

[4] See Ubaldo Pizzani, 'Il sesto libro', in '*De Musica*' *di Agostino d'Ippona* (Lectio Augustini, Settima Agostiniana Pavese, V, ed. Luigi Franco Pizzolato and Giovanni Scanavino; Palermo, 1990), p. 65.

[5] See *Retractationes* I.VI, where Augustine comments on his projected 'encyclopedia', the *De libris disciplinarum*.

[6] Mus. VI.14. Translations from *De musica* have been done having consulted the English text in Saint Augustine: *On Music*, trans. Robert Catesby Taliaferro (FC 2; New York, 1947), pp. 338-339.

[7] Ibid.

Throughout this first phase Augustine clearly views the text's cry as *sub lege* discourse. He makes this explicit in his exegetical endeavors. The Pauline lament expresses an integral dimension of a 'rhetoric of conversion', the necessary voicing of human *miseria* that is answered by responsive *gratia Dei*[8].

This becomes deeply personalized as Augustine takes the Pauline text and applies it to himself, making it serve in the *Confessions* as the North African's own cry for redemption:

> It was in vain that '*I* delighted in your law according to the inner man (*frustra condelectabar legi tuae secundum interiorem hominem*), when that other law in *my* members rebelled against the law of *my* mind and led *me* captive in the law of sin that was in *my* members (*cum alia lex in membris meis repugnaret legi mentis meae et captiuum me duceret in lege peccati, quae in membris meis erat*)'. For the law of sin is the violence of habit (*uiolentia consuetudinis*), by which the mind is drawn and held even against its will (*qua trahitur et tenetur etiam inuitus animus*), and yet deservedly (*eo merito*) because it had fallen wilfully into the habit (*quo in eam uolens inlabitur*). Who then would deliver *my* wretched self (*miserum ergo me quis liberaret*) from the body of this death unless your grace through Jesus Christ our Lord (*nisi gratia tua per Iesum Christum, Dominum nostrum*)?[9]

Miserum ergo me — without apology the Pauline cry is appropriated and personalized, put on the very lips of a *sub lege* Augustine.

Phase II.402-417 C.E.

It is during this second phase that the *miser ego homo* cry will gradually find its way onto the lips of someone *sub gratia*. This appears to unfold almost unconsciously, as Augustine first begins to employ the distress language of the text in homiletic work to describe present Christian struggling and then gradually acknowledges the exegetical legitimacy of such interpretation[10].

This period eventually sees the text taken up into the heat of the Pelagian controversy. In this context there begins a more focused attention upon one panel of our text's triptych. An excerpt from the *De peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo paruulorum* of 412 *C.E.* is characteristic.

> Let them say who can that people are not born with 'the body of this death' (*dicant qui possunt homines nasci non 'in corpore mortis huius'*), so that they may also say that they do not need 'the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord', by which grace they may be freed 'from the body of this death' (*ut possint etiam dicere, non eis necessariam 'gratiam Dei per Iesum Christum', qua liberentur 'de corpore mortis huius'*)[11].

[8] *Exp. prop. Rm.* 45-46,2.
[9] *Conf.*, VIII.5.12.
[10] Typical is *en. Ps.* 70.I.2.
[11] *Pec. mer.* 1.27.43.

Here it is not the '*miser ego homo*' which calls attention to present distress and leads to the *gratia Dei* response. It has now become the experience of *corpus mortis huius*. Augustine thus begins to devote increasing attention to his discovery that this segment of the text eloquently expresses 'present captivity' of struggling Christian.

Phase III.418-430 C.E.

Two points stand out during this final period of Augustine's endeavors with our text. First, this phase begins with intensive preaching on *Romans* in general, with considerable attention paid specifically to the concluding verses of Chapter Seven. In 419 such preaching suddenly comes to a halt and the *miser ego homo* cry never again appears in a homily.

Why did Augustine suddenly cease to use this text in his preaching? One of the bishop's own comments suggests the possibility that it was the discovery of a potentially provocative sexual dimension in the distress of *Romans* 7 that led to this deliberate exclusion from popular homily. *Sermo* 151 that led off his *Romans* homiletic commentaries has Augustine noting that even saints are not immune from provocative dreams:

> '*Miser ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore huius?*' I do not want to be always conquering, I want someday to come to peace (*nolo semper uincere: sed uolo aliquando ad pacem uenire*). Now, therefore, brothers and sisters, hold fast with this approach; with your mind serve the law of God, with your flesh, the law of sin (*nunc ergo, fratres, tenete istum modum: mente seruite legi Dei, carne autem legi peccati*). But do this (the latter) out of necessity, because you crave, not because you consent (*sed ex necessitate, quia concupiscitis, non quia consentitis*). Sometimes these cravings even ambush the saints, so that something is done sleeping which would not be able to happen awake (*aliquando ista concupiscentia sic insidiatur sanctis, ut faciat dormientibus quod non potest uigilantibus*). Why do you all applaud, if not that all of you recognize what I mean (*Unde omnes acclamastis, nisi quia omnes agnouistis*)? To dwell at length upon this is not appropriate, but to pray about it is (*pudet hic immorari, sed non pigeat inde Deum precari*)[12].

Pudet hic immorari suggests that Augustine may have concluded that the kind of distress suggested by the text rendered it no longer suitable for homiletic discourse. It now belongs more appropriately to the restricted forum of theological debate.

The second noteworthy development during this phase concerns Augustine's formulation of the concept *corpus vitae illus* as counterpart to the text's *corpus mortis huius*. He places these two parallel expressions in antithesis, leading to a complex series of often polemical discussions regarding the body before and

[12] *S.* 151.8.

after *peccatum*. Typical is this excerpt from Book Two of the *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* of 420-421[13]:

> There was no 'body of this death' in paradise before sin (*non enim erat 'corpus mortis huius' in paradiso ante peccatum*), for which reason we said that in 'the body of that life' which was there, the semination of children would have taken place without this disorder, something now incapable of happening in 'the body of this death' (*propter quod diximus 'in corpore uitae illius' quae ibi erat sino isto morbo seminationem fieri potuisse filiorum, sine quo nunc' in corpore mortis huius' fieri non potes*)[14].

Augustine's formulation of this antithesis allows him to clearly articulate two conditions of 'bodiliness', one drawn directly and the other indirectly from the *Romans* text. Augustine develops the implications of this antithesis throughout the final decade of his writing.

Conclusion

These brief excerpts attest to the richness Augustine mined from the closing lines of *Romans* 7. Thoughout his writings the text gives voice to human *miseria* and its divine remedy. At first Paul's cry was seen to initiate the conversion process. Then it served to poignantly express present captivity of the Christian. Finally, out of it Augustine generated an antithesis that clarified the embodied human condition — from paradisaical bliss all the way to hoped-for resurrection. Clearly, its cry was seen as an integral part of a human-divine dialogue that culminated in *gratia dei*, divine response to human predicament.

The role given to the *miser ego homo* cry also reveals how Augustine as reformed *rhetor* sensed the power inherent in its charged Pauline language (a Latin speaking Paul of course). He also saw its language as eminently adaptable. At first supplying a 'rhetoric of conversion', then serving 'a rhetoric of present captivity', it finally gives voice to a 'rhetoric of antithesis'. The same Pauline cry, continuously explored and even exploited, served throughout to eloquently express what it meant to live between the two poles of *miseria* and *gratia*. Augustine's employment of the *miser ego homo* cry suggests that *Augustinus Rhetor* was never far from *Augustinus Explanator*. Rhetoric taught Augustine that all discourse, whether *verbum Dei* or *sermo Augustini*, finds fulfillment in persuasion — *flectere ut vincat*[15]. For Augustine, the conclusion of *Romans* 7 eloquently served this aim.

[13] See *Premières polémiques contre Julien: De nuptiis et concupiscentia, Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum*, Introd. trad. and notes by F.-J. Thonnard, E. Bleuzen, and A.C. De Veer (BA 23; Paris, 1974), p. 25.

[14] *Nupt. et conc.* II.2.6.

[15] *Doct. chr.* IV.13.29.

Augustine and Church Authority: The Developing Role of the Provincial Primate

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On October 8, 393, a plenary council commenced at Hippo. Its agenda was ambitious — no less than the revitalization of the Catholic Church in Africa. Masterminding the proceedings were two of the most talented and dedicated men ever to serve the African Church — Aurelius, the new primate of Carthage, and Augustine, the new priest at Hippo[1]. The time was ripe for action. For decades, the Donatists had been in the ascendant, but the death of their leader, Parmenian, had ushered in for them an era of uncertainty and schism. For the Catholic side to regain lost ground, its clergy needed discipline and basic theological education.

Canon 5, promulgated at the Council of Hippo, stands as the centerpiece of Aurelius' and Augustine's reforms. It stipulates that a general council is to meet annually[2]. Hitherto, no such provision had existed in African canon law; a general council had convened only when the primate of Carthage had deemed one necessary. Years had often elapsed between such gatherings. For the Catholic Church to acquire the organizational and inner strength to combat Donatism, however, more frequent conclaves were an absolute necessity. The annual council would enjoy *plena auctoritas* in all cases that it would adjudicate.

Apart from the annual council, did Aurelius and Augustine seek to promote any other measures which would further strengthen the Church's authority? I believe that they did, and I believe that these measures have been overlooked by scholars in their haste to acknowledge the importance of Canon 5. From my work on the North African canons, I have come to the conclusion that Augustine and Aurelius wanted to bolster the power of the provincial primates as well. Each ecclesiastical province in Africa boasted a primate. He was the senior

[1] F.L. Cross' research on the African canons is indispensable for a study such as this. See his 'History and Fiction in the African Canons', *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s., xii (1961), pp. 227-247. All canons in this paper are from Charles Munier, *Concilia Africae A. 345-A. 525*, *Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina* (Turnhout, 1974). Henceforth cited as *CCL* 149. All articles by Munier are from his *Vie conciliaire et collections canoniques en Occident IVe-XIIe siècles* (London, 1987). For a more extensive analysis of Augustine and Aurelius' programme, see my book on Rome and the African Church in the time of Augustine (New Haven, 1997).

[2] Hippo Breviary, Canon 5 (Munier *CCL* 149. 34). Most canons from the Council of Hippo are contained in the Hippo Breviary, an attenuated compendium of the legislation drafted at the council.

churchman in his region — but the position was mainly honorific. At the Council of Hippo, however, primates are given specific authority in judicial matters.

To appreciate Aurelius' and Augustine's innovations, we must first go back a half-century earlier to the Council of Carthage circa 348. It was presided over by Gratus, primate of Carthage at the time. Several canons were drafted there, but only one is of concern to us — number 11[3]. It establishes the parameters for local trials for clergy. The number of judges for each case will depend on the rank of the accused. If the defendant is only a deacon, a mere three bishops will hear his case. If the defendant is a priest, six neighboring bishops will judge. If the accused is himself a bishop, he will be judged by twelve of his peers.

For local trials, Canon 11 remained the standard by which the African Church operated. Four decades after its inception, its terms were slightly revised by the Council of 390, but its basic intent remained unaltered. Genethlius was primate of Carthage at the time, and Aurelius his archdeacon. It now became Canon 10 in the series of canons promulgated by the Council of 390 and reads in part: 'Felix, bishop of Selemsela stated: "I would like to make this proposal as well, since it is consistent with canons decreed by venerable African councils of old: if a bishop is accused of some sort of wrongdoing, which we hope not, and if it is impossible for a larger number of bishops to gather together to hear his case, he should be judged by twelve bishops so that he will not continue to have the charge hanging over him"'. And, once again, a priest is to be judged by six bishops, and a deacon by three[4].

In regard to this canon, Charles Munier has noted that it looks as if the African fathers would prefer to convene a synod to judge a fellow bishop, rather than simply calling on twelve confreres to decide[5]. I think that he is correct here; there does seem to be sentiment for assembling a larger group to hear episcopal cases. Whether it should be a fairly local gathering or something more ambitious on the inter-provincial level, the fathers neglect to specify. Nonetheless, practicality obtrudes when the fathers admit that a quorum of twelve may just have to suffice for most cases. They know that it can be difficult to summon a considerable number of bishops within a short span of time.

What is interesting about this is, though the Africans cherish long-standing custom and endeavor to abide by it as best they can, by 390 they realize that they need not be hidebound by it. They now seem to understand that, at least

[3] Canon 11, Council of Carthage, 348 (Munier *CCL* 149. 8-9). '... a tribus uicinis episcopis, si diaconus est qui arguitur; si presbyter, est a sex; si episcopus, a duodecim consacerdotibus audiatur'. The date of the council is disputed. It may have convened as early as 345.

[4] Canon 10, Council of Carthage, 390 (Munier *CCL* 149. 17). 'Ut si quis episcopus, quod non optamus, reatum aliquem incurrerit, et fuerit ei nimia necessitas non posse plurimos congregari: ne in crimine remaneat, a duodecim episcopis audiatur et a sex presbyter et a tribus diaconus cum proprio suo episcopo'.

[5] Munier, 'Un canon inédit', p. 117 in *Vie conciliaire*.

for higher clergy, justice might be better served by a large tribunal where petty jealousies and past slights, so easily amplified in a small setting, tend to fade into the background.

Three years later, at the Council of Hippo in 393, the canon we are discussing was again revised. Designated as Canon 8 at Hippo, it now was directed solely at lower clergy[6]. Priests and deacons are still to be judged by the same number of bishops as before and, for the first time ever, we are told what the lowliest members of the hierarchy — the subdeacons, acolytes, door-keepers, and grave-diggers — can expect if they commit an infraction. But how are *causae maiores* to be judged? How are the higher clergy to be judged? The evidence leads me to believe that the Council of Hippo proved to be something of a milestone in this regard. For the first time in half a century, no mention is made of trying a bishop before twelve of his peers. The dissatisfaction that bubbled up over this issue in 390 had apparently become strong enough to prompt a revision in policy by 393. No longer lumped together with minor clergy, bishops are now treated separately — in two different canons at Hippo, Canons 6 and 7.

We need to look briefly at these two rulings. Canon 6 stipulates that if a bishop is accused of wrongdoing, the case must go to his provincial primate[7]. The accused will have one month from the day on which he received the official summons to appear before the primate. If important matters delay him, he will be granted an additional month. But after that, he shall be excommunicate until he appears before the primate.

It is here, I believe, that the provincial primate begins to take on a new importance in the judicial process. Hitherto, the primate of each African province had presided over local synods and had enjoyed a certain pride of place within his own territory, but he had not been expected to play an official role in legal matters[8]. No extant canon prior to 393 makes any mention of his responsibility to judge ecclesiastical cases. Conscientious primates probably did investigate matters that were brought to their attention, but the process must have been informal at best since custom and canon law dictated that an accused bishop should be tried by twelve peers. No doubt, geography played a role in such cases as well; a primate was more likely to hear about a refractory bishop close by than about one whose see lay far away. Nonetheless, with the passage of Canon 6, there were probably some clergymen who were relieved not to have to face a panel of inquisitive colleagues and instead welcomed the opportunity to discuss their problems in a confidential setting.

Aurelius, Augustine, and the assembled bishops at Hippo knew that the provincial primate would, at best, serve as a waystation for most bishops

[6] Hippo Breviary, Canon 8 (Munier *CCL* 149. 35-36). 'Si autem presbyteri uel diaconi fuerint accusati, adiuncto sibi ex uicinis locis legitimo numero collegarum, idest: in presbyteri nomine V, in diaconi ii., episcopi ipsorum causam discutiant...'.

[7] Hippo Breviary, Canon 6 (Munier *CCL* 149. 34-35).

[8] Rémi Crespin, *Ministère et sainteté* (Paris, 1965) pp. 17, 121-123.

suspected of wrongdoing. It is the annual council, which they had just inaugurated, that will serve as the ultimate forum for most episcopal cases. This becomes obvious as soon as we read the next canon which they drafted, Canon 7. It states: 'If, however, the accused is unwilling to appear before the annual plenary council, so that his case can indeed be settled there, he is to be considered as having pronounced a sentence of excommunication against himself. As long as he remains excommunicate, he is not to have any contact with his flock'[9].

The intent of Canons 6 and 7 seems to be that an accused bishop should first approach his provincial primate, and if he is not satisfied with the verdict, he must then approach the general council. There he will receive final judgment for his case; as we know, the African fathers regard the plenary council as their highest court, from which there is no appeal[10]. On the surface, then, these two canons seem to be straightforward in their specifications; they seem to spell out judicial procedure in a simple, tidy manner. We need to exercise caution here, however. For decades, it had been customary for twelve bishops to come together to judge one of their own. Are we to believe that practice suddenly disappeared in 393 at the mere stroke of a pen? There must have been many bishops who grumbled against such an innovation.

To my mind, Canons 6 and 7 are *desideratum*: they indicate the path that Aurelius and Augustine would like the African Church to take. They would like provincial primates to exercise more control over their own regions; they would like the primates to keep in contact with Carthage so that Aurelius can readily offer them advice and help. It will be easier for him to communicate with just a few individuals rather than have to deal with tribunals of bishops scattered across North Africa which only meet sporadically. I believe this is why we hear nothing about the twelve-bishop proviso in any of the legislation from 393. Not a single canon drafted at Hippo either expressly forbids it nor expressly allows it. Augustine and Aurelius were doing their best, I would argue, to proceed circumspectly.

Both Charles Munier and Remi Crespin have analyzed the material under discussion, but neither of them offers satisfying answers. Munier glosses over the problem by saying that the Council of 393 makes the legislation of 390 'more precise' by requiring an accused bishop to appear before his primate and then before the general council[11]. But is the accused still supposed to be judged by twelve of his peers at some point? Munier does not say. He does insist that the plenary council 'must function as a court of appeal', but he makes no attempt to be more specific than this. Crespin's analysis is scarcely

[9] Hippo Breviary, Canon 7 (Munier *CCL* 149. 35).

[10] Paul Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne depuis les origines jusqu'à l'invasion arabe* (1901-1923; Brussels, 1963), vol. 3, p. 211; Munier, 'Un canon inédit', p. 117 in *Vie conciliaire*.

[11] Munier, 'Un canon inédit', p. 117 in *Vie conciliaire*.

more illuminating. He contends that we no longer hear about the twelve-man tribunal after 393 because the council decided it should be 'superseded' by recourse to one's primate and to the annual council[12]. The problem is that Crespin assumes that the Council of Hippo abolished the twelve-bishop proviso when, in fact, the council was simply silent about it. When he proceeds to adduce evidence that conflicts with his conclusions, he is hard pressed to explain himself (i.e., the case of Bishop Maurentius in 407). Admittedly, it is difficult to ascertain the Africans' precise intentions about episcopal trials. No record of the debates which transpired at the Council of Hippo has survived. We have only the barebones evidence of the canons that were drafted there. All the more reason, I would suggest, to exercise caution here. It is tempting to want to make African canon law as neat and tidy as possible, but I would emphasize that we need to respect the inevitable lack of coherence in a system that was only just beginning to become organized.

In the time remaining, I shall look briefly at two other canons from the Council of Hippo which, I believe, bolster my argument about increased power for provincial primates. Canon 10 focuses on appeals and arbitration. It states that 'if a case is appealed from one ecclesiastical tribunal to another with greater authority (*maior auctoritas*), no disgrace shall redound to the court of first instance, provided that the judges acted fairly. Certainly, if by consent of both parties, arbitrators are selected, the case cannot be appealed'[13]. (The words '*maior auctoritas*' and the plural '*judices*' indicate that the Africans were thinking of courts composed of more and more bishops). But why are we being told this? Are not bishops supposed to go to their primate and then to the general council? I believe that Canon 10 is mute testimony to long-standing practices that still prevailed in the North African Church. In my opinion, it demonstrates that cases continued to be appealed at a number of different levels or continued to go to arbitration — despite the innovations ushered in by Canons 6, 7, and 8[14]. Augustine and Aurelius wanted to increase the authority of the provincial primate, but they respected customs and traditions that had sunk deep roots into the African soil.

The final canon which I shall touch on is number 27 from the Council of Hippo. It is concerned with overseas appeals. 'Bishops must not set out across

[12] Crespin, *Ministère et sainteté*, pp. 122-123.

[13] Hippo Breviary, Canon 10 (Munier *CCL* 149. 36-37). 'Hoc etiam placuit ut a quibuscumque iudicibus ecclesiasticis ad alios iudices ecclesiasticos ubi est maior auctoritas fuerit prouocatum, non eis obsit quorum fuerit soluta sententia ... Sane si ex consensu partium iudices electi fuerint, etiam a pauciore numero quam constitutum est, non liceat prouocari'. See Crespin, *Ministère et sainteté*, p. 125.

[14] In 318, Constantine allowed Christian bishops to arbitrate civil disputes. See P.R. Coleman-Norton, *Roman State and Christian Church: A Collection of Legal Documents to A.D. 535* (London, 1966) 1: 74. The popularity of arbitration amongst lay parties probably caused the Church to sanction it for clergy long before the Council of 393.

the sea without first consulting their provincial primate. Above all, they must secure a letter of introduction from him. Notification to this effect shall be sent by the council to bishops overseas'[15]. This canon gained notoriety in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries because a number of church historians insisted that it is anti-papal in tone[16]. They argued that the African fathers were stubbornly independent and wanted to confine appeals to Africa proper. I disagree with that interpretation. For decades, African bishops had been allowed to seek justice abroad as an alternative to their own ecclesiastical court system. No measures had ever been instituted to control these transmarine forays, however, and too many bishops were crossing the Mediterranean for frivolous reasons. With the passage of Canon 27, Augustine and Aurelius were determined to regulate such traffic and allow only those with a serious purpose to proceed. But my main point in mentioning this canon is to underline the fact that it is the provincial primate who is now charged with the task of determining legitimate petitions from non-essential ones. It is the primate who will now enjoy a measure of control over those in his province who wish to travel abroad. Because of the dust kicked up over Canon 27, this point has been obscured. Perhaps the fathers at Hippo felt that one's primate would be more conversant with one's case than an ecclesiastical official elsewhere, but as we have mentioned, that was not necessarily so. Provinces could be large and the number of bishops many. To my mind, Canon 27 endeavors to harness a growing problem in the African Church by bolstering the status of the key churchman in every province.

One final piece of evidence needs to be mentioned. The Council of Hippo readily approved the creation of a new primatial see for the vast province of Mauretania[17]. For years, the area had been served by only one primate (at Caesarea) and was ripe for division. The Roman government had recognized the eastern portion — Mauretania Sitifensis — as a separate civil province since the time of Diocletian. Again, I suspect that Augustine and Aurelius were happy to recognize a *prima sedes* for Mauretania Sitifensis, not only because

[15] Hippo Breviary, Canon 27 (Munier *CCL* 149. 41). 'Ut episcopi trans mare non proficiscantur, nisi consulto primae sedis episcopo suae cuiusque prouinciae, ut ab eo praecipue possint formatas accipere…' Many scholars believe that the destination was the imperial court. See Munier, 'Un canon inédit', pp. 121-122, 125-126 and 'La tradition littéraire des dossiers', p. 44; also Crespin, *Ministère et sainteté*, p. 118. I believe that the authors of the canon had the papal court in mind as well.

[16] For example, B.J. Kidd, *A History of the Church to 461 A.D.* (Oxford, 1922), vol. 3, pp. 162-164.

[17] Canons D and E, Council of Hippo, 393 (Munier *CCL* 149. 32); Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*, vol. 3, pp. 87-88; W.H.C. Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1971) p. 42; Crespin, *Ministère et sainteté*, p. 17. Around 422, the primate of Numidia played a very active role in adjudicating the case of Antony of Fussala. Perhaps we see here the mature fruit of Augustine's and Aurelius' policy. We know of the Numidian primate's efforts thanks to the new letters of Augustine. See Letter 20* in Johannes Divjak, ed., *Lettres 1*-29*. *Nouvelle édition du texte critique et introduction par Johannes Divjak* (Bibliothèque Augustinienne 46B; Paris, 1987).

the church there deserved one, but because it would make ecclesiastical administration more effective for all concerned. In such ways, I would argue, the Catholic Church in Africa took steps to strengthen its position over against its long-time adversary, the Donatists.

Aspects théologiques de la conversion

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La souveraineté de Dieu

Le pouvoir du soleil

L'expérience de la découverte de la Vérité faite par saint Augustin, quand il se sentait invité à se nourrir de ses mets célestes afin de se changer en quelque chose d'autre, nous amène à considérer la conversion comme une transformation et un changement de la personne qui devient en quelque sort quelqu'un d'autre. Elle s'ouvre à de nouvelles valeurs morales et religieuses, et devient capable de s'engager à les réaliser et vivre selon les exigences d'une nouvelle vision de choses, c'est-à-dire, d'après les exigences de la nouvelle mission.

Augustin avait alors senti qu'une simple adhésion intellectuelle ne peut réaliser la transformation d'une personne. La connaissance de Dieu purement intellectuelle n'est pas une adhésion cordiale à Dieu, selon les traits fondamentaux de la personne, parce qu'en est absente ou est minime la rélation affective avec celui qui se présente comme la valeur suprême.

C'est pourquoi, ce sont les relations affectives de l'homme qui expriment le mieux, par analogie, la nouvelle relation à Dieu qui exige toute conversion, c'est-à-dire, l'amitié de Dieu, qui constitue l'idéal suprême qui captiva aux environs de Trèves, dans la cabane d'un moine, les deux officiers impériaux. En lisant la vie de saint Antoine, ils decouvrirent qu'ils pouvaient atteindre ce qu'il avait atteint: 'Que cherchons-nous? A quoi tend notre service? Pourrons-nous espérer un plus grand privilège au palais que d'être amis de l'empereur? Et là encore, tout n'est-il pas fragile et plein de périls? Et que de périls traversés pour parvenir à un plus gros péril? Et quand y sera-t-on? tandis que ami de Dieu, si je veux le devenir, voici qu'à l'instant c'est fait', se disaient-ils émerveillés[1].

On atteint ce très haut idéal par la conversion, mais au prix d'un profond changement de la vie personnelle, qui affecte non seulement le domaine de la connaissance, mais aussi celui des sentiments qui sont l'expression la plus complète de la vie de la personne humaine.

Nous sommes donc ici en face d'un changement qui se produit et qui implique un double travail: la destruction et l'édification ou reconstruction.

[1] *Conf.* 8, 6, 15.

D'abord il faut détruire l'œuvre du péché qui a déformé en l'homme l'image à la ressemblance de son Créateur, et, par ailleurs, l'homme doit restaurer et édifier l'œuvre divine. Saint Augustin decrira d'une façon magistrale cet double travail: *Euertit foeditatem, formauit pulchritudinem*, c'est-à-dire 'Abattre la laideur et restaurer la beauté'[2]. Il faut restituer la ressemblance et la beauté divines, pour que l'homme se sente réellement un ami, libre, faisant confiance à celui qu'il regardait jusque là comme un adversaire terrible et un ennemi à craindre, mais qui est toujours prêt à lui offrir son amitié.

Dieu opère, en collaboration avec le libre arbitre, la transformation que suppose toute conversion, en nous introduisant dans une théologie particulière qui confère au visage divin un éclat et une beauté nouvelle. En tant que mutation ou transformation religieuse, la conversion authentique est comparable au miracle des noces de Cana, où le Christ changea l'eau en vin, le meilleur que les hommes aient jamais bu. Ce fut un acte de toute-puissance et de miséricorde divines, comme l'est toute conversion, lorsque des âmes refroidies deviennent purifiées et brûlants de charité. Pensons simplement et songeons à Marie Madeleine à Paul de Tarse, à Augustin de Tagaste.

Des faits semblables ne font pas partie de notre foi, cependant ils nous aident d'une façon efficace et ils nous font mieux connaître comment la toute-puissance de Dieu conduit et gouverne les âmes, parmi lesquelles il exerce sa vraie souveraineté. La Bible et l'Histoire de l'eglise sont pleines de miracles, car elles ont leur part dans la pédagogie divine du genre humain.

Mais le pouvoir divin n'œuvre pas uniquement à travers des miracles. C'est un pouvoir ou plutôt un attribut ou une forme d'agir qui comprend toute l'action de Dieu dans la création et dans l'histoire des hommes, qu'est l'histoire du salut.

Nous nous référons ici à l'exercice de la souveraineté divine sur des esprits libres, purs ou incarnés. C'est une souveraineté transcendante que ne peut égaler l'action d'aucun autre être créé.

Une image lointaine de cet agir de Dieu nous est donnée par l'influence du soleil, de si haut, de si loin, sur l'univers créé, et d'un manière tellement visible sur le monde végétal, vivifié par sa lumière et sa chaleur. Au printemps, c'est la manifestation de cette œuvre bénéfique et vivifiante. La nature ressuscite réveillée de son sommeil hivernal par l'astre qui communique sa chaleur à l'intime des plantes, aux mouvements secrets de leur métabolisme. Elles accomplissent leur cycle vital grâce à l'activité solaire. Ainsi le soleil participe à la reproduction des fleurs et des fruits. Son influence est secrète, silencieuse, douce et souverainement efficace.

Si nous remontons maintenant à la créature humaine, comment nier à son Créateur une action analogue, mais éminemment supérieure, afin de pénetrer

[2] *En. in ps.* 44, 3 *PL* 36, 495. La beauté est la justice: 'Summa et uera pulchritudo iustitia est', *ibid.*

dans la partie la plus secrète des esprits et y eveiller des mouvements spéciaux, sans jamais nier leur liberté, mais au contraire favorisant leurs exigences les plus naturelles et leur réalisation selon le plan divin?

Imaginons cette souveraineté divine accomplissant son plan dans l'immense domaine des esprits, ordonant et dirigeant les moyens et les fins pour les êtres qu'elle a créés. D'une main ferme, elle soutient toute chose à sa place et la garde dans son existence. L'art divin de changer les âmes et de les convertir suppose le plein exercice de sa souveraineté que saint Augustin a rattaché à sa doctrine de la grâce. Elle agit au plus profond des cœurs, afin de les changer et les faire pencher du côté qui lui plaît.

Le psaume 134 formule ainsi cette souveraineté: 'Tout ce qui plaît au Seigneur, il le fait, au ciel et sur la terre, dans les mers et tous les abîmes'.

A la lumière de cette parole biblique, le commentateur place l'univers entier sous la volonté et la souveraineté divines qui pénétrent jusqu'à ces abîmes secrets que sont les cœurs: 'Est caché le cœur qui est bon, caché aussi le cœur perverse. Le cœur bon est un abîme, et un abîme aussi le mauvais. Et pourtant ils sont à découvert au regard de Dieu à qui rien ne peut être caché. Il console le cœur qui est bon, et il rend inquiet le cœur qui est mauvais'[3].

Ici la toute-puissance de Dieu et la volonté de l'homme se rejoignent pour faire ce qui est désiré, à condition que ce soit bon et raisonnable. C'est une toute-puissance bonne et une bonté puissante, qui sont toujours exercées pour la diffusion du bien.

Conformement à ces principes, Augustin tire au clair le mystère de la grâce: 'Il est certain que rien ne peut resister à la volonté de Dieu, qui fait tout ce qui n'est encore que future. La volonté humaine ne saurait l'empêcher de faire ce qu'il veut, puisqu'il fait de la volonté même des hommes ce qu'il veut, et quand il veut. Je me contentarai de citer parmi beaucoup d'exemples, un seul. Lorsque Dieu voulut donner le royaume à Saül, était-il au pouvoir des israélites de se soumettre ou pas, à cet homme, et leur volonté assez forte pour pouvoir resister à Dieu? Le Seigneur fit cependant ce qu'il avait résolu, par leur volonté même, car il est tout-puissant pour incliner les cœurs humains selon son bon plaisir'[4].

La toute-puissance de Dieu

C'est une évidence de ce pouvoir divin que nous ne devons pas oublier dans notre exposition, selon ce principe: 'Dieu avait sans doute le pouvoir absolument

[3] *En. in ps.* 134, 6 *PL* 37, 1749.

[4] *De corrept. et gr.* 14, 45 *PL* 44, 943. Cf. *Enchir.* 95 *PL* 40, 276: 'Non ergo fit aliquid nisi omnipotens fieri uelit, uel sinendo ut fiat, uel ipse faciendo'.

tout-puissant d'incliner les cœurs humains là où il voulait'. Et saint Augustin le confirme en citant l'Ecriture sainte à propos de Saül: 'Samuel renvoya le peuple et chacun s'en alla en sa maison, Saül, lui aussi, rentre à Gabaa, et quelques hommes dont Dieu avait touché le cœur, le suivirent. Toutefois, quant aux hommes qui ne valaient rien, ils dirent: "Comment celui-là nous sauvera-t-il?" et ils le méprisèrent, et ils ne lui apportèrent point de dons' (1 *Reg* 10, 25-27).

L'expression *corda tangere* — toucher les cœurs — est une excellente métaphore pour exprimer l'opération divine d'incliner les volontés des hommes pour accepter une proposition faite aux hommes libres vers cet agent mysterieux et très haut qui est Dieu.

Un peu plus loin, Augustin reaffirme le même fait au sujet de l'élection de David: 'C'est par leur volonté qu'ils établirent David roi sur Israel. Ils agirent volontairement et même avec plaisir, poussés par un esprit de paix. Cette décision leur fut inspirée par celui qui opère ce qu'il veut dans le cœur des hommes. C'est pourquoi l'Ecriture dit: "Et David croissait en force et en puissance, il devenait plus grand et le Seigneur était avec lui". C'est donc par la volonté de Dieu que ces hommes furent aménés à établir David roi d'Israel. Et comment les amena-t-il? Est-ce en les liant, les enchainant? Il agit intérieurement sur eux, s'empara de leurs cœurs, les toucha et les entraîna par la volonté même qu'il leurs inspira'[5].

On le voit, saint Augustin insiste là-dessus contre les pélagiens qui n'admetaient que de rares interventions divines et de l'extérieur. Augustin livre à la toute-puissante action divine la partie la plus secrète et la plus intime du cœur de l'homme sans signifier pour autant la suppression d'une resistance du libre arbitre. Celui-ci peut s'insurger contre le pouvoir divin et s'ériger en une republique indépendante. Cependant, même-là, il ne peut pas éluder la souveraineté divine, et demeure soumis à ses ordres et à ses sanctions.

Voici un autre texte de saint Augustin tiré de son livre *De Trinitate*: 'C'est la volonté de Dieu qui est la cause première et suprême de toutes les formes et de tous les mouvements sensibles. Rien de visible et de sensible ne se produit sans que du fond de son invisible et immateriel palais, le souverain Maître en ait donné l'ordre ou la permission conforme à la mystérieuse répartition des récompenses et châtiments, des faveurs et des salaires dans cette immense et énorme république qui est l'univers créé'[6].

Cette phrase de saint Augustin nous permet d'imaginer ce palais impérial, d'où émanent des ordres selon le plan d'une justice qui se déroule tout au long des siècles. Les hommes avec leur libre arbitre en sont les acteurs principaux, méritant, selon leur agir, soit une récompense, soit un châtiment.

[5] *Ibid.* 'Intus egit, intus corda tenuit, corda mouit, eosque uoluntatibus eorum, quas ipse in illis operatus est, traxit'.

[6] *De Trin.* 3, 4 *PL* 42, 873.

Cette souveraineté impériale est partagée en deux vastes domaines: l'individuel et le social. Chaque personne et tout le genre humain sont soumis à la providence divine. Chaque personne est en relation avec son créateur, relation qui est une histoire sainte, où s'inscrivent tous les évènements personnels. Voici un texte des *Confessions* à ce sujet: 'Tu es et tu es Dieu et Seigneur de tout ce que tu as créé, en toi toutes les choses instables ont leurs causes stables, toutes les choses muables gardent leurs origines immuables, toutes les choses irrationnelles et temporelles ont leurs raisons éternellement vivantes'[7].

L'intervention salvifique de Dieu peut être expérimentée, à titre personnel, à l'intérieur du théâtre de chaque homme, comme l'a fait Augustin dans les *Confessions*, où il suit pas à pas toutes les interventions de la providence.

Cependant le genre humain offre un domaine ou un théâtre plus vaste, où l'histoire de l'action divine est objet de la révélation ou de la prophétie: 'La providence divine pourvoit aux intérêts, non seulement de chaque homme en privé, mais de tout le genre humain, en quelque sort officiellement. Son action sur les individus, Dieu qui en est l'auteur la connaît et les bénéficiares aussi; son action sur le genre humain, il a voulu nous la transmettre et manifester par l'histoire et la prophétie. Or la foi à des événements temporels, passés ou futurs, est affaire de croyance plutôt que d'intelligence. Ce qu'il nous appartient d'examiner, c'est à quels hommes ou à quels livres nous devons croire pour rendre à Dieu le culte qui convient, car c'est l'unique salut'[8].

Dieu s'est manifesté aux hommes par la parole et des prodiges en faveur du genre humain qui portent le sceau de sa toute-puissance, de sa sagesse et de sa miséricorde. L'Ecriture sainte nous révèle et nous apprend la conduite divine, qui est la garantie de la vérité et un guide sûr dans notre obscur pélerinage ici bas, qui est la vie de l'homme.

C'est dans les deux livres, ouvrages qui l'ont rendu célébre, qu'Augustin a voulu dévoiler l'action de Dieu dans l'histoire du salut: dans les *Confessions* et dans la *Cité de Dieu*. Ces deux ouvrages nous ont appris à lire l'histoire universelle de l'humanité, ainsi qui l'histoire personnelle de l'individu.

Les *Confessions* décrivent l'expérience d'un homme, l'action salvifique de Dieu au plus profond de sa conscience, tandis que la *Cité de Dieu* révèle la théologie de l'histoire universelle. Dans les deux il s'agit d'une pédagogie divine qui veut la transformation et la conversion du vieil homme, superficiel et terrestre en homme nouveau, intérieur, participant de la divinité[9].

Il s'agit, donc, dans le fond, d'une histoire de conversion qui recouvre l'immense espace depuis la création du genre humain jusqu'à la fin des temps, tous marqués du signe salvifique de la rédemption. 'Ainsi, depuis notre péché qui

[7] *Conf.* 1, 9, 6.

[8] *De uera rel.* 35, 46 *PL* 34, 142: 'Quoniam igitur diuina prouidentia non solum singulis hominibus quasi priuatim, sed uniuerso generi humano tamquam publice consulit'.

[9] *De uera rel.* 25, 50 *PL* 34, 144.

fut commis par notre nature même, par la faute du premier homme, l'humanité est redevenue la magnifique parure de la terre, et l'action de la providence divine l'a si bien gouvernée que par l'habilité d'un traitement indescriptible, la laideur même des vices se transforme en je ne sais quelle beauté'[10].

Toute l'histoire de l'humanité devient une immense mutation, et un miracle surprenant de conversion: le genre humain devient meilleur, et reçoit un mode nouveau, une forme et un poids dans son être completement nouveaux.

Dans cette perspective on trouve constamment des allusions à la double théologie du péché et de la grâce, les deux pôles, negatif et positif, de l'immense histoire de la conversion. La souveraineté divine resplendit d'autant plus qu'est profond l'abîme du mal dont Dieu libère l'homme. Ainsi la dialectique de la misère et de la miséricorde est cette toile de fond lumineuse qui éclaire l'histoire des conversions.

La dialectique des contraires

La conversion vue comme une dialectique des contraires, soit que considerons l'action divine, soit la décision que doit prendre l'homme pour changer sa vie et la fonder sur de nouvelles bases qui affectent toute son existence, suppose un processus plus ou moins long, riche en élans et rebondissements, telle une chasse passionnée. Il est clair qu'il n'est pas question ici des conversions fulgurantes ou soudaines comme celles de saint Paul, d'un Alphonse de Ratisbonne ou d'autres de cette catégorie.

Dans la conversion deux pouvoirs s'affrontent: le péché et la sainteté, qui luttent l'un contre l'autre. La victoire demande du temps et aussi une stratégie particulière au pouvoir victorieux.

Chez saint Augustin, cette stratégie trouve son expression dans tout un repertoire de verbes qui font allusion à de multiples situations de ceux que la grâce a subjugués. Je veux noter ici un texte du sermon 216, dans sa propre expression latine: *Currite ad illum et convertimini; ille enim est qui conuertit auersos, persequitur fugitiuos inuenit perditos, humiliat superbos, pascit famelicos, soluit compeditos, illuminat caecos, purgat inmundos, recreat fatigatos, suscitat mortuos, atque nequititiae spiritibus possessos et captos erigit*[11], c'est-à-dire: 'Convertis-toi, regrette tes fautes, reviens au Seigneur. Accurrez à lui et convertissez vous; c'est lui qui rappelle ceux qui détournent de lui, poursuit les fugitifs, retrouve les égarés, humilie les orgueilleux, nourrit les afamés, brise les chaînes des captifs, éclaire les aveugles, purifie les impures, rend la force à ceux qui sont fatigués, ressuscite les morts et enlève aux esprits du mal ceux qu'ils retenaient sous leur domination'[11].

[10] *De uera rel.* 32, 52 *PL* 34, 144.

[11] *S.* 216, 11 *PL* 38, 1082.

Notez la variété des situations que crée l'eloignement de Dieu: ceux qui lui tournent le dos, ceux qui fuient; les égarés, les superbes qui demandent un traitement spécial, les affamés, les enchaînés, les aveugles, les impurs, ceux qui sont victimes de dégout et de lassitude, les possédés par l'esprit du mal. Nous nous trouvons en face de toute une typologie variée d'êtres humains qui exigent de la providence divine une pédagogie appropriée à chaque type, illuminée par la souveraineté, la sagesse et la miséricorde de Dieu.

Ainsi on peut comprendre tous les chemins qui mènent à Rome, autrement dit, les multiples voies que prennent ceux qui reviennent à Dieu. Chacun choisit son chemin, et par chemins differents tous arrivent à une même cité de Dieu qui les accueille dans son sein.

Ce sont les psaumes qui révèlent le mieux cette souveraineté divine régnant sur les esprits. En les commentant, saint Augustin retrouve dans leurs versets sa propre histoire. Il s'appliqua d'une façon très intime l'histoire du fils prodigue. En commentant le verset 17 du psaume 58: 'Et moi je chanterai ta force, j'acclamerai ton amour au matin car tu as été pour moi une citadelle', Augustine le personalise immédiatement: 'Qui étais-je, si tu n'étais pas venu à mon secours? Dans quel état désespéré n'étais-je pas si tu n'avais pas pris soin de moi? Où étais-je étendu, si tu n'étais venu à moi? Certes j'étais en danger de mort par suite d'une grave blessure qui exigeait un médicin tout-puissant. Même si je ne voulais pas être soigné, la gravité de la blessure l'invitait à me guérir. Tu as beau te détourner de lui, il te rappelle, te force en quelque sorte à revenir, malgré ta fuite, et t'attire à lui. Ainsi s'accomplit cette parole: "Sa miséricorde me previendra"'[12].

Augustin adopte un langage concret et personalisé, car les prières des psaumes ont une valeur universelle: 'Tu es mon Dieu et Sauveur, en toi j'espère tout le jour (ps. 24, 5). Chassé donc par toi du paradise et exilé dans une contrée lointaine, je ne puis retourner de moi-même si tu ne viens à la rencontre de l'égaré. Dès les origines de ce monde j'ai attendu ta miséricorde'.

Dans le gouvernement des cœurs humains, la miséricorde et la souveraineté divine sont étroitement unies. 'Mon Dieu, dit-il, tu es ma miséricorde! Si tu dis: "mon salut", je comprends que Dieu donne le salut; si tu dis: "mon refuge", je comprends que tu te refugies en lui; tu dis: "ma force", je comprends qu'il te donne de la force. Mais que veut dire "ma miséricorde"? Tout ce que je suis vient de ta miséricorde. Mais t'ai-je mérité en t'invoquant? Qu'ai-je fait pour exister? Qu'ai-je fait pour t'invoquer? Si j'ai fait quelque chose pour exister, j'existais donc avant que d'être. Mais si je n'étais absolument rien avant que d'exister, je n'ai pu rien mériter pour exister. Tu m'as donné d'exister, et tu ne m'aurais pas donnée d'être bon? Si tu m'avais donné d'exister et qu'un autre m'avait donné d'être bon, c'est lui qui serait meilleur. Mais puisque

[12] *En. in ps.* 24, 5 *PL* 36, 185.

nul n'est meilleur que toi, nul plus puissant, nul plus riche en miséricorde, c'est de toi que j'ai reçu l'être et être bon, ô mon Dieu, ma miséricorde!'[13].

Toute l'habilité de la souveraineté divine vise ce but: rendre les hommes meilleurs en réalisant leurs aspirations les plus hautes. 'Il est puissant le Seigneur, qui envoie l'unité, pour rendre meilleure la volonté'[14]. C'est bien le fruit très précieux de la seigneurie divine que d'arriver à une plus grande cohésion et union entre les hommes aux temps des conflits et des divisions internes.

L'action de Dieu ne s'exerce donc pas contrairement à la nature. Elle l'aide, au contraire, à devenir meilleure, elle stimule sa capacité vis-à-vis du bien que son Créateur a déposé dans les âmes et que les hommes ont laissé parfois s'endormir, par paresse ou égoisme.

Terreurs et conversions

Toute la dynamique de la vie affective est entre les mains du tout-puissant, qui nous aide à réaliser ses desseins. La terreur n'est pas exclue quand elle peut rendre service. Dans le sermon sur la prise de Rome par les soldats d'Alaric en 410, Augustin rapporte un événement extraordinaire qui eut lieu à Constantinople au temps de l'Empereur Arcadius. Un militaire fidèle reçut un avertissement du ciel: la ménace de l'incendie de la ville et l'apparition d'un personnage qui sema la terreur parmi les habitants. Ce fut la cause de sa conversion: la sévérité de la menace se mua en œuvre de miséricorde. Et saint Augustin commente: 'Le Seigneur a voulu répandre la terreur dans la ville, la corriger par la terreur, la convertir par la terreur, la transformer par la terreur'[15].

La terreur peut être un allié de Dieu dans l'œuvre de la conversion, de la correction de mœurs, de la purification des consciences, du changement de la volonté.

D'une façon plus douce, la crainte de Dieu amène à la conversion ou produit des pensées qui sont le commencement du rapproche de Dieu. 'Tout d'abord la crainte de Dieu nous fait decouvrir sa volonté, ce qu'il nous dit de faire ou d'éviter. Cette crainte nous inspire le sentiment de notre mortalité, de notre

[13] *En. in ps.* 58, 2, 11 *PL* 36, 712-713.

[14] *S. ad Caes. Eccl. plebem* 1 *PL* 43, 611: 'Potens est Dominus qui praecipit unitatem, mutare in melius uoluntatem'.

[15] *S. de excidio Vrbis* 7 *PL* 40, 722: 'Volens Deus terrere ciuitatem, et terrendo emendare, terrendo conuertere, terrendo mundare, terrendo mutare'. Saint Isidore de Séville reflet cette pensée augustinienne dans ses *Sententiae*: 'Multis modis terret Deus homines, ut uel sero conuertantur atque exinde magis erubescant, quod tandiu exspectati sunt ut redirent. Nam nunc minis, nunc plagis, nunc reuelationibus quosdam concutit, ut qui uoluntate conuerti despiciunt, commoti terroribus conuertantur', *Sententiae* 2, 7, 8 *PL* 83, 607.

mort à venir, et elle cloue, pour ainsi dire, notre chair au bois de la croix, et nous fait prendre conscience de tous nos mouvements d'orgueil'[16].

Dans son ouvrage *De catechizandis rudibus*, ou *La catéchèse des debutants*, Augustin nous a laissé cette certitude: 'De la divine sévérité il vient que Dieu frappe d'une terreur très salutaire les cœurs des hommes... En effet il arrive très rarement ou plutôt jamais, qu'un homme se présente avec le désir de se faire chrétien sans être sous le coup d'une certaine crainte de Dieu'[17].

Saint Augustin avait l'expérience de cette crainte de Dieu qui est à l'origine d'une conversion, et dans ce sens cette crainte appartient au principe de la sagesse, selon la Bible; elle est un don divin, un des dons de l'Esprit saint. La peur causée par des événements divers peut être aussi un début du retour à Dieu. La providence divine se sert de tout dans son dessein du salut de l'humanité, puisqu'elle peut attirer des volontés séparées des hommes, celles qu'elle veut, quand elle veut, où elle veut, afin de les convertir au bien. Et quand Dieu le veut, il agit par miséricorde, et quand il ne le veut pas, il agit toujours par justice[18].

Personnellement Augustin avait une bonne expérience en soi même de ces mouvements de crainte inspirés par la toute-puissance divine travaillant à briser les résistences humaines. En faisant allusion aux difficultés qu'il éprouvait avant d'accepter la tâche de la prédication, étant simple prêtre, et aussi à ce qui lui coûta de se soumettre à la volonté du peuple d'Hippone le traînant vers l'évêque Valerius pourqu'il l'ordonnât prêtre, Augustin nous dit dans les *Confessions*: 'Mais quand suis-je capable d'énoncer, par le langage d'une plume, toutes les exhortations et toutes les terreurs venues de toi, les consolations et les directions par lesquelles tu m'as améné à prêcher la parole et à dispenser ton sacrement à ton peuple? Elle même si je suis capable d'énoncer cela point par point, les gouttes du temps valent cher pour moi'[19].

Les mots *exhortations*, *terreurs*, *consolations*, *directions*, *pilotages*, etc. expriment les différentes formes d'interventions de la main de Dieu dans les événements, qu'ils soient d'ordre général ou individuel. L'emploi du mot 'terreur' suppose la présence de graves obstacles à vaincre, avant d'arriver à la vraie conversion.

Peut-être, Augustin fait-il allusion à la même situation dans un autre chapitre, un peu plus haut, quand il nous dit: 'Atterré par mes péchées et le poids massif de ma misère, j'avais agité dans mon cœur et médité le projet de fuir

[16] *De doctr. christ.* 1, 7 *PL* 34, 39.

[17] *De cat. rud.* 5, 9 *PL* 40, 316: 'Rarissime quippe accidit, imo uero numquam ut quisquam ueniat uolens fieri christianus qui non sit aliquo Dei timore perculsus'.

[18] *Enchir.* 98, 25 *PL* 40, 277: 'Quid porro tam impie desipit ut dicat Deum malas hominum uoluntates quando uoluerit, quomodo uoluerit, ubi uoluerit in bonum non posse conuertere? Sed cum facit, per misericordiam facit; cum autem non facit, per iudicium facit'.

[19] *Conf.* 11, 2, 3. Augustin laisse entendre qu'il aurait aimé louer le Seigneur pour la grâce de la vocation au sacerdoce et à l'épiscopat. Cette *confession* fait l'objet des *sermons* 339 et 340.

dans la solitude. Mais tu m'en as empéché et tu m'as donné la force en disant: Voici pourquoi le Christ est mort pour tous; c'est afin que tous ceux qui vivent ne vivent plus pour eux-mêmes, mais pour celui qui est mort pour eux'[20].

A cette même terreur fait vraisemblablement allusion le sermon de l'anniversaire de son ordination, lorsque Augustin disait à ses paroissiens: 'Si au lieu de le distribuer, je garde le trésor qui m'est confié, l'Evangile me frappe d'épouvante, *terret Evangelium*. Qu'ai-je besoin d'importuner les hommes? De dire: "ne faites pas ceci, ne faites pas cela, vivez de cette façon". Qu'ai-je besoin d'être à charge aux hommes? Mais *Evangelium me terret*, l'evangile me saisit d'effroi'[21].

Cette terreur providentielle appartient au pouvoir divin tout au long de l'Histoire. Ce que la *Cité de Dieu* est pour l'histoire de l'humanité, les *Confessions* le sont pour l'histoire personnelle d'Augustine. Si là il y a une providence génerale qui agit en vue du salut humain, si là il y a un flambeau qui illumine les événements, qui est révélation et prophétie, ici c'est une expérience personnelle, une recherche rationnelle et théologique qui permet d'éclairer le cheminement d'une vie humaine. Cependant cette recherche est soutenue par la foi et par un sentiment très vif de la providence divine qui gouverne toutes les choses, depuis les anges jusqu'aux plus petits vermisseaux[22].

C'est avec cette foi et ce sentiment qu'Augustin s'engage dans le brouillard de ses égarements pour découvrir la conduite de Dieu, depuis le lait maternel jusqu'à sa conversion. Dans les *Confessions*, nous avons une espèce de théologie de l'histoire de l'âme d'Augustin. Dans tous les recoins de son existence il découvre les traces du Seigneur, de son amour, saint et éternel, le guidant vers son éternelle destinée.

Il n'y a pas de place, ni dans l'histoire universelle, ni dans l'histoire personnelle d'un homme, pour ce que Frederic II appela, 'sa majesté le hasard'. Ni la fatalité, ni le hasard n'entrent dans le domaine de l'amour et de la miséricorde. Le Dieu des *Confessions* est le Dieu de la Bible, le Seigneur des Seigneurs, le Tout-puissant, le *Deus magnus Dominus et rex magnus super omnes deos*, 'le grand Roi au dessus de tous les dieux', à la fois infiniment lointain et différent de toute créature; et très proche du cœur, comme le dit si bien Augustin: 'Dieu, tu étais plus intime que l'intime de moi-même, et plus

[20] *Conf.* 10, 43, 70. P. de Labriolle reporte cette tentation de fuite aux lendemains de sa conversion, *Conf.*, 292, n. 2. P. Courcelle a repris d'abord cette opinion à son compte. Cf. *Recherches sur les Confessions*, p. 198, mais il a reconnu que cette solution n'est pas définitive, cf. *Année théologique* (1951), pp. 256-257. J. Pintard la fixe entre 395 et 398, et pense que les calomnies des donatistes en seraient la cause, cf. *Le sacerdoce selon saint Augustin* (Paris, 1961), pp. 327 et ss.

[21] *S.* 339, 4 *PL* 38, 1481: 'Si non erogem et pecuniam seruem, terret Euangelium ... de aliis reddere rationem quo mihi? Euangelium me terret'.

[22] Cf. *De ciu. Dei* 5, 12 *PL* 41, 154.

élévé que les hommes de moi-même'[23]. C'est la plus belle formule et affirmation de la transcendance et de l'immanence divines.

En effet cette brève définition de Dieu, dans les *Confessions*, si souvent citée, dit à la fois l'immanence divine au sein de toute créature, de l'homme en particulier, et la transcendance de Dieu au-dessus de tout ce que l'esprit humain contient de plus élévé. Ainsi Dieu est il à la fois intime au cœur de l'homme, fût-il pecheur, et tout autre que l'homme en sa sainteté.

Toute la stratégie de la conversion d'Augustin vient du dedans, de ce Dieu en moi, ce Maître intérieur, entre les mains duquel se trouvent tous les ressorts de la dynamique du libre arbitre. On comprend alors l'introversion ou interiorité augustinienne: il avait trouvé un trésor intime qu'il ne pouvait abandonner. Ce fut la source où naquirent les *Confessions*, livre de temoignages, récits, interrogations, méditations, actions de grâces chants du chantre de la miséricorde et de la souveraineté de Dieu.

La vie même de l'esprit conduit à Dieu. L'histoire personnelle devient l'itinéraire d'une intelligence qui recherche le sens profond des événements, des exhortations, des terreurs, des consolations, des contraints qui contribuèrent à donner à sa vie une sensation de delivrance.

Saint Augustin découvrit l'admirable accord entre les événements extérieurs et intérieures, et cet accord lui fit entrevoir l'action de quelqu'un qui lui est supérieur et qui disposait sa vie en vue d'un destin qui répondait à son désir le plus cher, le plus intime. Il toucha du doigt la rélation qu'il y avait entre les prières de sa mère et ce qui lui arriva de plus important au cours de son expérience d'homme. Un pouvoir caché, maître des événements, réglait toutes choses d'une façon surprenante, dirigeant le tout vers des dénouements pleins de sens et de sagesse.

Lors de son départ pour Rome et Milan, Augustin semble profiter avec la plus grande liberté des circonstances qui le provoquaient, sans savoir que quelqu'un prépara et arrangea ce voyage dont le dénouement résulta aussi imprevu que glorieux. Comme dans la *Cité de Dieu*, deux amours semblaient bâtir une cité nouvelle, un homme nouveau.

Dans cette perspective on peut définir les *Confessions* comme une histoire de deux amours qui s'affrontent pour arriver finalement à une réconciliation définitive que l'on appelle la conversion. La souveraineté divine illumine les pages de ce livre au moyen des expressions fulgurantes qui nous aident à comprendre la profondeur du mystère divine et de son action dans les âmes.

Saint Augustin lutte pour découvrir cette action divine dans les âmes en faisant appel à différentes images où apparaît l'intervention du tout-puissant, de là-haut dans les événements de l'existence humaine. Tout au début des *Confessions* apparaît la transcendence divine, si élevée face à l'abîme d'où un régard

[23] *Conf.* 3, 6, 11: 'Tu autem eras interior intimo meo et superior summo meo'.

implore: 'Tu es grand, Seigneur, et bien digne de louange; elle est grande ta puissance, et ta sagesse est innombrable'[24].

Et un peu plus loin, Augustin définit l'ineffable être de Dieu comme une complexité de contrastes — *complexio oppositorum* — qui volent au dessus de l'intelligence:

> 'O très grand, très bon,
> très puissant, tout-puissant,
> très miséricordieux et très juste,
> très rétiré et très présent,
> très beau et très fort;
> stable et insaisissable,
> ne pouvant changer et changeant tout;
> jamais neuf, jamais vieux, mettant tout à neuf,
> et conduissant à vetusté les superbes, et ils l'ignorent;
> toujours en action, toujours en repos.
> Amassant sans avoir de besoin,
> portant et remplissant et protegeant;
> créant et nourrissant et parachevant;
> cherchant bien que rien ne te manque;
> tu aimes et ne brûles pas,
> tu es jaloux et plein d'assurance;
> tu te repens et ne souffres pas;
> tu t'irrites et restes calme.
> tu change d'œuvre, sans changer de dessein;
> tu reprends ce que tu trouves et n'as jamais perdu;
> jamais sans ressources, tu te rejouis de tes gains;
> jamais avare, tu réclames les intérêts;
> on te donne en trop si bien que tu es en dette;
> qui possède rien qui ne soit à toi?
> Et qu'avons-nous dit, mon Dieu,
> ma vie, ma sainte douceur?
> Ou que dit-on, quand on dit quelque chose sur toi?
> Et malheur à ceux qui se taisent sur toi,
> puisque, bavards, ils sont muets'[25].

Ce Dieu très haut, très fort, très secret et très miséricordieux, tient les rênes de ceux qui reviennet à lui par une sincère conversion.

Dans les *Confessions*, nous trouvons des principes géneraux qui expriment cette intervention de la providence: 'Cela venait du fait que tes oreilles étaient appliquées à ton cœur, ô toi, bonté toute-puissante, qui prends souci de chacun d'entre nous, comme si tu prenais souci de lui seul, et de nous tous ensemble, comme s'il s'agissait de chacun en particulier'[26].

[24] *Conf.* 1, 1.
[25] *Conf.* 1, 4, 4.
[26] *Conf.* 3, 11, 19.

Cette providence universelle repose sur la sagesse universelle qui comprend tout et pénétre tout: 'Tu es Dieu et Seigneur de tout ce que tu as créé; en toi toutes les choses instables ont leurs causes stables toutes les choses muables gardent leurs origines immuables, toutes les choses irrationnelles et temporelles ont leurs raisons éternellement vivantes'[27].

La main de Dieu est guidée secrètement par ces hautes raisons. La métaphore de la main, l'outil le plus familier à saint Augustin: 'Et tu as tendu la main d'en haut, et du fond de mes ténèbres tu as arraché mon âme, tandis que pour moi des pleurs coulaient vers toi, ceux de ma mère, ta fidèle servante, plus abondantes que les pleurs versés par les mères sur le corps d'un défunt'[28].

Quand Augustin commença à se libérer des chaînes des erreurs manichéenes, à partir de son débat avec Faustus de Milevi, il le fit toujours avec l'aide d'en haut. 'Car tes mains, mon Dieu, dans le secret de la providence, n'abandonnaient pas mon âme; et du sang de son cœur ma mère, par ses larmes nuit et jour, t'offrait un sacrifice pour moi; et tu as agi avec moi de merveilleuse manière. C'est toi qui as agi ainsi, mon Dieu. Oui, c'est le Seigneur qui dirige les pas de l'homme et qui voudra sa voie. Comment obtenir le salut, sans ta main qui refait ce que tu as fait?'[29].

Dans ces événements, Augustin découvre un mode d'action merveilleux et secret — signe d'une autorité qui dirige sa vie vers un dénouément plein de sens.

Un pas vers la conversion fut le rejet du rationalisme manichéen, qui voulait expliquer tout par la raison; il comprit que les croyances ont une grande place dans la vie d'un homme. 'Puis peu à peu, écrit Augustin, mon Dieu, dans le secret de ta providence, d'une main très douce et très miséricordieuse, tu maniais et disposais mon cœur, m'amenant à considérer l'infinité de choses auxquelles je croyais sans les voir, ou sans avoir assisté à leur production: ainsi tant de choses sur l'histoire des nations, tant de choses sur les lieux et les villes que je n'avais pas vus, tant de choses sur la foi des amis, sur la foi de médecins, sur la foi de tels et tels autres nous croyons, sinon nous ne pourrions absolument rien faire dans la vie d'ici bas. Enfin, avec quelle foi inébranlable je n'étais pas bien assuré des parents dont j'étais issu, ce que je n'aurais pu savoir sans croire sur parole[30].

Cependant cette main douce et guériseuse doit parfois faire appel à des traitements douloureux, comme nous dit Augustin dans ce texte des *Confessions*: 'Vois mon cœur, Seigneur, qui as voulu de moi ces souvenirs et cette confession devant toi. Que mon âme aujourd'hui s'attache à toi, elle que tu as debarrasée

[27] *Conf.* 1, 6, 9.
[28] *Conf.* 3, 11, 19.
[29] *Conf.* 5, 7, 13: 'Et egisti mecum miris modis'. *Conf.* 5, 6, 10: 'Me autem iam docuerat deus meus miris et occultis modis'.
[30] *Conf.* 6, 5, 7: 'Tu, Domine, manu mitissima et misericordiosissima pertractans et conponens cor meum'.

d'une glu si tenace de mort. Qu'elle était malheureuse! Et toi, tu la piquais au vif de la blessure pour qu'elle quittât tout et se convertît à toi, qui es au-dessus de tout et sans qui tout serait néant, qu'elle se convertît et fût guérie. Que j'étais donc malheureux, et comme tu as su t'y prendre pour me faire sentir son malheur ce jour-là'[31].

La main guériseuse n'abandonna jamais le malade, l'assistant dans les moments les plus durs et critiques: 'Louange à toi, gloire à toi, source de miséricorde! Moi je devenais plus miserable, et toi plus proche. Elle était là déjà, ta main toute prête à m'arracher du bourbier et à me laver, et je l'ignorais. Je n'avais plus pour me retenir de m'enfoncer plus bas dans le gouffre des voluptés charnelles, que la crainte de la mort et de ton futur jugement, crainte qui, malgré les variétés d'opinions que j'ai traversées, ne s'est jamais éloignée cependant de mon cœur'[32].

Le trouble et l'inquiétude sont dans les mains de Dieu une arme secrète et souvent victorieuse, comme nous le voyons dans ce texte des *Confessions*: 'Mais toi, Seigneur, tu demeures à jamais, et tu ne gardes pas à jamais ta colère contre nous, puisque tu as eu pitié de ce qui est terre et cendre, et qu'il a plu à tes yeux de réformer mes déformités. Et par des aiguillons intérieures tu me harcelais, pour que rien ne me fût supportable, jusqu'à ce que, pour mon regard intérieur, tu fusses devenu une certitude. Et mon enflure se réduisait sous le traitement mystérieux de ta main, et la vue troublée et enténébrée de mon esprit, sous le brûlant collyre des douleurs salutaires, se guérissait de jour en jour'[33].

A l'expérience des mains de Dieu, il faut ajouter celle de sa voix, des paroles intimes, puisque Dieu non seulement tient toutes les choses dans sa main par la vérité, mais il fait entendre sa parole dans les secrets des cœurs, d'après ce texte augustinien: 'Et j'ai tourné mon regard vers les autres choses, et j'ai vu qu'elles te doivent d'être et qu'elles sont en toi toutes finies, d'une autre façon pourtant, non pas comme dans un lieu, mais parce que toi tu es celui qui tient toutes choses dans la main par la vérité — *omnipotente manu ueritatis* —[34]. En fait ceux avec qui je veux m'entretenir un peu devant toi, mon Dieu, sont les gens qui admettent que tout ce qu'au dedans ta vérité consent à dire à mon esprit est vrai. Quant à ceux qui le nient, eh bien! qu'ils aboient tant qu'ils veulent, qu'ils s'assourdissent eux-mêmes'[35]. Aux bons comme au méchants la Providence divine fait connaître silencieusement son dessein de salut.

Les *Confessions* ne cessent de s'émerveiller devant la prudence de la conduite divine qui d'une manière occulte et discrète aboutit manifestement au

[31] *Conf.* 6, 6, 9.
[32] *Conf.* 6, 16, 26.
[33] *Conf.* 7, 8, 12.
[34] *Conf.* 7, 15, 21.
[35] *Conf.* 12, 16, 23.

salut de l'homme. Avec quel respect saint Augustin fait allusion à cet agir secret à propos de son voyage à Rome et Milan, préparé en vue d'avantages matériels et qui se termina en gagnant le ciel: 'Tu as donc agi avec moi de telle façon que je fusse persuadé d'aller à Rome, et d'enseigner là-bas de préférence, ce que j'enseignais à Carthage. Et ce qui fut à l'origine de ma persuasion, je n'omettrai pas de te le confesser, puisque là aussi tes mystères très profonds et ta miséricorde toujours présente sur moi, méritent d'être médités et proclamés'[36].

Avec de nombreuses et diverses voix, Dieu appela Augustin à la conversion, comme lui-même l'observe dans ses *Confessions*:

> 'Maintenant que je t'appelle, ne m'abandonne pas,
> puisqu'avant que t'appelle tu as pris les devants
> et insisté par de fréquents appels de voix de tout genre
> pour que j'entende de loin et me retourne et réponde
> à ton appel vers moi par mon appel vers toi'[37].

Il écouta celles qu'il appelle 'les voix de mon erreur'. 'Parce que les voix de mon erreur me tiraient dehors, et que le poids de ma superbe me faisait choir au plus bas. Car tu ne donnais pas à mon ouïe la joie et l'allegresse, et mes os n'exultaient pas, parce qu'ils n'avaient pas été humiliés'[38].

Et contre ces voix de l'erreur, les voix de la mère ne cessèrent de sonner, de sa mère qui fut sa providence terrestre et qu'il importunait avec ses prières. Depuis que le Seigneur avait commencé à édifier son temple et sainte demeure, dans le sein de la mère, de celle-ci venaient les avertissements les plus insistents. Et Dieu ne se taisait pas en voyant qu'Augustin s'éloignait. 'Malheureux que j'étais, et j'ose dire que tu te taisait, mon Dieu, quand je m'en allais plus loin de toi! Est-ce ainsi que tu te saisais alors pour moi!, et de qui donc étaient-elles, sinon de toi, les paroles que par ma mère, ta servante fidèle, tu fis sonner à mes oreilles? Mais rien ne m'endescendit au cœur, pour passer dans mes actes. Car ce qu'elle voulait, elle, et je garde en secret le souvenir de l'avertissement qu'elle me donna avec une immense sollicitude, c'était que je ne commisse point de fornication et surtout pas d'adultère avec l'épouse de quiconque'[39].

Il fait ici allusion Augustin à sa seixième année, quand, dévoré par les désirs précoces de la sensualité, il parcourait les rues et les places de Babylone, Carthage.

Mais à ces voix et à ses appels répondait d'en haut la miséricorde divine: 'Dieu incline ses oreilles vers nous. Il est en haut, et nous ici-bas. Lui dans les hauteurs, et nous dans l'humilité, cependant nous ne sommes pas abandonnés'[40].

[36] *Conf.* 5, 8, 14.
[37] *Conf.* 13, 1: 'Et institisti crebrescens multimodis uocibus'.
[38] *Conf.* 4, 15, 27: 'Vocibus erroris mei'. Augustin se refère probablement au matérialisme qui lui bouchait tout horizon à la vérité.
[39] *Conf.* 2, 3, 7.
[40] *En. in ps.* 83, 2 *PL* 37, 1082.

C'est ainci qu'Augustin fait allusion à la présence et à l'assistance de Dieu dans son cheminement tortueux vers la vérité, lorsqu'il meditait sur l'autorité de la Bible dans le monde: 'Je méditais ainsi, tu étais là près de moi; je soupirais et tu m'entendais; je flottais, et tu me gouvernais; je m'en allais par la voie large du siècle, et ne m'abandonnais pas'[41].

Ses recherches sur l'origine du mal furent l'occasion d'un tourment encore plus grand. 'Donc, tous ces points étant saufs et inébranlablement consolidés dans mon esprit, je cherchais avec fièvre d'où vient le mal. Quelles tortures pour cet enfantement dans mon cœur! Quels gémissements, mon Dieu! Et tes oreilles étaient là, à mon insu. Et comme dans le silence intensément je cherchais, de grandes voix montaient vers ta miséricorde: les muets brisements de mon cœur'[42].

La main qui libère n'était point absent dans les angoisses que resent toute âme qui s'éloigne de Dieu. Augustin parle de lui comme d'un malade alité avec une grosse fièvre:

> 'O tortueuses voies! Malheur à l'âme téméraire
> qui a pu espérer, en se retirant loin de toi,
> qu'elle posséderait quelque chose de mieux!
> Elle s'est tournée et retournée
> sur les dos, sur le flanc, sur le ventre,
> et tout est dur! Toi seul es le repos.
> Te voici, tu es là.
> tu délivres des misérables erreurs,
> et tu vas nous rétablir dans ta voie,
> et tu consoles, et tu dis:
> Courez, moi, je vous porterai,
> et moi je vous mènerai au bout,
> et là, moi, je vous porterai'[43].

C'est la dialectique de la misère et de la miséricorde, que l'auteur des *Confessions* nous présente dans son livre. Dans toutes les ambigüités et méandres de sa vie, ce fut comme une loi, dejà dans les années difficiles de Carthage: 'Et m'entourant de son vol, plânait au-dessus de moi, fidèle et constante, ta miséricorde'[44].

C'est avec cette perséverance et fidélité à lui-même que le Seigneur souverain des âmes, met en embarras le libre-arbitre. Ainsi, lorsque Augustin avait presque atteint le but, la strategie divine fit recours à une spèce de siège ou blocus dans lequel il n'y avait pas d'autre issue que de se jeter dans les bras de

[41] *Conf.* 6, 5, 8: 'Cogitabam haec et aderas mihi; suspirabam et exaudiebas; fluctuabam et gubernabas me; ibam per uiam saeculi latam, nec deserebas me'.
[42] *Conf.* 7, 7, 11.
[43] *Conf.* 6, 16, 26.
[44] *Conf.* 3, 3, 5: 'Et circumuolabat super me fidelis a longe misericordia tua'.

l'assiégeant: 'Tes paroles s'étaient fixées dans mes entrailles, et de toute part j'étais investi par toi', *undique circumualabar abs te*[45].

Nous sommes ici dans un cas évident où le langage est emprunté à la stratégie militaire, bien propre à révéler l'art suprême dont se sert le Créateur pour conquérir une créature libre; ce langage rappelle de loin celui de la poliorcétique, en vue de assoiffer, d'ataquer ou de défendre une place forte. Mais pour obtenir sa rendition sans violence ni coups brutaux, il faut cette tactique de sagesse que seul possède le souverain des âmes. Saint Augustin était sur le point de se rendre; la vérité était pénétré au-dedans de lui, mais les passions charnelles n'étaient point domptées, et elles résistaient encore.

Dans l'exercice de la souveraineté divine, telle qu'elle est décrite dans les *Confessions*, nous découvrons divers instruments dont Dieu se sert pour accomplir son œuvre. Non pas qu'ils lui soient nécessaires, mais parce qu'elle désire donner à ses créatures une certaine participation à son pouvoir divin. 'Toi, Seigneur, toi qui présides au gouvernement de tout ce que tu as créé, tu n'avais pas oublié qu'il était destiné à être parmi tes fils le ministre de ton sacrement... Toi qui te sers de tous, à leur su ou à leur insu, selon l'ordre que tu connais — et cet ordre est juste — de mon cœur et de ma langue tu formas des charbons ardents pour brûler ainsi, dans une âme de belle espérance, un abcès et l'en guérir'[46].

On voit dans l'histoire de la conversion d'Augustin plusieurs médiateurs de la Providence, qui se dissimule ou se cache derrière un voile opaque, tout en tenant toujours les rênes et conduisant habilement. Et cela peut donner l'impression qu'il s'agit d'un ensemble d'événements chaotiques, jouets du hasard.

Ce fut le regard d'Augustin sur l'histoire de sa vie avant son illumination par la foi. Mais la réflexion chrétienne offrait une nouvelle intelligence ou compréhension nouvelle aux événements de son itinéraire spirituel. Là où tout semblait comme un chaos, surgit la lumière; où tout paraissait dépourvu de sens ou dû au hasard, apparut le vrai sens. Toutes les circonstances recouvrèrent une dignité inaperçue jusque là, et la présence du Seigneur se manifesta dans tous les recoins de son éxistence.

Naturellement les personnes sont ce qui a un relief important pour devenir participants de la activité et souveraineté divines. Les méchants peuvent y collaborer pour réaliser le bien, tel le docteur Faustus de Milévi, cause de perdition pour beaucoup, 'lacet du diable', comme le définit Augustin, qui cependant l'aida à se libérer des lacets de l'erreur manichéene. Rappelons encore une fois ce que nous dit l'auteur des *Confessions*: 'En est-il bien comme je me rappelle? Seigneur mon Dieu arbitre de ma conscience, mon cœur et ma mémoire sont devant toi, qui me conduisais alors par le mystère secret de la providence, et qui retournais deja mes humiliantes erreurs vers mon visage, pour me les faires voir et haïr'[47].

Quand on parle des instruments de la Providence, il faut mentionner en premier lieu Monique, la mère d'Augustin, en nous rappelant le principe de Pascal, qui se demandait: 'Pourquoi Dieu a-t-il établi la prière' et répondait: 'Pour conférer à ses créatures la dignité de la causalité. Et aussi pour nous apprendre de qui nous tenons la vertu, et aussi pour nous faire mériter les autres vertus par le travail. Mais pour se conserver la prééminence, il donne la prière à qui il lui plaît'[48], sans oublier non plus la participation en sa souveraineté.

Le fils de Monique attribue sa conversion aux prières de sa mère et à ses larmes[49]. Avec la même certitude, un évêque que nous ne connaissons pas l'appela 'fils de tant de larmes'. 'Il eut beau dire, elle ne voulait pas entendre, mais elle insistait, se faisait plus suppliante redoublait ses larmes, en lui demandant de me voir et de discuter avec moi. Et lui un peu gagné déjà par l'impatience et l'ennui de répondre "Va-t-en, laisse moi; aussi vrai que tu vis, il ne peut se faire que fils de ces larmes perisse". Elle accueillit cette parole; dans ses entretiens avec moi elle me le rappelait souvent, comme si elle eût retenti du haut du ciel'[50].

C'est grâce à ses prières et à ses larmes que Monique remporta la victoire pour son fils. 'De fait, écrit Augustin, près de neuf ans se sont écoulés ensuite. Moi je les ai passés dans cette boue des bas-formes dans les ténèbres de l'erreur, et malgré de fréquents efforts pour me lever qui me laissaient plus lourdement brisé, je me suis roulé. Pendant ce temps cette veuve chaste, pieuse et sobre, comme tu les aimes déjà plus allègre sans doute dans l'espérance, mais non moins assidue aux larmes et aux gemissements, ne cessait, à toutes les heures de sa prière, de se lamenter sur moi auprès de toi. Ses prières entraient en ta présence, et pourtant tu me laissais encore me rouler et m'enrouler dans ces ténèbres'[51].

[45] *Conf.* 8, 1, 1.

[46] *Conf.* 6, 7, 12. Saint Augustin nous montre la conversion d'Alypius. P. Courcelle pense qu'Augustin a arrangé cet épisode d'après l'*exemplum* de la conversion du jeune Polémon, venant au cours de Xénocrate, cf. *Recherches sur les Confessions*, p. 59 et n. 5, 6. Il faut noter en tout cas l'analogie entre les deux recits, et il est certain, comme signale Courcelle, que cette anecdote était très célèbre dans l'Antiquité, et qu'Augustin lui-même y fait allusion, cf. *C. Iul.* 1, 4, 12. Solignac ecrit: 'A notre avis, ce récit figurait dans les *Successions* de Sotion, d'où elle est passée dans Diogène Laërce 4, 3, et dans la source à laquelle le *Manuel* de Cornelius Celsus, probablement utilisé par Augustin, empruntait ses renseignements biographiques', cf. *Confessions*, p. 543.

[47] *Conf.* 5, 6, 11. En tout cela Augustin voit et admire l'art secret de la providence: 'Me tunc abdito secreto prouidentiae tuae', *Conf.* 5, 7, 13. 'Manus enim tuae, Deus meus, in abdito prouidentiae tuae, non desserebant animam meam', *Conf.* 5, 7, 13.

[48] Pascal, *Pensées* 513.

[49] *De ord.* 2, 20 *PL* 32, 1019.

[50] *Conf.* 3, 12, 21: *Fieri non potest ut filius istarum lacrymarum pereat.

[51] *Conf.* 3, 11, 20: 'Et intrabant in conspectum tuum preces eius; et me tamen dimittebas adhuc uolui et inuolui illa caligine'.

Cependant, comme Moïse sur la montagne, Monique gagna la bataille en suppliant, les bras levés et en pleurant[52].

Un autre instrument de la Providence divine fut Ambroise, évêque de Milan. Il aida Augustin à briser bien des chaînes et le mit sur le chemin de bien des vérités du christianisme: la spiritualité de Dieu et de l'âme, l'homme créé à son image et ressemblance. Grâce à la prédication d'Ambroise, Augustin put trouver la solution de difficultés qui lui venaient de son éducation et profession manichéenne, et découvrit ainsi la dignité de l'Ecriture sainte, mal intepretée par les disciples de Mani; l'exégèse allégorique de la Bible et la concordance des deux Testaments.

Le voyage à Milan fut aux yeux d'Augustin vraiement providentiel: 'Je vins à Milan, chez l'évêque Ambroise. C'était un des hommes les plus éminents d'après la notorieté universelle, et ton pieux adorateur et son éloquence zélée distribuait alors la fine fleur de ton froment et la joie riante de l'huile, et 'la sobre ivresse du vin', à ton peuple. Or près de lui j'étais conduit par toi inconsciemment, pour être par lui conduit vers toi consciemment. Cet homme de Dieu m'accueillit paternellement, et se félicita de mon séjour à l'etranger avec une charité digne d'un évêque'[53].

Autour d'Ambroise, il faut que nous comptions aussi son auxiliaire. Simplicianus, qui lui succeda dans le siège de l'episcopat. C'est bien éloquent le témoignage d'Augustin au sujet de Simplicianus: 'En tout cas, aussitôt que ton serviteur Simplicianus, parlait de Victorinus, m'eut raconté ces faits, je brûlais de les imiter. C'était bien pour cela que lui les avait racontés. Mais il ajouta aussi qu'à l'époque de l'Empereur Julian une loi avait été portée interdisant aux chrétiens d'enseigner les lettres, et l'éloquence, et que Victorinus respectant cette loi avait préféré abandonner le bavardage de l'école plutôt que ton Verbe par qui tu rends les louanges des enfants habiles à parler; alors, il me sembla qu'il avait eu autant de chance que de courage, puisqu'il avait trouvé l'occasion de s'adonner à ton service'[54].

Très efficace fut aussi, dans le même esprit, l'intervention de Ponticien, son compatriote, qui lui raconta les merveilles de la vie de saint Antoine, et l'histoire de la conversion de deux employés de palais, et l'existence aux environs de Milan des florissantes communautés religieuses[55].

Toutes ces conversations préparèrent le denouement final et firent lever 'une grande tempête, suivie d'une grande avenue de larmes'[56], à laquelle survint le

[52] Augustin compare sa mère à la veuve de Naïm, qui accompagnait au cimetière le cercueil de son fils et dont les larmes incitèrent Jésus-Christ à le ressusciter. Cet evangile figure à la fête de saint Augustin.

[53] *Conf.* 5, 13, 23. Cf. P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions*, pp. 93-138.

[54] *Conf.* 8, 5, 10.

[55] Cf. *Conf.* 8, 6, 13-15.

[56] *Conf.* 7, 16-18. Ponticien eut une influence sur la libération d'Augustin pour ce qui est des passions charnelles et de ses ambitions séculières. Le désir de se faire serviteur de Dieu ou religieux ou moine lui vint après avoir entendu le récit de la vie monastique et la vie exemplaire moins des environs de Milan.

calme de la conversion, avec l'épisode du *Tolle lege, tolle lege*, 'Prends et lis'. Obéissant à la voix mystérieuse, Augustinse saisit des Lettres de saint Paul et y lit silencieusement les premières lignes qui lui tombèrent sous les yeux: 'Marchons avec décence comme en plein jour, non pas dans les orgies ni dans les beuveries, ne pas dans le commerce charnel illicite ni dans l'inconduite, non pas dans les querelles ni dans les jalousies. Mais revêtez-vous du Seigneur Jésus-Christ, et ne suivez pas les convoitises de la chair (*Rm* 13, 13-14).

L'effet de cette lecture pauline nous est décrit d'une façon magistrale dans les *Confessions*: 'Ainsi en toute hâte, je revins où Alipius était assis; oui, c'était là que j'avais le livre de l'apôtre tout à l'heure, en me levant. Je le saisis, l'ouvris en silence le premier chapitre où se jetèrent mes yeux: "Non, pas de ripailles et des souleries; non, pas de coucheries et d'impudicités; non, pas de disputes et de jalousies; mais revêtez-vous du Seigneur Jésus-Christ, et ne vous faites pas les pourvoyeurs de la chair dans les convoitises". Je ne voulus pas en lire plus: ce n'était pas nécessaire. A l'instant même en effet, avec les derniers mots de cette pensée se fut comme une lumière de sécurité déversée dans mon cœur, et toutes les ténébres de l'hésitation se dissipèrent'[57].

Saint Paul l'introduisit dans le mystère du Christ, et du chrétien qui doit se revêtir du Christ. Les ténébres qui se dissipèrent étaient les fluctuations et les hésitations d'Augustin sur un choix de vie qu'il devait choisir. Tant la conversion intellectuelle comme sa conversion morale étaient déjà décidées: la foi chrétienne et la vie chrétienne dans le monachisme au dedans de l'Eglise. Telle était la decision qu'Augustin avait prise d'une façon irrevocable[58].

Cependant, tous ces agents et toutes ces mediations humaines, qui aidèrent Augustin à s'approcher de la foi, n'étaient que des instruments ou causes secondaires entre les mains de l'auteur tout-puissant qui honore ses créatures en les faisant collaborer aux œuvres de sa grâce.

[57] *Conf.* 8, 12, 29.

[58] Pour completer la liste des médiateurs de la Providence, il faut ajouter Cicéron et Plotin. La lecture de l'*Hortensius* fut l'occasion de ce qu'on a appelé la conversion à la philosophie, cf. G. Bardy, *La conversion au Christianisme durant les premiers siècles* (Paris, 1946). Le fils prodigue commença à se lever et retourner à la maison de son père, *et surgere iam coeperam ut ad te redirem*, cf. *Conf.* 3, 4, 7-8. *De b. uita* 1, 4 *PL* 32, 961. Vide P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions*, pp. 49-60. Desormais sa vie fut orientée vers la quête de la sagesse, idéal suprême et les biens terrestres perdirent leur attrait, Cf. *Sol.* 1, 10 *PL* 32, 878. La lecture produisit comme un incendie à l'intérieur dont la flamme ne s'étaignit jamais: 'et accendebar et ardebam', *Conf.* 3, 4, 8. Pour les textes de l'*Hortensius* cf. M. Testard, *Saint Augustin et Cicéron* (Paris, 1958). A Milan il reçut un nouvel élan dans le même sens avec la lecture des platoniciens, Plotin et Porphyre, avec toute probabilité. Augustin estima providentielle la découverte de ces livres même si ce fût par la médiation d'un homme qui paraissait très orgueilleux, cf. *Conf.* 7, 9. P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions*, pp. 153-167.

La souveraineté de Dieu et le libre-arbitre

Pour terminer notre exposé, disons que Dieu agit au plus intime des consciences humaines avec un très grand respect de la liberté de l'homme selon ce principe de l'ontologie augustinienne: 'Dieu gouverne de telle manière tous les êtres qu'il a créés, qu'il leur laisse l'exercice et la liberté de leurs propres mouvements'[59]. Les créatures sont ennoblies par leurs activités propres et naturelles, qui sont comme une participation de la puissance et de la causalité divines. Le feu brûle et resplendit avec une vertu ou force propres; les roses montrent leur parfum; les oiseaux volent, font leurs nids, élevent leurs petits.

L'homme, lui, a l'avantage d'être doté de raison et de libre-arbitre qui le rendent maître du monde, souverain dans son domaine. Dieu ne retire ni supprime le pouvoir que ont les causes secondes, libres ou non. Il n'opprime pas la liberté de l'homme, il le laisse jouir de sa souveraineté, qui est une prérogative insigne avec laquelle l'homme peut créer un monde de valeurs propres, selon la volonté de son Créateur. Mais l'homme a aussi la terrible capacité ou possibilité de s'opposer à son Créateur, s'arrogant une certaine souveraineté autonome et se dressant contre la volonté divine.

C'est cela le péché de l'homme, l'orgueil, que saint Augustin appele 'la perverse imitation de Dieu'. Les relations avec Dieu sont perturbées, les liens d'amitié se brissent, et l'homme s'installe dans la contrée lointaine du fils prodigue: c'est l'oublie et l'abandon de Dieu. L'homme est desormais le seul maître de ses actes, de son propre univers des biens relatifs, en jouisant selon sa volonté, à sa guise. Et la souveraineté de Dieu respecte cette décision de la créature libre qui, malgré tout, s'éloigne des domaines divins, alors que Dieu continue toujours à l'appeler au retour vers la justice et l'amitié.

La véritable seigneurie de l'homme advient dans l'humilité et dans sa sumission à l'unique Seigneur; par contre, la révolte contre lui, c'est la révolte des esclaves, la servitude ou esclavage de celui qui devait être maître grâce à son libre-arbitre.

En dehors de la révolte tragique déclarée contre Dieu, qui constitue le péché et qui a comme conséquence la servitude, il peut y avoir des résistences inconscientes et même innocentes. Ce fut le cas de Monique quand elle s'opposa au depart de son fils à Rome. La mère voulait retenir son fils à coté d'elle, et l'aider à sa conversion qu'elle attendait avec certitude. Deux volontés libres s'affrontaient. Le fils voulait changer de chaire, deçu par l'ambiance estudiantine de Carthage, et s'établir à Rome. Laissant sa mère en prières dans la chapelle de saint Cyprian, il la trompa et s'embarqua pour la traversée. Pendant ce temps la miséricorde toute-puissante du Seigneur voletait au-dessus d'eux, plus haut que leurs désirs, pour leur donner, en son temps ce qui leur convenait le mieux.

[59] *De ciu. Dei* 7, 30 *Pl* 41, 220: 'Sic itaque administrat omnia quae creauit ut etiam ipsa proprios exercere et agere actus sinat'.

Saint Augustin distingue dans les désirs deux niveaux, ceux qu'il appelle la charnière ou l'essence profonde et intime du vouloir — *cardo desiderii* — autour duquel tournent des désirs plus variables, davantage liés aux circonstances.

Le *cardo desiderii* de Monique, même quand elle priait pour que son fils ne quittât pas Carthage et vécût près d'elle, était sa conversion à Dieu. C'est pourquoi le Seigneur ne l'écouta pas, afin de lui donner plus tard ce qu'elle désirait depuis toujours: 'Et que te demandait-elle, mon Dieu, avec tant de larmes, sinon de ne pas me permettre d'embarquer? Mais toi, par un dessein profond, l'exauçant sur le point essentiel de son désir, tu ne t'es pas soucié de ce qu'alors elle demandait, pour faire de moi ce que toujours elle demandait'[60].

Ainsi la toute-puissance divine résolvait toutes les résistances du libre-arbitre humain avec douceur et efficacité. Le voyage en outre-mer était aussi providentiel, comme reconnaît Augustin: 'Tu as donc agi avec moi de telle façon que je fusse pérsuadé d'aller à Rome, et d'enseigner là-bas de préference, ce que j'enseignais à Carthage. Et ce qui fut à l'origine de ma persuasion, je n'omettrai pas de te le confesser, puisque là aussi tes mystères très profonds et ta miséricorde toujours présente sur nous, méritent d'être médités et proclamés'[61].

Cet afrontement fondamental entre les deux pouvoirs, tout en gardant les distances voulues a toujours le même origine: l'orgueil humain qui ambitionne une independance totale de l'homme, qui se veut entièrement libre dans ses décisions, sans rendre compte à personne de ce qu'il fait. Mais cela c'est le privilège essentiel de Dieu, qui est le principe, la loi, la norme de toutes choses, que l'homme veut lui ravir. 'Et qu'est-ce l'orgueil, sinon la convoitise d'une fausse grandeur? C'est une fausse grandeur, en effet, d'abandonner celui à qui l'homme doit être soumis, pour devenir son principe à soi-même. Ce qui arrive, lorsqu'il se complaît trop en lui même'[62].

Cette usurpation du privilège divin oblige l'homme à attaquer Dieu avec ce que Augustin appelle 'les cornes d'une fausse liberté'. Mais c'est le 'cornupète' qui ressent tous les dommages qu'il dirigeait contre Dieu.

C'est pourquoi la solution de tous les conflits des deux pouvoirs est une humble prière, comme indique Augustin: 'Aussi, est-ce par une humble prière et piété qu'on retourne en toi; et tu nous purifies de l'habitude mauvaise et tu es indulgent aux péchés que l'on confesse tu écoutes les gemissements de ceux qui sont dans les entraves, et tu détaches les liens que nous nous sommes faits, à condition que nous ne dressions plus contre toi les "cornes d'une fausse

[60] *Conf.* 5, 8, 15: 'Et tu alte consulens et audiens cardinem desiderii eius non curasti quod tunc petebat, ut me faceres quod semper petebat'.

[61] *Conf.* 5, 8, 14.

[62] Cf. *De ciu. Dei* 14, 13 *PL* 41, 429: 'Quid est autem superbia nisi peruersae celsitudinis appetitus? Peruersa enim celsitudo est, deserto eo cui debet animus inhaerere, sibi quodam modo fieri et esse principium'.

liberté", par avidité de posséder davantage et au risque de tout perdre, en ayant plus d'amour pour notre propre bien que pour toi, le bien suprême de tous les êtres'[63].

Le choix de son autonomie propre est essentiellement négatif, car il prive l'homme de ses meilleurs pouvoirs: le salut et l'amitié éternelle avec Dieu. C'est là la grande tragédie du libre-arbitre, lors qu'il se proclame autonome et independant de la souveraineté divine qui est le principe de tous les biens.

[63] *Conf.* 3, 7, 16: 'Si iam non erigamus aduersum te cornua falsae libertatis'.

Saint Augustin et l'*impiété* de Cicéron: Étude du *De Civitate Dei* V, 9

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Augustin n'a jamais cessé d'estimer son maître Cicéron, non seulement comme orateur mais aussi en matière religieuse[1]. Au *De Civitate Dei* V, 9, il l'accuse pourtant d'avoir nié la prescience divine et va même, les notions de divinité et de prescience s'impliquant mutuellement[2], jusqu'à le soupçonner d'avoir nié Dieu. Si le grand humaniste[3] refusait ainsi la prescience divine, c'est parce qu'il s'agissait d'une notion stoïcienne liée à celle de destin et exclusive comme elle du libre-arbitre, donc de toute moralité[4].

Augustin propose deux analyses concurrentes du fait incriminé: ou bien Cicéron confessait Dieu mais niait la prescience et donc niait Dieu sans le savoir, ou bien, conscient de la convertibilité des notions de divinité et de prescience, il a d'abord nié Dieu pour mieux rejeter ensuite toute connaissance divine de l'avenir[5].

De là, deux constatations s'imposent: d'une part Augustin laisse le choix entre involontaire incohérence et négation voulue et préméditée, d'autre part, on va le voir, il n'a argumenté qu'en faveur de la préméditation. Ces deux

[1] Augustin reprend le concept de *religio* au *De Natvra deorvm* II, 72 (abrégé en *Nat.*), *vg.* en *De Civitate Dei* X, 3 (abrégé en *Civ.*). Il cite encore l'*Hortentivs*, lu dans sa jeunesse, au *De Trinitate* XIII, 8 et XIV, 12.

[2] Augustin affirme la prescience de Dieu au nom de son immutabilité. Il n'a jamais varié sur ce point, *cf. Gn. adv. Man.*, I, 22, 34; *S.* 2, 2, 2 et 4, 5; 214, 3 *etc.* dans J. van Gerven, 'Liberté humaine et prescience divine d'après saint Augustin' dans *RPL* 54 (1951), pp. 317-330.

[3] *Vitæ hvmanæ consvlens* 9/57. Les citations du *De Civitate Dei* sont faites sur le CCSL avec indication du livre, du chapitre et des lignes.

[4] Il s'agit de l'argument carnéadien repris par Cicéron contre les stoïciens au *De Fato* (ce traité de Cicéron sera abrégé en *Fat.* et le *De Divinatione* en *Div.*). *Cf.* D. Amand, *Fatalisme et liberté dans l'antiquité grecque. Recherche sur la survivance de l'argumentation antifataliste de Carnéade chez les philosophes grecs et les chrétiens des quatre premiers siècles* (Louvain, 1945). M. Testard pense retrouver les références carnéadiennes du *De Fato* en *Civ.* V, 9/36-48 et 62-75, *cf.* son ouvrage fondamental: *Saint Augustin et Cicéron. I Cicéron dans la formation et dans l'œuvre de saint Augustin, II Répertoire des textes* (Etudes augustiniennes; Paris, 1958), en particulier II, pp. 49-50. *Idem* pour H. Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics* (2 vol., Göteborg, 1967).

[5] *... avt enim esse Devm negat, qvod qvidem indvcta alterivs persona in libris de deorvm natvra facere molitvs est; avt si esse confitetvr Devm, qvem negat præscivm fvtvrorvm, etiam sic nihil dicit alivd, qvam qvod ille dixit insipiens in corde svo: Non est Devs. Qvi enim non est præscivs omnivm fvtvrorvm, non est vtiqve Devs* (9/152-157).

aspects un peu contradictoires reflètent la complexité de ce jugement sur Cicéron. L'un et l'autre sont indispensables à l'intelligence de ce texte difficile[6].

Après avoir rappelé le contexte de la controverse, on développera rapidement trois points de philologie pour illustrer la précision et la gravité de la thèse affirmant la préméditation. On proposera ensuite une interprétation de la pensée d'Augustin sur Cicéron et l'on tentera de dégager le sens de la négation de Dieu qui lui est imputée[7].

1. Le contexte

Ayant établi à l'encontre des païens la fausseté des dieux et leur inefficacité dans l'essor de Rome (*Civ.* II-IV), Augustin veut montrer que seule la providence du vrai Dieu conduit les empires (*Civ.* V), en vue d'établir la *vera religio*. Mais, avant d'être décrite dans son activité historique (*Civ.* V, 12-26), la notion de providence doit, au plan rationnel, être purifiée de toute signification fataliste. D'où la controverse sur le destin par laquelle s'ouvre le livre V. Une première partie (1-7) fait valoir les droits du libre arbitre contre l'astrologie puis une seconde (8-11) s'en prend, à l'inverse, à des réactions antifatalistes dont le défaut consiste à supprimer plus ou moins la référence fondamentale de l'homme à la Divinité. Il s'agit des stoïciens (10) et surtout de Cicéron, négateur de la prescience divine (9).

2. L'accusation

Puisant au *De Fato* de Cicéron, Augustin a rappelé que les stoïciens entendent par *fatvm* la connexion et la série des causes et qu'ils soumettent cet enchaînement à Dieu dont ils reconnaissent la prescience et la maîtrise sur

[6] Rien n'empêche de trancher dans un sens ou dans l'autre selon l'idée que l'on se fait du rapport d'Augustin à son maître. Ainsi, sans manquer de relever l'aspect volontaire et prémédité, M. Testard insiste plutôt sur l'incohérence non voulue en montrant qu'à maintes reprises Augustin reproche seulement à Cicéron de ne pas mesurer assez la portée de certaines déclarations, *cf.* I p. 235-242 *et vtiqve* 240-242. W. Rordorf, dans 'Saint Augustin et la tradition philosophique antifataliste. A propos de *civ. Dei* 5, 1-11' dans *VigChr* 28 (1974), pp. 190-202, dit seulement 'Et Augustin de reprocher à Cicéron un penchant vers l'athéisme', p. 197.

[7] Trois remarques préliminaires: 1/ Il ne sera pas question de la pensée de Cicéron lui-même mais d'Augustin sur Cicéron. 2/ ne seront commentés ici que les passages du chapitre 9 qui comportent la citation du psaume 13, 1. L'étude du chapitre n'est donc pas exhaustive. 3/ un premier titre était: *Augustin et l''athéisme' de Cicéron. Etude du De Civitate Dei, V, 9*. Il a paru meilleur de remplacer *athéisme* par *impiété*. Bien qu'ayant lu ἄθεος en *Nat.* I, 63, Augustin n'emploie jamais dans son œuvre ni ce terme, que ce soit en grec ou translitéré, ni aucun de ses dérivés. En outre, malgré les similitudes qu'une étude serrée ferait ressortir entre l'ἀσεβεῖα/*impietas* de l'antiquité et l'athéisme moderne, les deux concepts et leur problématique demeurent assez différents.

toutes choses[8]. Ils ne distinguent pas vraiment destin et Divinité[9]. Champion de la liberté, Cicéron s'oppose à eux en niant la divination (argument fataliste) et donc la prescience impliquée dans la notion de divination (9/1-14). Mais, pour Augustin, le fait n'est pas sans conséquences:

... et confiteri esse Devm et negare præscivm apertissima insania est. Qvod et ipse cvm videret, etiam illvd temptavit qvod scriptvm est: Dixit insipiens in corde svo: Non est Devs; sed non ex sva persona. Vidit enim qvam esset invidiosvm et molestvm, ideoqve Cottam fecit dispvtantem de hac re adversvs Stoicos in libris de deorvm natvra et pro Lvcilio Balbo, cvi Stoicorvm partes defendendas dedit, malvit ferre sententiam qvam pro Cotta, qvi nvllam divinam natvram esse contendit. In libris vero de divinatione ex se ipso apertissime oppvgnat præscientiam fvtvrorvm (9/13-22).

Confesser Dieu et nier sa prescience, dit Augustin, constitue une contradiction manifeste. Pour y échapper sans renoncer à son propos de nier la prescience, Cicéron, comme l'insensé du psaume, a essayé de nier Dieu. Mais, craignant le scandale, il l'a fait par l'un des personnages de son *De Natvra deorvm*. En revanche, au *De Divinatione*, c'est par lui-même et très ouvertement qu'il a rejeté toute forme de prescience. Augustin conclut l'accusation en rappelant les motivations de son adversaire:

Hoc totvm facere videtvr, ne fatvm esse consentiat et perdat liberam volvntatem (9/23-24).

Les trois observations littéraires suivantes permettront de prendre la mesure de l'accusation:
— la formule *etiam temptavit* (9/15) comme expression de la gravité du délit,
— la mention par Augustin de ses sources cicéroniennes (9/16-22) comme argument étayant ses soupçons,
— l'adverbe *apertissime* et son contexte (9/22).

a. *L'expression* etiam ... temptavit *(9/15)*

Le verbe *temptare*, qui veut dire ici *essayer*, vient clore une série de verbes de sens voisin: *redargvere* ***nititvr*** contre les stoïciens fatalistes (9/1), ***conatvr*** *avferre* contre la divination (9/3), *nvllam esse omnino* ***contendat*** contre la prescience (9/4) et ***conatvr*** *evertere* contre la prophétie (9/7). *Temptavit* marque donc un aboutissement: après la prescience et ce qui s'y rattache, Cicéron essaie de nier Dieu. Il s'agit d'une progression dans le mal.

[8] *Qvi vero non astrorvm constitvtionem ... sed omnivm conexionem seriemqve cavsarvm, qva fit omne qvod fit, fati nomine appellant: non mvltvm cvm eis de verbi controversia laborandvm atqve certandvm est, qvandoqvidem ipsvm cavsarvm ordinem et qvamdam conexionem Dei svmmi tribvvnt volvntati et potestati, qvi optime et veracissime creditvr et cvncta scire anteqvam fiant et nihil inordinatvm relinqvere...* (V, 8/1-9).

[9] *... per istos versvs, qvos dispvtationi adhibent (scilic. stoici) qvam de fato habent, qvid sentiant esse fatvm apertissime declaratvr, qvoniam Iovem appellant, qvem svmmvm devm pvtant, a qvo conexionem dicvnt pendere fatorvm* (8/28-35).

La particule *etiam*, dont le sens est *aussi, même*, corrobore cette signification. D'une part, elle achève la série: Cicéron a essayé contre le destin, contre la prescience et même (sous entendu: *pour mettre le comble*) contre Dieu. Elle marque donc une gravité extrême. D'autre part, elle est suivie des deux idées importantes que sont *non ex sva persona* et *vidit enim qvam esset invidiosvm et molestvm* (9/16-17), par lesquelles Augustin rappelle qu'une négation publique de Dieu eût causé scandale dans la société antique[10] et que, pour cette raison, Cicéron voulait *avancer masqué* (*non ex sva persona*). *Etiam* ajoute donc à *temptavit* une note comportant l'idée de risque, d'audace, de transgression, de sacrilège[11].

b. *La mention des sources cicéroniennes*

L'ordre des intentions prêtées à Cicéron, à savoir, nier le Destin puis la prescience puis Dieu lui-même, ne constitue qu'un ensemble d'exigences logiques. La mise à éxécution, quant à elle, devait nécessairement procéder de façon inverse: d'abord nier Dieu pour mieux nier la prescience, ensuite nier la prescience pour mieux nier le destin, enfin nier le destin pour affirmer le libre arbitre. Or, la mention explicite du *De Natvra deorvm* (9/17-21) et du *De Divinatione* (9/21-22) d'une part, et l'emploi implicite du *De Fato* d'autre part[12], semblent correspondre exactement à cette seconde séquence. Car Augustin sait très bien que le maître avait publié ses trois ouvrages l'un après l'autre[13]. Rien pour lui de plus facile, donc, que de prendre cette succession éditoriale pour une stratégie en acte. Ainsi, le *De Natvra deorvm* aurait permis à Cicéron de refuser la Divinité par un autre (*sed non ex sva persona* 9/16 ou *indvcta alterivs persona* /153) et de préparer ainsi son terrain, le *De Divinatione* de nier par lui-même et très ouvertement (*apertissime* 9/22) la prescience, enfin le

[10] *Invidiosvm* semble s'inspirer d'une formule de Possidonius sur la négation cachée d'Epicure, rapportée en *Nat.* I, 123. *Cf. etiam Nat.* I, 85 et III, 3. Augustin a sans doute pris l'idée d'un Cotta secrètement athée par crainte du scandale au *Div.* I, 8. Pour lui, bien sûr, Cotta n'est autre que Cicéron.

[11] Le mot *etiam* exprime fréquemment dans la langue d'Augustin le franchissement d'une limite dont la nature peut être logique, morale ou théologique. *Cf.* F. Chatillon, '*Etiam* (*Animadversionis avgvstinianæ*)' dans *R.M.A.L.* 9 (1953), pp. 267-342.

[12] Sur le rapport mutuel des trois ouvrages de Cicéron en *Civ.* V, 9: 1/ Le *De Fato* fournit la source principale et bien visible de toute la controverse sur le destin (V, 1-11), le lecteur averti n'avait donc pas besoin qu'on lui rappelât son titre. 2/ Augustin, comme le fait remarquer Hagendhal (II, pp. 532-533), a tout intérêt à trouver dans les trois ouvrages en question la problématique qu'il veut mettre en jeu en *Civ.* V, 8-10. Sachant par ailleurs que ces traités forment un tout, il ne manque pas, comme le rappelle M. Testard (II, p. 48, n. 1), de les éclairer les uns par les autres. 3/ Objectivement, c'est bien sur les notions de destin, de Divinité, de prescience (divination) et de liberté que Cicéron travaille. Si Augustin réutilise et systématise dans sa perspective propre, il n'invente donc pas pour autant. Le *De Divinatione*, par exemple, n'est pas sans indications explicites sur le lien prescience-destin, mieux encore, sur le lien prescience-destin-Divinité, spécialement *Div.* I, 125+, où le polémiste a pu voir un texte clef.

[13] *Cf. Nat.* III, 19; *Div.* I, 8-9. 127. II 3; 19 et peut-être *Fat.* I, 1.

De Fato de rejeter le destin et d'affirmer ainsi le libre-arbitre[14]. L'idée de stratégie antifataliste, comportant refus de la prescience divine et de Dieu lui-même, s'exprime d'ailleurs dans la phrase: *Hoc* ***totvm*** *facere videtvr ne* ***fatvm*** *esse consentiat...* (9/23-24) où *totvm* ne représente rien d'autre que cette supposée stratégie en plusieurs temps[15].

c. *L'adverbe apertissime* et son contexte

Augustin connaît bien le *De Natvra deorvm*[16]. Or, trois éléments du texte cité plus haut peuvent être utilement rapprochés d'un passage de ce traité. Il s'agit de *tollit præscientiam fvtvrorvm*, de *nvllam divinam natvram esse contendit* et de *apertissime oppvgnat præscientiam fvtvrorvm*:

... placet ... omnibvs fere (scil. philosophis) mihiqve ipsis in primis deos esse. Itaqve non pugno; rationem ... eam, qvæ a te adfertvr, non satis firmam pvto, dit le pontife Cotta à l'Epicurien Velleius. *Qvod enim omnivm gentivm generymqve hominibvs ita videretvr, id satis magnvm argvmentvm esse dixisti cvr esse deos confiteremvr. Qvod cvm leve per se tvm etiam falsvm est. Primvm enim vnde tibi notæ svnt opiniones nationvm? Eqvidem arbitror mvltas esse gentes sic immanitate efferatas, vt apvd eas nvlla suspicio deorvm sit. Qvid? Diagoras, ἄθεος qvi dictvs est, posteaqve Theodorvs nonne aperte deorvm natvram svstvlervnt? Nat.* I,62.63[17].

La mention de Diagore, de Théodore et, dans la suite du texte, de Protagoras qui passent pour ἄθεοι veut montrer que la perception naturelle des dieux n'est pas universelle et ne saurait par conséquent servir de prémisse à un raisonnement qui conclurait à leur existence. Cotta acule ainsi Velleius à la contradiction et montre que sa doctrine revient à nier la Divinité en fait.

Appliqué à sa problématique de la prescience, on retrouve le même vocabulaire sous la plume d'Augustin et la même idée de suppression de la Divinité. En effet, *aperte deorvm natvram svstvlervnt* se dédouble en *tollere* (9/12-13) ou *oppvgnare præscientiam fvtvrorvm* (9/22) et en *nvllam divinam natvram esse contendere* (9/20-21), l'expression philosophique à consonnance polythéiste *natvra deorvm* devenant *divina natvra*. Ce dédoublement suit exactement le couple prescience et Divinité. En outre, *aperte* passe au superlatif pour accompagner *oppvgnat præscientiam fvtvrorvm* (9/22). A vrai dire, Augustin emploie volontiers *apertissime* comme formule courante et banale (8/38 et 9/14) mais ici le superlatif renforce évidemment l'idée de suppression manifeste déjà

[14] Citation non littérale de l'argument carnéadien de ce traité en 9/36-48 et 62-75 et 10/52-55.

[15] L'argumentation d'Augustin en faveur de la négation de Dieu par Cicéron s'appuie beaucoup sur le *De Natvra deorvm*. Une relecture polémique de l'ouvrage semble viser à retourner contre Cicéron en personne les soupçons d'irréligion nourris par Cotta à l'endroit des épicuriens (*Nat.* I, 57-124), et à lui attribuer la critique apparemment nihiliste que ledit Cotta mène contre l'idée stoïcienne de Dieu et de la providence (*Nat.* III).

[16] Testard I, p. 212-213.

[17] *Cf. etiam* I, 42, 117.

exprimée au *De Natvra deorvm*. Le polémiste a donc amplifié la formule, consciemment peut-être, l'a infléchie dans le sens de la prescience divine et l'a impitoyablement retournée contre son auteur.

3. La pensée d'Augustin

Les trois exemples qu'on vient de proposer témoignent d'une sévérité extrême. Toutefois, ce n'est point sans des atténuations qui s'ajoutent à l'alternative finale déjà vue. Ainsi la thèse de la préméditation, seule développée, ne l'est qu'à titre de probabilité[18]. Augustin n'est donc pas très sûr de son fait. En outre, la négation de Dieu, coupable ou non, doit s'entendre comme une opposition au fatalisme du Portique tel qu'il apparaît dans la doxographie du chapitre 8. C'est avouer que l'attitude de Cicéron s'explique par une défaillance de sa *théodicée*[19] et non par le propos comme tel de nier Dieu. Mieux encore, tout en lui reprochant d'avoir incité au sacrilège par son refus de la science divine de l'avenir (9/60), Augustin ne laisse pas de saluer son maître comme grand humaniste à cause de son souci du libre arbitre (9/56-57). Or, l'âme religieuse, affirme t-il maintes fois au nom de la Cité de Dieu, confesse aussi bien la prescience que la liberté[20]. Il faut donc tirer cette conclusion que le Cicéron du *De Civitate Dei* V, 9 est religieux au moins pour moitié, ce qui n'est pas rien. Autre élément probant: dans la synthèse de la fin du chapitre 10, Cicéron est repris non pour avoir nié Dieu mais seulement pour avoir *mal cru* (*male credere*) à son sujet (10/45-50). En fait, sans le dire ouvertement, le polémiste ménage son auteur. Rien là qui doive surprendre, eu égard à son estime habituelle pour l'Arpinate.

Pour rendre raison de soupçons aussi détaillés et aussi graves chez Augustin, il faut avoir à l'esprit le fait que le *De Civitate Dei* appartient au genre patristique de l'*adversvs*[21]. Cette démarche ne vise pas tant l'objectivité que la caricature des arguments adverses[22]. Augustin y excelle ici par son utilisation

[18] Comme le suggère la phrase déjà citée: *hoc totvm facere* ***videtvr*** (9/23) où *videtvr* pourrait renvoyer au τὸ πιθανόν de la nouvelle académie. La disjonctive *avt esse Devm negat* (9/153) … *avt si esse confitetvr Devm* (9/154-155) est elle-même l'indice d'une ἐποχή de type néoacadémicien.

[19] Le terme remonte à Leibnitz. Il est employé ici, pour des raisons de commodité, dans le sens très général d'une tentative de penser de manière rationellement satisfaisante la relation du monde à Dieu.

[20] *Sed qvoqvo modo se habeant tortvosissimæ concertationes et dispvtationes philosophorvm, nos vt confitemvr svmmvm et vervm Devm, ita volvntatem svmmamqve potestatem ac præscientiam eivs confitemvr; nec timemvs ne ideo non volvntate faciamvs, qvod volvntate facimvs, qvia id nos factvros ille præscivit, cvivs præscientia falli non potest …* 9/26-32, *cf. etiam* /60-62.

[21] Les livres I-X surtout. *Cf. Retractationes* II, 1. Possidonius répertorie le *De Civitate Dei* comme un *contra paganos* (*Indiculus*, PL 46, col. 5+ et Wilmart, *MA* 2 (Rome, 1931), pp. 149-233.

[22] Il n'est pas certain que des procédés de ce genre soient toujours conscients chez les Pères.

du *De Natvra deorvm* dans le sens d'une négation de Dieu qui serait tout ensemble principe et conséquence du refus de la prescience. Mais on voit bien, dans cette perspective, que la pointe veut évidemment toucher moins le Cicéron de l'histoire que la Cité terrestre insoumise à Dieu[23]. Si celle-ci professe le fatalisme avec les astrologues elle court à l'immoralité (*Civ.* V, 1-7) mais si, avec Cicéron, elle cherche à s'en libérer par ses propres forces elle tombe infailliblement dans l'autonomie sacrilège et par suite dans l'immoralité, quoique par un chemin contraire au précédent[24].

Cette explication a indubitablement son importance. Mais à vrai dire, elle ne concerne pas directement l'adversaire. Qu'en est-il donc de Cicéron lui-même aux yeux d'Augustin? Il semble que la thématique du *pravvm cor*, fréquente dans son œuvre et contenue dans l'expression biblique *dixit insipiens in corde svo*, soit de grande utilité pour le savoir. Augustin se montre au *De Civitate Dei* très attentif à certaines contradictions affectant certains esprits d'élites, contradictions dont il ne manque pas de faire état pour mieux illustrer l'impuissance radicale de la Cité terrestre. Elles se ramènent à un alignement coupable sur la *consvetvdo civitatis*. On le voit chez le même Cicéron à propos des jeux (*Civ.* IV, 30), chez Varron au sujet de la théologie civile (*Civ.* VI, 10) ou chez les philosophes à propos du polythéisme (*Civ.* VIII, 12). Augustin reproche à ces gens d'avoir non seulement favorisé des conceptions et des comportements pervers et contraires à leur tendance personnelle mais encore de s'y être du coup laissés prendre eux-mêmes. Ainsi Cicéron. Il ne s'agit certes pas dans le cas présent de la *consvetudo civitatis* et de sa problématique mais bel et bien de consentement malgré soi à une attitude mauvaise. Cette opération contradictoire et gravissime a son champ propre dans le cœur perverti par le péché[25] et non resaisi par la Révélation et le Médiateur. En ruinant savamment dans l'esprit de ses lecteurs, par trois ouvrages successifs, les fondements rationnels de la religion, le Cicéron d'Augustin a pratiqué lui-même dans son propre esprit (*in corde svo*) un nihilisme qui refuse à Dieu le culte qui lui est dû comme créateur du monde et acteur principal de l'histoire humaine[26], nihilisme

[23] B. Lacroix s'est demandé si le *De Civitate Dei* n'aurait pas été destiné aussi à des athées. Son article laisse le lecteur sur sa faim. 'Les adversaires visés par saint Augustin dans la "Cité de Dieu"' dans *Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 4 (1958), pp. 163-175.

[24] *… nvllo modo cogimvr avt retenta præscientia Dei tollere volvntatis arbitrivm avt retento volvntatis arbitrio Devm … negare præscivm fvtvrorvm; sed vtrvmqve amplectimvr, vtrvmqve fideliter et veraciter confitemvr; illvd, vt bene credamvs; hoc, vt bene vivamvs. Male avtem vivitvr, si de Deo non bene creditvr. Vnde absit a nobis eivs negare præscientiam, vt libere velimvs, qvo adivvante svmvs liberi vel erimvs, Civ.* V, 10/45-52.

[25] Sur *cor* comme lieu de l'intériorité, comme opération spécifiquement humaine et comme valeur de la personne responsable en une situation donnée *cf.* G. Madec, 'Le 'cœur' dans les Confessions d'Augustin' (article dont je n'ai pas retrouvé la référence).

[26] Il faudrait étudier les idées d'Augustin sur la Nouvelle Académie dont il pensait que son maître avait été l'adepte. Le scepticisme de cette école lui semble être tantôt proximité avec la vérité (platonisme secret), tantôt évacuation de toute vérité (*omnia incerta non dicebant solvm,*

qui tend à faire de l'homme la mesure et l'auteur de sa propre destinée. Il ne niait pas Dieu *a priori* mais pour défendre la liberté et la moralité, en bref l'*humanité*, contre le fatalisme, il s'y est résolu. Il apparaît bien là, jugé par Augustin, comme le champion et en même temps la victime d'un anthropocentrisme impie et comme une des figures de la Cité des hommes rebellée contre Dieu.

Augustin présente de Cicéron une image finalement peu unifiée: païen et pécheur, il a exclu Dieu, pratiquement, de la sphère de la vie humaine. Esprit religieux, plus ou moins platonicien, il n'est pas sans perception de la Divinité[27] ni sans sentiment de sa transcendance[28]. Mais dans cette rapide étude, une autre idée importante affleure: pour Augustin, une négation de Dieu *absolue*, c'est-à-dire sans autre raison qu'elle-même, est impossible ou au moins rarissime. En effet, la création *ad imaginem Dei* fait qu'en l'homme, croyant ou non, Dieu constitue la clef de voûte de l'intelligence (comme il est la source de l'être). De sorte qu'une négation absolue tiendrait presque de la maladie mentale. Augustin le dit bien en évoquant son *De Civitate Dei*: ... *asserit Civitas Dei ... esse Devm, qvod natvra insitvm vix vlla vnqvam extirpat impietas ...* (*Ep.* 184B, 6)[29]. Il apparaît donc en fait que nier Dieu procède presque toujours de la difficulté à concilier les exigences de sa nature et les aspirations humaines, ici la prescience et la liberté.

La négation de Dieu est examinée par Augustin dans plusieurs de ses œuvres. Il la présente comme un phénomène complexe et diversifié[30]. On ne peut parler de réflexion systématique, mais le *De Civitate Dei* V, 9 constitue sans doute un moment majeur de sa pensée en la matière. La question du rapport à Dieu sous cet angle particulier de l'affirmation ou de la négation est importante chez lui car elle ne manque pas d'intervenir dans la compréhension du rapport de la providence et de la liberté et plus profondément encore de celui de la liberté et de la grâce[31], thème éminement augustinien. Elle mérite donc une étude d'envergure[32].

vervm copiosissimis rationibvs affirmabant, Acad. II, 5, 12). Par exemple, la figure de Cicéron dans l'epitre 118 est particulièrement ambigüe et il n'est pas sûr que l'explication du fait par les intentions pédagogique d'Augustin sur Dioscore soit suffisante. Sur Cicéron et la Nouvelle Académie, *cf.* C. Levy, *Cicero academicvs. Recherches sur les Académiques et sur la philosophie cicéronienne* (Collection de l'Ecole française de Rome 162; Rome, 1992). Sur la position d'Augustin à l'égard de Cicéron, *cf.* pp. 637-644.

[27] *Cf. vg. Civ.* XXII, 8.

[28] *Cf.* l'épitre 118 où Augustin se demande, sans répondre à la question, si Cicéron ne cache pas sa vraie pensée face aux matérialistes selon la méthode de la Nouvelle Académie.

[29] Des formules semblables ne manquent pas dans le reste de son œuvre, en particulier les *Enarrationes* et les sermons.

[30] Elle peut être le fait des pécheurs, des Juifs, des païens, des hérétiques ... *vg En. in ps.* 52, 2-4.

[31] La querelle avec les pélagiens fait l'arrière-fond du *De Civitate Dei. Civ.* V est achevé en 415 et en 416 Augustin sera au concile de Carthage pour la reprise des questions pélagiennes. Il faudrait étudier dans quelle mesure la position pélagienne pourrait, selon Augustin, revenir dans les faits à nier Dieu.

[32] Cette étude, dont le présent article résume sommairement les acquis, est en cours.

The Influence of Marius Victorinus on Augustine's Commentary on Galatians

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'(N)othing', wrote Alexander Souter, 'is more antecedently probable than that Augustine ... consulted (Marius Victorinus') commentaries on the Pauline Epistles in the course of his own work'[1]. But antecedent probability is not hard evidence. Souter's own research yielded only two verbal parallels, neither of which he deemed telling, and he concluded that Augustine's extraordinary independence of mind was likely to render doubtful any attempt to establish verbal dependence[2]. Later scholars have concurred[3]. Charles Gore, on the other hand, writing some forty years before Souter, discerned in the writings of the two men not verbal but conceptual parallels[4]. In general, however, even where verbal and conceptual dependence can be established, it is unlikely to be a satisfactory measure of one author's indebtedness to another. We need to begin by considering the broadest type of influence identifiable: in this instance, that of Victorinus as he is presented in the *Confessions* — as a moral exemplar. For as Peter Brown has noted, the late classical world was marked by an 'overwhelming tendency to find what is exemplary in *persons*...'[5]. Only when we have examined Victorinus' personal moral influence on Augustine will we have a meaningful context in which to raise the narrower issues of verbal, conceptual, and other forms of dependence in regard to the commentaries on St. Paul.

At the beginning of Book 8 of the *Confessions* Augustine seeks spiritual guidance from Simplicianus, who proceeds to tell him the story of Victorinus' conversion. Simplicianus thus considered Victorinus a fitting model for Augustine to follow, and the parallelism between the two is indeed uncanny. Both were men of learning, steeped in philosophy, who as rhetoricians had attained the highest eminence in their profession, Victorinus at Rome and Augustine at Milan. Victorinus had received the supreme honor of a statue in

[1] *The Earliest Latin Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul* (Oxford, 1927), p. 199.

[2] Ibid.

[3] E.g., Paula Fredriksen, *Augustine's Early Interpretation of Paul* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 1979), p. 116. And cf. the general observation of J.J. O'Donnell (*Augustine: Confessions* (Oxford, 1992), vol. 3, p. 15): 'One aspect of A.'s relation to V. requires emphasis: the lack of quotation or otherwise direct use anywhere in A.'s canon, of any of Victorinus' theological works'.

[4] 'Victorinus Afer', in *DCB*, vol. 4, pp. 1137-8.

[5] 'The Saint as Exemplar in Late Antiquity', *Representations*, 1 (1983), p. 2 (italics mine).

the Roman forum[6]; Augustine had prospects of a provincial governorship[7]. Both had influential patrons in the Senate to aid them in their ambitions[8]. For both, ambition and honor had gone hand in hand with superstition; indeed their very skills in rhetoric had been used to promote superstition[9]. The steps leading to conversion were also strikingly similar: for both the 'books of the Platonists' served as a preparation for the Gospel; for both the last great obstacle, the goad against which they kicked, was full sacramental initiation into the Church. Presumably such parallelism as the text implies originated in the mind Simplicianus, but the fact that it is here reproduced and highlighted means that Augustine not only recognizes it but wholeheartedly ratifies it.

Earlier portions of the *Confessions* are illuminated by the story of Victorinus' conversion, for in recounting it Augustine mentions that it was in Victorinus' translation that he had first read the 'books of the Platonists'[10], which had played such a decisive role in his intellectual conversion[11]. Highly significant (in light of his Pauline commentaries) is Augustine's clear implication that his former difficulties with St. Paul 'simply vanished' as a result of his neo-Platonic reading[12]. In two separate but closely-connected instances, therefore, Victorinus was God's instrument in Augustine's conversion[13].

[6] *Conf.* 8. 2. 3. (Abbreviations of titles of Augustine's works follow *Augustinus-Lexikon*).

[7] *Conf.* 6. 11. 19.

[8] For Victorinus see *conf.* 8. 2. 3; for Augustine see *conf.* 5. 13. 23 (Symmachus) and cf. 6. 11. 19.

[9] Victorinus had defended certain cults 'with a voice terrifying to opponents' (*conf.* 8. 2. 3; trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford, 1991), p. 135; CCL 27: 115. 24-5: 'ore terricrepo'). His tongue had been used by the devil 'as a mighty and sharp dart to destroy many' (*conf.* 8. 4. 9; Chadwick, trans., 139; CCL 27: 119. 24-5: '... Victorini lingua, quo telo grandi et acuto multos (diabolus) peremerat...'). As a Manichee Augustine had 'disturbed many untrained minds with many trivial questions' (*conf.* 3. 12. 21; Chadwick, trans., 51; CCL 27: 39. 10-11: '... nonnullis quaestiunculis iam multos imperitos exagitassem...'); he describes his entire time with the Manichees as one of 'being seduced and seducing, being deceived and deceiving' (*conf.* 4. 1. 1; Chadwick, trans., 52; CCL 27:40. 2-3: '... seducebamur et seducebamus falsi atque fallentes...'). He swayed an unnamed friend from Catholicism to Manicheism (*conf.* 4. 4. 7) and may have had a similar influence on Alypius (*conf.* 6. 7. 12). Cf. also *Acad.* 1. 1. 3 (Romanianus) and *util. cred.* 1. 2 (Honoratus). For Manicheism as a '*superstitio*' see *conf.* 4. 2. 3, 6. 7. 12, and 8. 7. 17 (CCL 27:41.27-8, 82.49, and 124. 24-5).

[10] *Conf.* 8. 2. 3.

[11] Cf. O'Donnell, *Augustine: Confessions*, vol. 2, p. 413: 'As long as A.'s goal was intellectual enlightenment, the reading of the *platonicorum libri* was the decisive intellectual event that reoriented his ways of thinking as nothing before or after would do'.

[12] *Conf.* 7. 21. 27 (Chadwick, trans., 130; CCL 27: 110. 2-3: 'et perierunt illae quaestiones...'). Augustine was not the only Christian Platonist wrestling with Paul at this time: there was Simplicianus as well (cf. Ambrose, *ep.* 37).

[13] The translation that Augustine used for his momentous reading of Aristotle's *Categories* (*conf.* 4. 16. 28-9) may also have been Victorinus'. Cf. e.g. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (Paris, 1938), p. 34, and Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers and Their Greek Sources*, trans. H.E. Wedeck (Cambridge, MA, 1969), p. 168. This possibility is doubted by O'Donnell, *Augustine: Confessions*, vol. 2, p. 265, following Pierre Hadot, *Marius Victorinus: Recherches sur sa vie et ses œuvres* (Paris, 1971), pp. 187-8.

Only one reference to Victorinus by name[14] occurs in Augustine's writings outside of the *Confessions*, but it is extremely important. In Book 2 of the *De doctrina christiana* Victorinus is numbered among the past worthies who spoiled the Egyptians of their gold[15]. This suggests that Augustine sees himself as the heir and champion of a *tradition*, a tradition replacing the ancient alliance of paganism and classical culture by a Christian culture centered on Scripture. The authors Augustine names are, in order: Cyprian, Lactantius, Victorinus[16], Optatus, and Hilary[17]. Thus twice in writings from the first years of his episcopacy, Augustine saw in Victorinus a model for the abandonment of secular ambition and the dedication of pagan learning to the service of the heavenly Word of God[18].

A few years earlier, Augustine had undertaken a major reconsideration and reinterpretation of Paul provoked largely by a need to counter 'the most radical and self-confident of Paul's expositors': the Manichees[19]. His pastoral responsibilities meant that the sophisticated neo-Platonic arguments he had used in earlier writings could no longer be his weapon of choice[20]. Only a scripturally-based argument would be effective, and for that a thorough reexamination of Paul was necessary. As a teacher Augustine stressed the need for teachers[21],

[14] It is possible that Marius Victorinus is the 'quidam Platonicus' of *ciu.* 10. 29 who, according to Simplicianus, thought the opening of St. John's Gospel 'should be inscribed in letters of gold and set up in the most prominent place in every church' (trans. Henry Bettenson (London, 1972), 417; CCL 47: 306. 99-104: 'aureis litteris conscribendum et per omnes ecclesias in locis eminentissimis proponendum esse'). This possibility, though incapable of proof, is taken very seriously by Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne* (Paris, 1901-23), vol. 3, p. 377, Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 237, and others.

[15] *Doctr. chr.* 2. 40. 60-1. This allegorical interpretation of Ex. 3.22 also appears at *c. Faust.* 22.91 (citing *doctr. chr.*) and *conf.* 7. 19. 15 (see next n.).

[16] That the reference is to Victorinus of Pettau (cf. e.g. Jean Doignon, '"Nos bons hommes de foi": Cyprien, Lactance, Victorin, Optat, Hilaire (Augustin, *De doctrina christiana*, IV, 40, 61)', *Latomus* 22 (1963), 803) is possible but not probable. In a closely-related passage written not long after the one under consideration, Augustine clearly identifies the Egyptian gold with the Platonic books translated by Marius Victorinus (*conf.* 7. 9. 15, cf. 8. 2. 3; the Platonists are especially mentioned in *doctr. chr.* 2. 40. 60).

[17] Marrou is no doubt right to say of this passage: 'Ici saint Augustin a pleinement conscience de ne pas parler en son nom seulement, mais comme représentant de la tradition de l'Église tout entière' (*Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique*, p. 394). And yet the particularity of Augustine's list should not be overlooked.

[18] Victorinus had once used his eloquence in the devil's service; now God had cleansed it so that it might be "'useful to the Lord for every good work" (2 Tim. 2.21)' (*conf.* 8.4.9 (Chadwick, trans., p. 139; CCL 27: 119.28: "'utilia domino ad omne opus bonum"')).

[19] Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967), p. 151.

[20] Cf. Paula Fredriksen, 'Beyond the body/soul dichotomy: Augustine on Paul against the Manichees and the Pelagians', *RAug* 23 (1988), pp. 89-92, and *Augustine on Romans* (Chico, 1982), pp. ix-xii.

[21] Cf. *util. cred.* 7. 17 (CSEL 25. 1: 21. 26-22. 2): 'Asper, Cornutus, Donatus et alii innumerabiles requiruntur, ut quilibet poeta possit intellegi, cuius carmina et theatri plausus uidentur captare — tu in eos libros, qui quoquo modo se habeant, sancti tamen diuinarumque rerum pleni prope totius generis humani confessione diffamantur, sice duce inruis et de his sine praeceptore

and while he may not always have taken his own advice[22], we know that in this case he did, for in a letter of the time he asks Jerome for translations of Greek commentators on the Bible, especially Origen[23], and explicitly states that he has been reading Jerome's commentary on Galatians[24].

Is it legitimate, however, to hypothesize that Augustine consulted Victorinus as well?[25] It is notable that both Jerome and Ambrosiaster claim to have done so[26]. Could Augustine have consulted Jerome but not Victorinus? Considered in the abstract and from a modern point of view, the choice between Jerome and Victorinus is not difficult: Victorinus may be passed over with few qualms. Yet they would have appeared very differently to Augustine. Jerome's vast erudition[27], which we find so fascinating, would have seemed daunting to Augustine. That Augustine sensed his own inadequacy is shown by his request to Jerome for translations of Greek commentaries.

The basic question Augustine faced was this: How can one trained in grammar and rhetoric adapt his skills for the interpretation of Paul in humble service to the Church? To some extent it was natural that he should employ the exegetical method of the schools[28]. On the other hand, the fact that the text was a text of Sacred Scripture meant that it was necessary to be cautious[29], especially for one who had for so long been misled by Manicheism. One way of being cautious was to turn to precedents, and the most trustworthy precedent here was Victorinus, who had already served as a moral exemplar at the time of Augustine's conversion.

audes ferre sententiam...?' Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, p. 264, remarks that 'Augustine lived in an age oppressed by reverence for the "expert"'.

[22] Cf. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, p. 49 n. 4. Similarly O'Donnell, *Augustine: Confessions*, vol. 2, p. 264: 'A. was essentially self-taught'.

[23] *Ep.* 28. 2. 2.

[24] *Ep.* 28. 3. 3.

[25] Although Augustine never refers to Victorinus' Pauline commentaries, I presume that he at least knew of the existence of the one on Galatians from his statement in *ep.* 28. 3. 3 that he has been reading Jerome's commentary on Galatians. Jerome's first prologue contains a striking statement about Victorinus' commentary on Galatians (PL 26), and regardless of whether or not Augustine read Jerome's commentary as a whole, he must surely have read that prologue.

[26] Jerome, *In Gal.*, pr. (PL 26: 308A), implies that he has read Victorinus' commentary on Galatians. Ambrosiaster, *In Rom.* 5.14 (CSEL 81. 1: 177.24-6) implies that he has consulted Victorinus' commentary on Romans. For the suggestion that Ambrosiaster also read Victorinus' commentary on Galatians see Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, pp. 63-4.

[27] Cf. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique*, p. 443.

[28] Cf. Ibid. 424: 'Aussi ne faut-il pas s'étonner si, à ce premier niveau, l'exégèse augustinienne apparaît essentiellement comme une exégèse grammaticale, si elle ne fait qu'adapter au cas particulier de la Bible les procédés traditionnels des écoles antiques: *lectio, emendatio, enarratio*'.

[29] Cf. Augustine's statement in *mor.* 1. 1. 1 that 'an explanation of the Scriptures should be sought from those whose are by profession teachers of Scripture' (trans. Gallagher and Gallagher, *Saint Augustine: The Catholic and Manichaean Ways of Life* (FC 56; Washington, D.C., 1966), p. 3; PL 32: 1311. 1-3: '... Scripturarum expositionem ab iis petendam esse, qui earum doctores se esse profitentur').

Now in writing his own Pauline commentaries Victorinus intended to produce what he calls '*commentatio simplex*'[30]. Augustine desired just such commentary for his immediate audience, which consisted of the 'brethren' of his own monastic community and included some who were relatively uneducated, such as Possidius, his future biographer[31]. In addition, there were the needs of the ordinary members of his congregation — not that they were intended readers of his[32], but rather that the straightforward interpretation to be worked out in his commentary would also be useful in his preaching[33]. A simple commentary, moreover, would have suited best his own grammatical background, his incomplete though growing mastery of Scripture, and his partiality for a kind of *explication de texte* as a means of elucidating so difficult an author as Paul. In the hands of Victorinus, moreover, *commentatio simplex* had proved effective in dealing with real theological issues in a way that Jerome's method of variorum commentary had not[34].

As well as offering a practical illustration of *commentatio simplex*, Victorinus' commentary on Galatians would also have offered an illustration of a commentary that was in part polemical[35] and thus precisely the kind Augustine needed in Hippo, where the Catholics were virtually a persecuted minority[36].

One objection to this line of argument is that when providing Jerome with names of authorities for his view that the dispute between Peter and Paul at

[30] *In Eph.* 4.8 (CSEL 83. 2: 60. 16); cf. *In Gal.* 4.19 (CSEL 83. 2: 151. 24-5): '*expositio verborum simplex*'. See further Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, p. 290, and Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, p. 28, who adds: 'The style he here employs is what the rhetoricians themselves called the ἰσχνόν, *tenue*, the plain, unvarnished, unadorned style'.

[31] Augustine describes him as uneducated in the liberal arts in *ep.* 101. 1 (cited by Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, p. 267). Possidius lived in the monastery at Hippo until his ordination as Bishop of Calama in 397.

[32] On the generally low level of education of those who heard Augustine preach see F. van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop*, trans. B. Battershaw and G.R. Lamb (London and New York, 1961), pp. 132-4.

[33] Cf. e.g. the striking similarites between the treatment of Paul's rebuke of Peter at Antioch in *exp. Gal.* and that in Mainz sermon no. 27 (dated 397), recently published by F. Dolbeau in *RBen* 102 (1992), pp. 52-63.

[34] Cf. Manlio Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*, trans. J.A. Hughes (Edinburgh, 1994), pp. 92-3 (on Victorinus) and pp. 102-3 (on Jerome). For Jerome's definition of the function of a commentator see *Contra Rufinum* 1.16.

[35] For both Victorinus and Augustine, the polemical element is important but not so important as the author's desire for understanding. On Victorinus cf. Werner Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer, der erste lateinische Pauluskommentator: Studien zu seinen Pauluskommentaren im Zusammenhang der Wiederentdeckung des Paulus in der abendländischen Theologie des 4. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main, Bern, Cirencester/U.K., 1980), p. 197: 'In der Bekämpfung häretischer Irrlehren seiner Zeit ist M.V. in den Pauluskommentaren auffallend zurückhaltend und unbestimmt gegenüber seinen theologischen Kontroversschriften. Das wird seinen Grund einmal darin haben, daß sich M.V. hier vor allem als Kommentator des Apostels versteht und daß das literarische Genus des Kommentars für ausgesprochene Polemik gar nicht geeignet ist'.

[36] Catholics were troubled not only by the Manichees but also and especially by the Donatists, who were predominant in Hippo. Cf. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, p. 139.

Antioch was not feigned, Augustine cites Cyprian twice but never Victorinus[37]. But here the most probable explanation is that Augustine, having read Jerome's commentary on Galatians, was well aware of his damning remarks on Victorinus' ability as a biblical exegete and saw not only the futility of naming him as an authority, but also the danger of giving Jerome further offense[38]. It was important, however, for Augustine to align himself with Cyprian. He had long ago claimed the support of the great African bishop and martyr in his struggle with the Donatists and had even quoted Cyprian's interpretation of Galatians 2.11-14 against them[39]. Victorinus' interpretation runs parallel to Cyprian's, and although Augustine does not name Victorinus when writing to Jerome, we do see the names of Victorinus and Cyprian explicitly linked in the passage cited above from the *De doctrina christiana*. This passage was written less than two years after Augustine's commentary on Galatians. If both Victorinus and Cyprian stand as authorities behind that commentary, then their appearance together in the *De doctrina christiana* gains new depth of meaning.

While other objections may be raised, the evidence taken as a whole creates a fair presumption in favor of the view that Augustine knew and used Victorinus' Pauline commentaries. Moreover, a remarkable affinity of theology and spirituality may be discerned in the writings of the two men: both place a strong emphasis on predestinating grace and justification by faith, the insufficiency of good works, and the importance of humility. First proposed by Gore, this affinity was strongly endorsed by Harnack and acknowledged by even so cautious a scholar as Hadot[40]. Yet what has been almost entirely overlooked is

[37] Cyprian is cited at *epp.* 82.24 and 180. 5. The matter is further complicated by the fact that in the former passage Ambrose is also cited. That the Ambrosian text Augustine has in mind is in fact the commentary on Galatians by 'Ambrosiaster' is argued persuasively by J.H. Baxter, 'Ambrosiaster cited as "Ambrose" in 405', *JThSt* 24 (1923), p. 187, following Goldbacher, CSEL 34: 376. 13 n. But if Augustine thought 'Ambrosiaster' was Ambrose in 405 when he wrote *ep.* 82, and if he had thought this in 394-5 when he decided to write his commentary on Galatians, then it becomes more difficult to see why he would have felt any need to consult Victorinus as a model. My reply to this possible objection is that if Augustine thought he had Ambrose's commentary on Paul in the mid-390s, why did he never once refer to it? At the very least, a brief reference to it in *ep.* 37 to Simplicianus (if not in *Simpl.* itself) would have been a *beau geste*. And we do find Augustine referring to Ambrose elsewhere at this time (e.g. *epp.* 36. 14. 32 and 44. 4. 7). It would appear that in the mid-390s Augustine did *not* attribute this commentary to Ambrose. (With Souter, *Earlies Latin Commentaries*, 39-40, I would argue that the commentary of 'Ambrosiaster' first circulated anonymously. And cf. the summary statement by M.G. Mara in Di Berardino (ed.), *Patrology* 4 (Westminster (Md.), 1986), p. 180: '(The commentary) must in fact have been anonymous from the beginning').

[38] I am grateful to Dr. Rowan Williams for reminding me of Augustine's desire to be deferential to Jerome.

[39] *Bapt.* 2. 1. 2 and 2. 4. 5, quoting Cyprian *ep.* 71 (to Quintus). See further R.S. Cole-Turner, 'Anti-Heretical Issues and the Debate over Galatians 2: 11-14 in the Letters of St. Augustine to St. Jerome', *AugSt* 11 (1980), pp. 155-66.

[40] Gore, 'Victorinus Afer', in *DCB*, vol. 4, p. 1137-8; Harnack, *History of Dogma*, trans. N. Buchanan (New York, 1961), vol. 5, p. 35 n. 1; P. Hadot, 'L'image de la Trinité dans l'âme

the even greater similarity that exists when the commentaries are viewed as literary artifacts. If, as Hadot has said[41], Victorinus' work on the Trinity may have served, if only in some minimal sense, as a model for Augustine's own work on the Trinity, how much more would Victorinus' Pauline commentaries have served as a model for Augustine, especially at such an uncertain and tumultuous time in his career as a theologian, exegete, writer, and spokesman for the Church? In choosing the specific genre that he did, Augustine revealed far more than a mere aesthetic whim, for to choose a genre is at the same time to place oneself within a specific tradition and not others, and to align oneself with specific teachers and not others[42].

In sum, there are reflections in Augustine of Victorinus's theological agenda and the literary genre he chose to implement it. It is true that we are still in the realm of the hypothetical, but this is surely better than suppressing a mass of evidence the core of which, as we have seen, is expressly given by Augustine himself. For suppression has been the practical (though unintended) effect of acknowledging the 'antecedent probability'[43] of literary influence but pursuing it no further. Antecedent probability should not be passed over lightly. Here Newman's observation is very apt: 'In all matters of human life, presumption verified by instances, is our ordinary instrument of proof, and, if the antecedent probability is great, it almost supersedes instances'[44].

If, then, the antecedent probability of Victorinus' influence on Augustine's commentary on Galatians is given its due weight, not only may that commentary be seen to have arisen out of something more than thin air, but the instances of parallelism between the two may be viewed positively, as corroborative of the thesis, rather than negatively, as failing to establish it[45]. Finally, the list of

chez Victorinus et chez saint Augustin', *SP* 6, ed. F.L. Cross (TU 81; Berlin, 1962), p. 433: 'C'est en effet surtout, à propos de l'exégèse des doctrines pauliniennes concernant la prédestination et la grâce, que l'on a pu dire de Victorinus qu'il était un "Augustin avant Augustin"'.

[41] In his introduction to P. Henry and P. Hadot, *Marius Victorinus: Traités théologiques sur la Trinité*, 1 (SCh 68; Paris, 1960), p. 86: 'l'*adversus Arium* de Victorinus a pu être un modèle de réflexion philosophique sur le dogme, pour le futur auteur du *de trinitate*' (quoted by A.A.R. Bastiaensen, 'Augustin et ses prédécesseurs latins chrétiens', in J. den Boeft and J. van Oort (eds.), *Augustiniana Traiectina* (Paris, 1987), p. 55).

[42] Cf. Jean Guitton, *Le temps et l'éternité chez Plotin et saint Augustin* (Paris, 1933), p. xi: 'En choisissant un genre, on a déjà reconnu ses maîtres: on se rattache à une tradition..., on accepte une compagnie' (quoted by John J. O'Meara, trans., *St. Augustine: Against the Academics* (ACW 12; Westminster, Md., 1950), p. 164 n. 147).

[43] Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, p. 199 (quoted in the opening sentence of this communication).

[44] John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (7th ed., London, 1890), pp. 113-14 (I.iii.2).

[45] A striking instance occurs in their interpretations of *proscriptus* in Gal. 3.1. Cf. Victorinus: 'Ergo proscriptus Christus est, id est bona eius distracta et vendita sunt, quae utique in nobis erant, Iudaismi persuasione proscripta sunt, vendita et perdita' (CSEL 83. 2: 126. 10-13) with Augustine: '"Ante quorum oculos Christus Iesus proscriptus est, crucifixus", hoc est, quibus

illustrious men in the *De doctrina christiana*, in which the names of Victorinus and Cyprian are linked together, may be seen to take on new clarity and coherence.

videntibus Christus Iesus hereditatem suam possessionemque suam amisit, his utique auferentibus eam dominumque inde expellentibus, qui ex gratia fidei, per quam Christus possidet gentes, ad legis opera eos, qui crediderant Christum, revocabant auferendo illi possessionem suam, id est, eos in quibus iure gratiae fideique inhabitabat' (CSEL 84: 75. 12-20). (This parallel is mentioned by Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, p. 193 n. 2). The interpretation of Gal. 3,1 given by Victorinus and Augustine is unparalleled by any other Latin author in the early Church.

Anxious for Worldly Things: The Critique of Marriage in the Anonymous Pelagian Treatise *De Castitate*

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I would like to begin by juxtaposing two passages, the first from Book VIII of Augustine's *Confessions* and the second from the anonymous *Epistula de castitate*, one of six Pelagian texts first published in a critical edition by C.P. Caspari in 1890. Describing the struggle within him in the garden at Milan Augustine writes:

> The trifles of trifles and vanities of vanities, my former mistresses, were restraining me. They were pulling at the garment of my flesh and murmuring: 'Are you dismissing us?' and: 'From this moment we shall not be with you forever', and 'From this moment 'this and that' will not be permitted to you forever'. And what were they suggesting in saying, 'this and that', my God, what were they suggesting? May your mercy turn away from the soul of your servant! What sordid and shameful things were they suggesting! … Again, she (Chastity) responded, as if saying: 'Become deaf toward your unclean members on the earth, so that they may be mortified'[1].

The author of *De castitate* invokes a similar rhetorical scenario:

> Behold two lovers, chastity and wantonness, are both striving for your form and appearance … chastity promises to you the glory of the heavenly kingdom, the friendship of God and the fellowship of the angels, so that you will consent; wantoness seems to offer you fleeting worldly wealth and human riches. Be a just judge: choose certainly the one to which you belong by nature, whose gifts are known to be better. Indeed, we are not ignorant of the stratagems with which the jealous enemy of chastity and perfection always attacks you, sometimes by means of the suggestions of others, at other times through your own thoughts … For wantonness suggests often to you: 'Are you not going to marry? Are you going to remain childless? And to whom are you going to

[1] *Confessionum libri XIII* (CCL 27: 129-30): Retinebant nugae nugarum et uanitates uanitatium, antiquae amicae meae, et succutiebant uestem meam carneam et submurmurabant: 'Dimittisne nos?' et 'A momento isto non erimus tecum ultra in aeternum' et 'A momento isto non tibi licebit hoc et illud ultra in aeternum'. Et quae suggerebant in eo, quod dixi 'hoc et illud', quae suggerebant, deus meus? Auertat ab anima serui tui misericordia tua! Quas sordes suggerebant, quae dedecora! … Et rursus illa, quasi dicerit: 'Obsurdesce aduersus immunda illa membra tua super terram, ut mortificentur'. As Pierre Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de Saint Augustin* (Paris, 1968), pp. 190-92, observes, Augustine borrows this literary *topos* from the sage Prodicus' scene of Heracles at the crossroads, recounted for example in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* II, 1, 21.

bequeath such wealth, such a patrimony? Does it not suffice that your sisters have wanted to embrace this lifestyle? If you also follow their examples, through whom will your family be renewed? Does it seem to be a good thing to you that the source of your whole lineage may die out?' ... (But Chastity argues), Let God be your posterity, consign your riches and your patrimony to him, so that in the future you may own him[2].

Both of these texts portray men who stand on the brink of a conversion, challenged to turn from the prospect of an impending marriage to a life of perpetual chastity. Despite apparent similarities, however, the two scenes exhibit striking differences. In the passage from *Confessions* the seductive enemies of chastity caress Augustine's fleshly garment and allude to the sexual acts which his unclean members must henceforth abandon. The dominant ethos in *De castitate*, on the other hand, is not erotic but economic. What sets the critique of marriage in this passage apart is that the attack does not come where one would expect it: the debate between chastity and wantonness centers not on the realm of sexuality but on concerns about wealth and inheritance. The goal of this paper is to locate *De castitate* in a social and theological context in which the appeal to riches by the enemy of chastity no longer appears out of place.

Although sexual concerns also prompt his writing, the author of *De castitate* goes beyond merely extolling the virtues of chastity and mounts a sustained attack on the dangers of marriage, including its involvement with riches. Indeed, themes of wealth and inheritance are not limited to the text which I read a moment ago but rather are woven throughout the work. For example, chastity's reference to owning God mirrors an earlier passage in which the author characterizes wives as property, observing that a man can test the quality of a merchant's wares before purchasing them but cannot discern the nature of a

[2] *De castitate* XVII. Latin text in C.P. Caspari, *Briefe, Abhandlungen, und Predigten aus den zwei letzen Jahrhunderten des kirchlichen Altertums und dem Anfang des Mittelalters* (Christiana, 1890; reprinted Bruxelles, 1964), pp. 159-60: Ecce speciem formamque tuam duae conpetunt amatrices, pudicitia scilicet atque luxuria ... Illa tibi, ut ei magis consentias, caelestis regni gloriam, familiaritatem Dei, angelorum consortium pollicetur; haec saeculares et caducas opes humanasque uidetur offerre diuitias. Iustus iudex esto; illam profecto elige, cui et natura deberis, et cuius munera constat esse meliora. Non ignoramus enim, quibus artibus modo per aliorum suggestiones, modo per cogitationes proprias te in hoc tempore pudicitiae semper et perfectioni inuidus inimicus infestet ... Nam suggerit haec saepius tibi: Tu ergo non nubes? Tu sine liberis permanebis? Et cui tantas opes, cui tantum patrimonium derelinques? Non sufficit, quod sorores tuae hoc adprehendere propositum uoluerunt? quarum si et tu exempla secteris, per quem uestrum reparabitur genus? Bonum ergo tibi uidetur, ut omnis uestrae stirpis origo deficiat? ... Deus sit posteritas tua, illi censum tuum trade, patrimonium tuum commenda, ut eum in futuro possideas. English translations of the Caspari texts appear in R.S.T. Haslehurst, *The Works of Fastidius* (London, 1927) and B.R. Rees, *The Letters of Pelagius and His Followers* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1991).

woman's character before he marries her[3]. Just as chastity encourages the young man to make God his possession, wantonness reminds him of his obligation to protect his family's patrimony by producing heirs. Indeed, one marries for procreation[4], but inheritance is neither as simple nor as innocent a process as merely acquiring a wife who will bear legitimate children. Suppose, the author conjectures, one's spouse is unfaithful. Then a man may be forced 'to make an adulterer's children co-heirs with his own children, like one who is unknowingly a favorer of his household servant'[5]. In an effort to avoid a diffusion of the family fortune, one may embrace an even worse fate. 'Some men', he writes, 'are not ashamed to enter marital relationships with their mothers and even their sisters, inflamed not so much by sexual desire as by avarice, lest their wealth be dispersed and their patrimony divided'[6]. Seeking heirs in Zion not the senate, one should spurn all earthly wealth[7].

Why such deprecation of wealth in a treatise on chastity? One could, hypothetically, answer by focusing exclusively on the anonymous person to whom *De castitate* is addressed. Much of the brunt of the attack on riches comes in the concluding section of the letter, the same section where we find some scant biographical information about its recipient. Here we learn, for example, that the addressee is a young, unmarried man whose character and virtue are widely praised and who is classed 'among the rich'[8]. One could conjecture, therefore, that the author pragmatically attacks the most formidable enemy. As a rich young virgin the man knows the luxuries of wealth but has not yet tasted the pleasures of sex; overcome the obstacle of his attachment to worldly goods and he will capitulate to a life of chastity. If this is the case, then the danger is

[3] *De castitate* IV.5 (Caspari: 128). The author of *De castitate* probably borrowed the enumeration of the woes of marriage from Jerome's *Adversus Iovinianum* I.47 (PL 23: 288-91). Harald Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics: A Study on the Apologists, Jerome and Other Christian Writers* (Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia VI; Göteborg, 1958), pp. 142-61, notes that Jerome is quoting here from a lost work of Theophrastus possibly transmitted to him by Seneca. I am indebted to Elizabeth A. Clark for bringing these similarities to my attention.

[4] *De castitate* IV.6 (Caspari: 129).

[5] *De castitate* IV.5 (Caspari: 128): et adulteram prolem cohaeredem suorum instituat filiorum, eritque sui uernaculae uelut ignarus fautor.

[6] *De castitate* IV.12 (Caspari: 130): Quosdam non pudet cum parentibus suis et paene sororibus cupiditatis non minus quam uoluptatis ardore matrimonii inire consortia, et hoc, ne dispergantur opes, ne patrimonium diuidatur. Whether incestuous marriages among the aristocracy actually occurred in late antiquity and if so among what degrees of kinship remain open questions. For those who argue that such marriages did happen for economic reasons, see Keith Hopkins, 'Brother-Sister Marriage in Roman Egypt', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22 (1980), pp. 303-54 and Yan Thomas, 'Mariages endogamiques à Rome. Patrimoine, pouvoir et parenté depuis l'époque archaïque', *Revue historique de droit français et étranger* 58 (1980), pp. 345-82. The occurrence of close kin marriages is challenged by Brent Shaw and Richard Saller, 'Close Kin Marriages in Roman Society?', *Man* (n.s.) 19 (1984), pp. 432-44.

[7] *De castitate* XVII (Caspari: 161, 163-4).

[8] *De castitate* XVII (Caspari: 166): inter diuites.

not wealth per se but some other aspect of marriage, and riches are criticized only because they are motivating this particular man to marry. Such might be one reconstruction of the circumstances which motivated the attack on riches in *De castitate*.

I believe, however, that the author has a wider audience and a broader purpose in mind, for *De castitate* is not only a personal letter but also a well developed treatise, more closely resembling Jerome's *Epistle* 22 to Eustochium, for example, than a piece of everyday correspondence. Contempt of wealth and love of virginity are frequently associated[9]. Moreover, the intrinsic connection between riches and marriage in *De castitate* is strengthened further if the person who wrote this treatise is also the author of another Pelagian text in the Caspari corpus, *De diuitiis*. The complex debate over the authorship of the six Caspari texts far exceeds the bounds of this paper, but suffice it to say that, while disagreeing on the exact identity of the author, most scholars have attributed all six texts to a single individual[10].

Just as the treatise on chastity addresses issues of wealth, so too *De diuitiis* addresses issues of marriage and sexuality, arguing that gluttony, lust and avarice are interrelated but insisting that avarice is the worst of the three vices because it alone is insatiable[11]. Because of greed 'modesty is often assaulted, chastity vanquished, and shameless lust revels in its forbidden pleasures...'[12]. Moreover, the author of *De diuitiis* refuses to allow the wealthy to exonerate themselves by claiming a legitimately inherited patrimony and insists that they are tainted not only by the acquisition but also by the inheritance of riches, the possession of which testifies that someone either in the present generation or in a past one committed injustice. The only way to purify oneself is to give away all one's wealth, to become rich in good deeds not possessions, thereby transferring an earthly patrimony to heaven.

[9] See e.g., *De castitate* X.4, XVII (Caspari: 140, 160-61, 163-4).

[10] The Caspari corpus has been attributed to Agricola by Caspari himself, *Briefe, Abhandlungen, und Predigten aus den zwei letzen Jahrhunderten des kirchlichen Altertums und dem Anfang des Mittelalters* (Christiana, 1890; reprinted Bruxelles, 1964), 278-389; to Pelagius by Georges de Plinval, 'Recherches sur l'œuvre litteraire de Pélage', *Revue de philologie* 60, series 3, no. 8 (1934), pp. 9-42; to Fastidius by Morin, 'Pélage ou Fastidius?', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 5 (1904), pp. 258-64, and I. Kirmer, *Das Eigentum des Fastidius im pelagianischen Schriftum* (St. Ottilien Oberbayem, 1937), and R.S.T. Haslehurst, *The Works of Fastidius* (London, 1927); to Sixtus III (with some reservation) by F.G. Nuvolone and A. Solignac, 'Pélage et pélagianisme', in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité, ascétique et mystique, doctrine et histoire* 12B (Paris, 1986), cols. 2889-2942 (2915-2918); to 'the Sicilian Briton' by John Morris, 'Pelagian Literature', *Journal of Theological Studies* 16 (1965), pp. 26-60; and simply to an anonymous Pelagian by Rees, *The Letters of Pelagius and His Followers* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1991), p. 16.

[11] *De diuitiis* I.1-4 (Caspari: 25-6).

[12] *De diuitiis* XVII.3 (Caspari: 54): Huius causa nonnunquam expugnatur pudor, castitas uincitur et per inlicitas uoluptates inpudens libido bacchatur.

The author of *De castitate* and *De diuitiis* refuses to declare marriage and riches inherently evil, for such a claim would be blatantly heretical, yet he implies as much by contending that chastity is the foundation of holiness and riches are the cause of all faults[13]. This ambiguity about the moral character of marriage and wealth masks a subtle distinction between that which is ontologically evil and that which is teleologically evil. Marriage and riches are good in themselves and have at times been used by God, who formerly bestowed riches upon Abraham and commanded him to marry. But both marriage and the possession of wealth are Old Testament practices which, like circumcision, Sabbath, and sacrifices, ought now to be rejected by New Testament Christians for whom they are a hindrance to keeping God's commandments[14].

In this respect the two treatises present two sides of the same coin of perfection. The vocabulary and logic on the obverse and the reverse are almost identical. After listing some examples of the commandments which everyone must keep, both treatises offer the same challenge. From *De castitate*:

> I beg you to answer me according to the witness of your conscience and tell me if you will be able to keep all these commandments if you are bound by the obligations of marriage. I am unmarried and live free and unbound by the bonds of such a troublesome burden, and yet I am scarcely able to keep these commandments in their entirety. What are we to do, if we are bound by the chains of such anxiety?[15]

and from *De diuitiis*:

> I beg you to answer me according to the witness of your conscience and tell me whether it is possible for one who is entangled in the bonds of riches to fulfill all these commandments. For the more worldly wealth one possesses, the more cares and anxiety one has as well. We know many people who have become poor for God's sake, freeing themselves from all earthly riches and the cares which they bring, and are bound by none of the obligations of worldly possession and are as free of land as exiles, and yet they can scarcely keep the commandments in their entirety. If they can scarcely fulfill these commands, how can those who are preoccupied with the care of enormous wealth and anxiety for many worldly possessions?[16]

[13] *De castitate* II (Caspari: 123) and *De diuitiis* XVI.1-4 (Caspari: 52-3).

[14] *De diuitiis* IX.1-3 (Caspari: 36-8) and *De castitate* XV.1-4 (Caspari: 156-9).

[15] *De castitate* X.8 (Caspari: 144): Obsecro te, ut secundum tuae testimonium conscientiae respondeas mihi, si poteris omnia ista seruare, quisque matrimonii fueris necessitatibus praepeditus. Sine matrimonio sumus et a tam molesti oneris nexibus liberi degimus ac securi et uix nihilominus plenitudinem possumus seruare mandati. Quid nobis agendum est, si tantae sollicitudinis uinculo implicemur?

[16] *De diuitiis* XIX.2 (Caspari: 61): Obsecro te, ut mihi secundum conscientiae tuae testimonium respondeas, an haec omnia inplere possibile sit ei, qui diuitiarum nexibus fuerit inplicatus. Tanto enim unicuique amplioris cura sollicitudinis nascitur, quanto maior rerum substantia possidetur. Multos propter Deum pauperes scimus ab omni terrena facultate, proprietate, cura (alienos) nullisque mundanae possessionis necessitatibus praepeditos et tantum terrae liberos, quantum extraneos, et uix nihilominus mandatorum perficere plenitudinem possunt. Si illi uix possunt, quid facient, qui ingentibus diuitiarum curis et inmensis mundanarum rerum sollicitudinibus occupantur?

Anxiety for worldly things lies at the heart of the critique in both treatises. In an extended exposition of the seventh chapter of I Corinthians, *De castitate* examines Paul's teaching about being free from the anxiety of pleasing a spouse[17]. Commenting on the same verses in *De diuitiis*, the author equates freedom from anxiety with freedom from riches and asserts that Paul 'was preaching contempt for riches, the owner of which cannot be without great "anxieties"'[18]. Indeed, the author of *De castitate* and *De diuitiis* uses the word *sollicitudine* and related terms more than 30 times[19]. In negative contexts these terms refer to a misplaced concern for things associated with his *saeculum*, things such as spouses and children and riches, while in a positive sense they connote an anxiety for the affairs of the Lord, that is for keeping all of his commandments. Futile worry for the preservation of this fleeting world will leave one bankrupt, for not only the rich themselves but also their estates and all their money will ultimately be destroyed. But earnest anxiety for the acquisition of the eternal kingdom will pay a reward far greater than any earthly fortune. Given the choice, no prudent entrepreneur would trade invaluable Heavenly riches for tawdry earthly wealth[20].

The problematization of earthly wealth in both *De diuitiis* and *De castitate* reflects the social milieu in which the two texts were written. Pelagianism first blossomed in the fertile soil of the aristocracy in Rome[21], but the winds of change which swept through the empire quickly scattered the seeds throughout Italy, Sicily, North Africa, and the East carrying them to equally rich ground where they took root among wealthy Christians. Unlike other Christian movements, however, Pelagianism — or at least one strain of it — did not attempt to persuade the rich to use their wealth for benevolent ends but taught instead, as the Sicilian layman Hilarius reported to Augustine, 'that a rich person who keeps his riches is not able to enter the kingdom of God unless he sells all that he has, and that he cannot benefit from keeping the commandments while retaining his riches'[22].

Peter Brown has observed that Augustine was unusual in locating sexuality at the center of the human person. Many rich Christians were held not by

[17] I Cor. 7:32-34.

[18] *De diuitiis* X.7 (Caspari: 43): Et cum dicit: Uolo, uos sine sollicitudine esse, puto illum diuitiarum adnuntiasse contemptum, quas quisque habuerit, absque ingenti sollicitudine esse non poterit.

[19] In *De castitate* '*sollicitudine*' and other forms are used 18 times, '*cura*' 3 times and '*anxia*' twice. In *De diuitiis* '*sollicitudine*' appears 11 times, '*cura*' 5 times and '*inquietudine*' once.

[20] Cf. *De castitate* XVII (Caspari: 163-4).

[21] See Peter Brown, 'Pelagius and his Supporters: Aims and Environment' and 'The Patrons of Pelagius: The Roman Aristocracy between East and West', both in *Religion and Society in the Age of St. Augustine* (London, 1972), pp. 183-226.

[22] Augustine, *Ep.* 156 (CSEL 44: 448): diuitem manentem in diuitiis suis regnum dei non posse ingredi, nisi omnia sua uendiderit, nec prodesse eidem posse, si forte ex ipsis diuitiis fecerit mandata.

memories of sex but by the burden of wealth[23]. At the end of the chains of marriage hung the weight of riches. To these persons sexual intercourse represented not only an occasion for indulging concupiscence but also the means to secure the transmission of their wealth to future generations. That the embodiment of wantonness in *De castitate* should tempt rich unmarried Christians with money and not sex, then, should come as no surprise. Arguing before this jury, the enemy of chastity has a strong case: no marriage, no children, no heirs, no family dynasty. Chastity, on the other hand, must advocate not only the renunciation of sex but also the abandonment of wealth, for although marriage entailed sexual intercourse, it also involved gorging oneself at sumptuous banquets, sleeping in soft beds, wearing the finest in clothing and jewels, and enjoying the pleasures of the flesh while the poor suffered[24]. More importantly, to marry was to accept a patrimony from one's parents and to transfer it to one's children, thereby perpetuating an unjust economic system. But most important of all, the rich married Christian who was anxious for worldly things such as spouses and wealth could not be anxious for keeping God's commandments, living a life of perfection, and earning the reward of the heavenly kingdom.

[23] See Peter Brown, *The Body and Society* (New York, 1988), p. 422 and 410: 'Sexual experiences were not what young persons, bruised by the tyranny of the marriage bed, wished to linger on. What weighed most terribly on Melania was the huge wealth that had made her body the joining point of two relentless families'.

[24] *De castitate* XVII (Caspari: 164-5).

Augustine's Theological Criticism of Politics[1]

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On the basis of his magnum opus, *De civitate Dei*, Augustine could be characterized as an ontological optimist: he believes in the intrinsic goodness of created nature. Originally, harmony and beauty prevailed in all nature, and human life was organized in an orderly way by rational virtue.

On the one hand, Augustine's theological thinking can be characterized by the concept of social life: by definition, life of all rational beings (angels and human beings) is *vita communis*. The supreme meaning and goal of all creative and saving activity of the Triune God is to create a society of human beings who humbly love and praise their Creator. This is the *civitas Dei peregrina* on earth, the universal society of believers, the boundaries of which are visible only to God.

The eschatological consummation of the *summum bonum* of all rational beings becomes real in the never-ending adoration God's beatitude in the heavenly *civitas Dei*. This is the proper *ordo* of creation in which rational beings are all equally — angels in their class and human beings in theirs — subordinated under the same Creator, praising him for his goodness. God did not mean that any human being should rule over anyone else — no one must interfere between God and the rational being humbly adoring him.

On the other hand, Augustine can be seen as a moral pessimist: sin and its permanent effects on God's creation have destroyed the harmonious *ordo* of nature and have brought about disorganization in all spheres of human life. According to Augustine, social relations based on affection and love, like kinship and family, are part of God's intrinsically good creation — although these, too, like everything else in human life, have been affected by sin, i.e., self-love.

But no relations or structures of social power or coercion are part of the originally good *ordo* of human life. On the basis of natural moral law, God did not give any human being the right to rule over any other human being. Political reality of social power is caused by sin, by *perversio amoris* from *humilitas* to *superbia*. It is based on the demonic lust for power, *libido dominandi* (Augustine

[1] The following presentation is based on the main results of the monographic study: M. Ruokanen, *Theology of Social Life in Augustine's De civitate Dei* (Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte, Bd. 53; Göttingen, 1993. Pp. 179). See also: M. Ruokanen, 'Augustin und Luther über die Theologie der Politik', *Kerygma und Dogma* (1988/1), pp. 22-41.

borrowed this concept from the Roman historian Sallust, Gaius Sallustius Crispus, 86-35 BC).

Satan seduced human beings to 'imitate God', to play god to one's fellow man — i.e., as a ruler over him[2]; this is the main characteristic of *civitas terrena*. The history of humankind is dominated by the reality of the terrestrial city: it is the history of fighting, war, and violence, because it is the history of the struggle for power. Lust for dominion is the most important single factor causing the rise and the fall of empires throughout the world. According to Augustine's magnum opus, *civitas terrena* signifies the eschatological-transcendental realm of evil; it is not a concept meaning state or society. Some social relations like family ties are good, because they are based on love and good-will seeking the good of the neighbour. Coercive social power, on the contrary, is based on the lust for power aiming at the subjugation of the neighbour under one's own rule.

Because of the fall into sin, social life cannot be organized by the ideal of *iustitia*, reflecting the intrinsically good *ordo* of creation. In Augustine's magnum opus, justice is a transcendental-eschatological concept — *vera iustitia* cannot be accomplished except in the eschatological *civitas Dei*. Until the end of history, human society is doomed to suffer from *libido dominandi* and all of the evils caused by it. In order to minimize the social evils, political life or public life should, according to Augustine, be based on the social contract concerning the aims and targets of collective selfish love, *amor sui* of the social group in question. 'A people is the association of a multitude of rational beings united by a common agreement on the objects of their love', Augustine defines[3].

In the thought of Augustine, the social contract is relative and changeable because it is historically and culturally conditioned and political realities are ever-changing and in movement; there is no abstract, timeless ideal of such a contract. There is no ideal society — not to even speak about a Christian society, although a society led by a good Christian emperor could be relatively slightly better than some other society. The premises of social life are the same for all people, Christian or non-Christian. Augustine demythologizes the triumphal and sacral illusions of Roman politics. His concept, on the contrary, can be seen as realistic-pessimistic and dynamic, and it contains a seed of democratic thinking.

In *De civitate Dei*, Augustine is critical of the idealistic social thought of Cicero, who believes in the organization of political life on the principle of absolute justice — or, at least, Augustine — doing justice or not — interprets Cicero this way. Here Augustine employs the concept of *iustitia* meaning perfect

[2] 'Sic enim superbia perverse imitatur Deum. Odit namque cum sociis aequalitem sub illo, sed inponere vult sociis dominationem suam pro illo'. *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 12.

[3] *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 24. Translation by Henry Bettenson.

transcendental justice, not a part of natural moral law. Following the Platonic tradition, Cicero, according to Augustine, believes in the power of human virtue, and promotes the idea of virtuous men ruling over those less developed in virtue. A good society is, by definition, a hierarchic — not a democratic — society. Cicero would not accept any idea of the social contract. Augustine's theological criticism of political power, on the contrary, is overwhelmed by the idea of sin permeating and spoiling all areas of human life, lust for social power and domination over one's fellow men being the worst of all evils.

Throughout centuries, the Christian rulers of Europe have, through the promotion of the church and with divine rights, demanded that citizens subjugate themselves humbly, without questioning, to all kind of political rulers. The church has supported the Platonic ideas of the hierarchic, rigid, and immovable structure of society and of the natural inequality of human beings. Augustine's *De civitate Dei* does not, however, provide any support to these allusions very often regarded as 'Augustinian'.

Modern critical analysis of Augustine's magnum opus does not offer support to the traditional interpretation of seeing him as an ideological father of the static concept of human society or state. Reference to Augustine does not justify the undemocratic use of political coercion; on the contrary, it leads to a permanently critical attitude towards the whole phenomenon of any social or political power and to the necessity of trying to find democratic means to organize social life. Following Augustine, we could say: it is the high calling of every Christian to be constantly critical about his or her superiors in society.

Verifying or Falsifying Psychohistorical Observations: The Case of Dido's Suicide in Augustine's *Confessions*

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It is impossible to say here anything about Psychohistory in general or of its use for Church history[1]. However, in relation to Augustine, one can state two almost obvious things: on the one hand — especially in the *Confessions* — he provokes a psychohistorical approach[2]. This may at first consist merely in reconstructing his self-portrait. On the other hand, through his self-portrait itself, he also attracts the attention of those who think a psychohistorical interpretation is absolutely necessary, even without any basis in the sources. Both of these lines of approach in interpretations of Augustine I will put on one side and will concentrate my efforts instead on the question as to whether there is a certain path between these two approaches. Are there texts of Augustine, which directly demand a psychohistorical interpretation due to *hidden allusions* in the texts themselves?

The classic text for this line of questioning is *Confessions* I, Chapter 13, paragraphs 20 to 22, where Augustine speaks of his time at school and how he wept over Dido's suicide, after she was abandoned by Aeneas, as it is related in the fourth book of the *Aeneid*. The first to stress the importance of this scene was Charles Kligerman. In an essay of 1957 he wrote: 'It is my thesis that this story contains the nuclear conflict of Augustine's infantile neurosis and played a most decisive role in his subsequent career'[3]. The crucial point is that the Dido-Aeneas configuration is a model or reproduction of Augustine's mother-relationship.

[1] For a general discussion see *The Psychohistory Review: Studies of Motivation in History and Culture* (Springfield, Il., 1975 ff.), and *The Journal of Psychohistory: A quarterly Journal of Childhood and Psychohistory* (New York, 1973 ff.). A useful summary of the field is given in Hedwig Röckelein, 'Psychohistorie(n) zur Religions- und Kirchengeschichte, in *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* 7 (1994), pp. 11-25.

[2] A predominantly Anglo-Saxon essay collection is found in Donald Capps and James E. Dittes, *The Hunger of the Heart: Reflections on the* Confessions *of Augustine* (Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Monograph Series, Number 8; West Lafayette, 1990).

[3] Charles Kligerman, 'A Psychoanalytic Study of the *Confessions* of St. Augustine', in *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 5 (1957), pp. 469-484, p. 472. E.R. Dodds had already pointed to the Dido/Aeneas parallels in his essay (reprint in Capps and Dittes, see note 2 above): 'Augustine's *Confessions*: A Study of Spiritual Maladjustment', in *The Hibbert Journal* 26 (1927/8), pp. 459-473. However, unlike Kligerman, Dodds does not link the mother relationship with the farewell scene.

Kligerman's thesis has undergone many modifications at the hands of others and has found powerful resonance. Ever since it has been taken up in the most diverse forms of Augustine scholarship. In Anglo-Saxon literature there is John J. O'Meara, in French Chomarat, in Italian Troncarelli, in German Flasch and Brändle/Neidhart, only to mention but a few well-known names[4].

This interpretation of the Dido episode retains its argumentative force through the parallels to Augustine's departure from Carthage to Rome, which only took place many years later (according to *Confessions* V, 8, 15), when he deceived his mother by sailing away at night. This incident bears parallels to the way Aeneas left Dido during the night, leaving her in helpless despair as she woke up the next morning to find that the man who did wish to go, but, of course, not callously, had now indeed disappeared without saying farewell.

One must judge these quite illuminating parallels according to various criteria in order to ascertain whether a psychohistorically significant observation can be made between the lines here.

1. Does Augustine make it known that he sensed the parallels between the incident with Aeneas and Dido's suicide and his own secret departure from Carthage?

2. If that is not the case — or not sufficiently so — is there enough evidence for Augustine's bond to his mother, which could then be found to have parallels to Aeneas' bond to Dido?

3. If that is also not the case, can other references to Vergil, such as literary or biographical ones, explain the texts better as psychohistorical hypotheses?

To the first question: Just as the Dido episode in Book I has nothing explicitly to do with his mother, so the episode in Book V where Augustine sails to Rome has nothing explicitly to do with the Aeneas story. Neither can allusions, that is implicit cross-references, be ascertained. The nearest allusion from *Confessions* V to the Aeneas episode in *Confessions* I would be the following sentence: Flavit ventus et implevit vela nostra et litus subtraxit aspectibus nostris[5]. This is no quotation; however much Vergil speaks of Aeneas' sailing away in Books IV and V, there are no linguistic or factual parallels. I give only two examples: In contrast to Monica, Dido really does see the Trojan fleet. And Aeneas follows

[4] John J. O'Meara, 'Augustine the Artist and the *Aeneid*', in *Mélanges offerts à Mlle Christine Mohrmann* (Utrecht/Anvers, 1963), pp. 252-261, and the same, 'Virgil and saint Augustine. The Roman Background to Christian Sexuality', in *Augustinus* 13 (1968), pp. 307-326 (neither of the essays make any specific reference to Kligerman); Jacques Chomarat, 'Les "confessions" de saint Augustin', in *Revue française de psychanalyse* 52 (1988), pp. 153-174; Fabio Troncarelli, *Il ricordo della sofferenza. Le Confessioni di Sant'Agostino e la psicoanalisi* (Napoli, 1993), p. 145 and 166sq.; Kurt Flasch, *Augustin. Einführung in sein Denken* (Stuttgart, 1980), p. 237 and 245sq.; Rudolf Brändle/Walter Neidhart, 'Lebensgeschichte und Theologie. Ein Beitrag zur psychohistorischen Interpretation Augustins', in *Theologische Zeitschrift* (Basel) 39 (1983), pp. 157-180. This is, of course, by no means a comprehensive list of articles on the subject.

[5] *Conf.* V, 8, 15 (CCSL vol. 27, p. 65, 47sq.).

a divine call, whereas Augustine is merely drawn by his ambition, as he says himself[6].

The recognizable motives in both of Augustine's texts fully explain their structure. In Book I it is the false tears which the schoolboy Augustine weeps for Dido instead of for his own ungodly life. The description slides away from Dido's erotic relationship to Aeneas to the so-called 'fornicatio' against God, of which Augustine accuses himself[7]. And the fifth book is concerned with the decidedly earthly striving of Augustine's move to Rome as well as that of his mother, who does not want him to leave. Both act egocentrically and cannot perceive God's hidden decree behind their ostensible motives[8]. Only somewhat later, when Augustine speaks of his serious illness in Rome, does he consider that his mother would never have been happy again if he had in fact died from that disease in Rome[9]. But did he suffer from such tortuous anxieties at the time of his illness? He doesn't say a single word about it.

Thus I come *to the second question*: Can Augustine's mother-tie, which is assumed so naturally by most authors, be recognized anywhere in the texts? Of course, there is no question that a child has a strong emotional bond to his parents and that without it no normal development can take place. However, less equivocal references are needed for a hypothesis that goes beyond such a child relationship to its mother, as for example references to suffering due to the mother relationship, or the ambivalence of the relationship or something similar. This, however, is not the case in the *Confessions*. There is much lamenting and weeping in this work. Augustine also cries himself, e.g. over the death of a friend, as he relates in Book IV, or over a poetic tragedy such as Dido's suicide, as well as when he hears the hymns during Ambrose's services in Milan[10]. But in the mother relationship it is repeatedly herself, above all as the mother praying for Augustine, who cries. A climax, as is well known, is the tale of the bishop who says to her that the son 'istarum lacrimarum' will not perish[11]. Augustine himself never cries for or over his mother. Only after her death, according to Book IX, is he overtaken, and he suppresses his need to cry[12]. None the less, in comparison with the death of his friend in Book IV, he describes markedly less extreme emotions.

[6] *Aen.* IV, 586 sq.: Regina e speculis ut primam albescere lucem
Vidit et aequatis classem procedere velis …
Conf. V, 8, 14: egisti mecum ergo, ut mihi persuaderetur Romam pergere …

[7] *Conf.* I, 13, 21: 'fornicabar abs te' is a reference to Psalm 72 (73), 27.

[8] *Conf.* V, 8, 15: Sed quare hinc abirem et illuc irem, tu sciebas, deus, nec indicabas mihi nec matri …

[9] *Conf.* V, 9, 16f.

[10] *Conf.* IV, 4, 7-7, 12; IX, 6, 14.

[11] *Conf.* III, 12, 21.

[12] *Conf.* IX, 12, 29, as also in the following sections up to 12, 33, where it is then actually stated: Et dimisi lacrimas, quas continebam, ut effluerent quantum vellent … and the following passages where, almost as an act of excusing of his own tears, he mentions the tears of his mother.

The ambivalence of the description in the *Confessions* regularly comes about through the introduction of Augustine's *later* catholic-cum-ecclesiastical viewpoint. This is particularly clear in Book V, where in immediate succession to the threat of illness in Rome comes the description of his mother as a pious widow whose prayers God cannot let go unheard (V, 9, 17). Augustine never lets any ambivalence between attraction and repulsion come into play in his own *previous* feelings.

As long as one does not read a particular type of mother-tie into the texts in the *Confessions*, it seems quite clear to me that Augustine went his own way — at the latest from the time of his concubinage and his turn to Manicheism — and kept his mother firmly but politely out of his affairs, i.e. out of his own activities up until his conversion. From then on his relationship normalizes for the reason that he could only now positively bring his mother's incessant urging and pleading into his own scheme of life. Beforehand — including her marriage plans for him in Milan — she was a constant irritation to him, but in such a way that he was always aware as to how he could retain his independence and obviously was, for the most part, able to avoid serious conflicts. The bother or irritation caused by his mother's tears is what we can historically be most sure of and comprehend. However, for us their effect on him remains almost inconceivable.

To point three: Even if, on the one hand, the extreme tension of the mother relationship, as when it is linked to the Dido episode, is not verifiable in the texts, many authors have, on the other hand, spurred on by Kligerman's suggestions, rightly pointed to the influence of Vergil in Augustine's descriptions. I am of the opinion, however, that O'Donnell was the first to find the correct lead. In volume II of his large commentary he writes about the secret departure from Carthage[13]. There O'Donnell points out the similarities between Monica and the Vergilian mother of Euryalus. And there really is a verifiable quotation in *Confessions* VI, 1, 1, which, once again in relation to his mother, reappears very much later (in *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*, circa 422). What the mother of Euryalus expresses in her despair Augustine's mother had done: quae terra marique secuta est, ut mecum viveret[14]. There, too, in Vergil, in the ninth book, we find a statement of what hindered Augustine from openly leaving his mother behind in Carthage instead of sailing away secretly: ... quod nequeam lacrimas perferre parentis (so spoke Euryalus before his deadly adventure)[15].

[13] James J. O'Donnell, *Augustine. Confessions*, vol. 2: Commentary on Books 1-7 (Oxford, 1992), p. 307sq., 331. The author rightly refers to the interesting article by Camille Bennett, 'The Conversion of Vergil: The Aeneid in Augustine's Confessions', in *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 34 (1988), pp. 47-69. However, O'Donnell illustrates the parallels more clearly.

[14] *Aen.* IX, 492: ... hoc sum terraque marique secuta? *Conf.* VI, 1, 1: Iam venerat ad me mater pietate fortis, terra marique me sequens ... De cura pro mortuis gerenda 13, 16: ... me ipsum pia mater nulla nocte desereret, quae terra marique secuta est, ut mecum viveret.

[15] *Aen.* IX, 289.

Finally, I pose the question: who was Monica? The answer is: we do not know who she was. We only know the two typologies of Augustine which are left to us: the one is the pleading mother who weeps for him and despite this can effect nothing, except what God executes himself, which often runs against her intentions. That is the Monica of the *Confessions*. The other is the philosopher of the Cassiciacum dialogues, i.e. the Monica dramatized by Augustine himself, whom he allows to express significant opinions, at crucial turning points in the dialogues[16]. Augustine did, however, not dramatize his mother only in the dialogues, for the *Confessions* also show us a construction of his mother. According to this portrayal she had a downrightly excessive bond to him. He, however, had a more distanced relationship to her. I fear that, for the most part, psychohistorical literature projects an excess of knowledge into the texts, which certainly corresponds to modern depth psychology, but which cannot be authenticated.

[16] Ragnar Holte, 'Monica, "the Philosopher"', in: *Charisteria Augustiniana*, Iosepho Oroz Reta dicata, edd. P. Merino et J.M. Torrecilla II (Augustinus 39; Madrid, 1994), pp. 293-316; Emilien Lamirande, 'Quand Monique, la mère d'Augustin prend la parole', in *Signum Pietatis, Festgabe für Cornelius Petrus Mayer OSA zum 60. Geburtstag* (Würzburg, 1989), pp. 3-19.

Augustine's Reading of the *Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*

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The *Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis* is clearly a Montanist document[1]. In fact, it may rightfully be considered a major source of Montanist teaching and piety[2]. Its introduction and conclusion, written by a later editor, possibly Tertullian, tell the reader of new prophecies under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who still operates in the present age. Visions, exhibiting Montanist images, abound. In her first vision Perpetua participates in a heavenly liturgy. She eats cheese, which an elderly shepherd has offered her, and all present respond 'Amen!' Epiphanius identifies Montanists with Artotyrians, who 'set forth bread and cheese in their mysteries, and in this way they celebrate their mysteries'[3]. In her fourth vision Perpetua demonstrates the insignificance of personal gender identity by becoming male. Female authority on a par with male authority is a characteristic of Montanism: 'And women are bishops among them, and presbyters, and the other offices, as there is no difference, they say, for "in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female" (cf. 3:28)'[4].

[1] Ed. and trans. Herbert Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford, 1972) (= ed. C.J.M.J. van Beek (Nijmegen, 1936)), pp. 106-31. I call the reader's attention to three recent studies of the *Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*, each of which is fascinating because of their varying methodologies. Cecil M. Robeck, *Prophecy in Carthage: Perpetua, Tertullian, and Cyprian* (Cleveland, 1992), pp. 9-94, carries out a thorough literary analysis seeking the theological function as determined by the redactor. Peter Habermehl, *Perpetua und der Ägypter oder Bilder des Bösen im frühen afrikanischen Christentum: Ein Versuch zur Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis* (TU 140; Berlin, 1992) is interested in historical questions, particularly the characteristics and authenticity of Perpetua's diary. Patricia Cox Miller, *Dreams in Late Antiquity: Studies in the Imagination of a Culture* (Princeton, 1994), pp. 148-83, takes a social approach within a sophisticated hermeneutic of dreams. For a discussion of the Monatist nature of the *Passio*, see Robeck, pp. 13-16, who is somewhat reticent in this regard. I follow the opinion of Timothy David Barnes, *Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study* (Oxford, 1971), p. 77: 'The theological character of the *Passion* is Montanist through and through'.

[2] Ronald E. Heine, *The Montanist Oracles and Testimonia* (Patristic Monograph Series 14; Macon, 1989) has produced a dossier of Montanist literature which is very useful; see my review in *The Catholic Historical Review* 78 (1992), p. 99.

[3] Epiphanius, *Panarion* 49.2 ((ed. and trans. Heine), PMS 14 (=ed. K. Holl, GCS 31)), pp. 134-35; see Paul Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne depuis les origines jusqu'à l'invasion arabe* (Paris, 1901), vol. 1, p. 85.

[4] Epiphanius, *Panarion* 49.2 ((ed. and trans. Heine), PMS 14 (=ed. K. Holl, GCS 31)), pp. 134-35.

Indeed, on two occasions Perpetua herself functions as the leader of her jailed Christian companions. Above all, the central message of the narrative is the glory of martyrdom, which together with ascetic piety was strongly encouraged by the movement.

The question has been raised whether or not Augustine was aware of the Montanist characteristics of the *Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*[5]. How is it possible that Augustine could have been unaware of such obvious traits? Or if he were indeed aware, how could he have passed over them in silence? There seems to be one of two alternatives possible — either the story's Montanist characteristics evaded Augustine's perception, or he was cognizant of its Montanist traits and ignored them. Actually a deliberate reading of the sources resolves the dilemma leaving instead a third alternative, which in my opinion is most probable. Augustine was both very much aware of the Montanist nature the *Passio* and in no way did he ignore what he perceived. Augustine treats the *Passio* in two diverse contexts, the one liturgical and the other polemical. In each case, he astutely applies his perception to his immediate goals.

The first context is liturgical. Augustine preached Sermons 280, 281, and 282 in his diocesan cathedral on March 7, the feast day commemorating the martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas, in three different years sometime between 400 and 420[6]. In two of the sermons Augustine explicitly refers to having just heard the marvelous deeds of these two women as their passion had been publicly read to the community. Certainly an heretical account would not have been read publicly to a Catholic congregation during a liturgical celebration. Clearly the African church had embraced the Montanist saints and their feast days and had made them its own. This is documented by Praedestinatus who writes in reference to the Tertullianists, as later Montanists[7] are sometimes called: 'God restored the religious services of their martyrs with catholic festivity'[8]. During the lifetime of Augustine, Perpetua and Felicitas were Catholic saints and their feast day was celebrated by the universal church.

The second context is polemical. In 419 Augustine wrote *De natura et origine animae* against the view of Vincentius Victor[9]. In his *Retractationes* Augustine

[5] See Musurillo, xxvi, and Miller, p. 174.

[6] PL 38, 1280-86; trans. Edmund Hill, *Sermons* (The Works of Saint Augustine III, 8; Hyde Park, 1994), pp. 72-82.

[7] Montanists are called by a variety of names: Artotyrians, Cataphrygians, Pepuzans, Phrygians, Priscillians, Quintillians, Tascodrougites, and Tertullianists; on the relationship of Montanists to Tertullianists, see P. Siniscalco, 'Tertullian', *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* (New York, 1992), 2: 819.

[8] Praedestinatus, *Praedestinatorum haeresis* 1.86 ((ed. and trans. Heine), PMS 14 (= PL 53)), pp. 172-73.

[9] *De nature et origine animae* ((ed. C.F. Urba and J. Zycha), CSEL 60, 301-420); trans. Peter Holmes and Robert Ernest Wallis, NPNF, first series, vol. 5, pp. 309-71.

explains the progression of his controversy with Victor[10]. Augustine had written Letter 190 to Optatus, where he explained that he could not fully grasp the problem of the origin of the soul. He left the problem unsolved and open. The presbyter Peter possessed his own copy of the letter which was subsequently read by Vincentius Victor, who was irked by Augustine's indecision and responded with two books addressed to Peter. The monk Renatus sent Victor's work to Augustine, which Augustine then refuted in *De natura et origine animae*, addressing book one to Renatus, book two to Peter, and books three and four to Victor himself. Vincentius Victor is an elusive figure. We known nothing of him save what Augustine recounts. He was a convert to the Catholic church from the Rogation faction, which in turn had split from the Donatist schismatics. Although Augustine's *De natura et origine animae* is customarily grouped among the Pelagian writings, the work is more anti-Montanist than anti-Pelagian simply because Victor is more a Montanist than a Pelagian. Victor was certainly no Pelagian[11]. Nowhere does Augustine acuse him of being a Pelagian. On the contrary, he writes:

> Once more, if you desire to be a catholic, do not believe, or say, or teach that 'some of those persons who have departed this life without Christ's baptism, do not in the meantime go into the kingdom of heaven, but into paradise; yet afterwards in the resurrection of the dead they attain also to the blessedness of the kingdom of heaven'. Even the Pelagian heresy was not daring enough to grant them this, although it holds that infants do not contract original sin. You, however, as a catholic, confess that they are born in sin; and yet by some unaccountable perverseness in the novel opinion you put forth, you assert that they are absolved from that sin with which they were born, and admitted into the kingdom of heaven without the baptism which saves[12].

Victor does not deny the existence of hereditary sin. If he is not Pelagian, is then his theological position totally idiosyncratic? I think not. Victor is a later Montanist or Tertullianist. Montanism seems to have reached its zenith in Africa during the lifetime of Tertullian, but Augustine still writes of Montanism in the present tense and considers it to be a contemporary threat:

> But those men (the Montanists) deceive those people who, being negligent of the Catholic faith, are not willing to learn about their own faith itself which is manifest in the Scriptures, and what is more serious and to be greatly deplored, while they remain heedlessly in the Catholic Church, they apply their ear diligently to the heretics[13].

[10] For a careful reconstruction of the chain of events, see Albert C. de Veer, 'Aux origines du *De natura et origine animae* de saint Augustin', *REAug* 19 (1973), pp. 121-57.

[11] Albert C. de Veer, BA 22 (Paris, 1975), p. 312, rightly rejects Victor's alleged Pelagianism: 'Nous croyons pouvoir affirmer cependent, contrairement à l'opinion assez généralement admise, qu'il ne représentait pas une forme dérivée de pélagianisme'.

[12] *De nature et origine animae* 3.13.19 ((ed. Urba and Zycha), CSEL 60), 374; trans. Holmes and Wallis, 350.

[13] *De agone christiano* 28.30 ((ed. and trans. Heine), PMS 14 (=ed. J. Zycha, CSEL 41)), pp. 160-61.

Historically Victor could be a disciple of Tertullian and he could accept and promote Montanist teaching without necessarily breaking with the church[14]. Thus, Augustine's *De natura et origine animae* is consciously an anti-Montanist tract. Three pieces of evidence may be advanced from the text of Augustine's work.

First, Vincentius Victor relies exclusively on Montanist sources, particularly Tertullian's *De anima* and the *Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*. This does not escape Augustine's notice. Victor cites the Montanist *Passio* as an authority on the same level as the Bible. His argument against the necessity of baptism is simple. There are unbaptized people in paradise. He cites two examples from *his* sacred scriptures — the good thief, crucified with Jesus, and Dinocrates, the brother of Perpetua. Augustine separates the examples and treats each individually. On one hand, the good thief was a martyr and Cyprian has assured us that martyrs need not be baptized because they are baptized by shedding their own blood. On the other hand, Dinocrates was baptized. Augustine finds no evidence that he was unbaptized. The baptized Dinocrates could have arrived in paradise through the prayerful intercession of his sister Perpetua. In the course of his explanation, Augustine advances a subtle secondary argument declaring that there is no mention of Dinocrates in the canonical scriptures, thus implying that the *Passio* is not canonical. Augustine would hardly insist on the fact that the *Passio* was not canonical unless someone in turn were asserting that it was, in this case his adversary Vincentius Victor. The Montanists held martyrdom in high esteem and had given the *Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis* canonical status. Victor shared this approach, which Augustine challenged.

Second, Victor's explanation of the origin of the individual soul through traducianism is essentially the same argument advanced by the Montanist Tertullian[15]. The soul is a corporeal substance and in procreation both the soul and the body are transmitted from parents to child. Traducianism may be used to explain the possibility of hereditary sin. Yet Augustine ironically congratulates Victor for avoiding the views of Tertullian:

> In that he (Victor) believes God to be truly incorporeal, I congratulate him in that herein, at all events, he has kept himself uninfluenced by the ravings of Tertullian. For *he* (Tertullian) insisted, that as the soul is corporeal, so likewise is God. It is therefore specially surprising that our author, who differs from Tertullian in this point, yet labours to persuade us that the incorporeal God does not make the soul out of nothing, but exhales it as a corporeal breath out of Himself[16].

[14] This peculiar characteristic of African Montanism is discussed by Robert D. Sider, 'Approaches to Tertullian: A Study of Recent Scholarship', *The Second Century* 2 (1982), p. 237.

[15] Tertullian, *De anima* (ed. J.H. Waszink); trans. Edwin A. Quain, FC 10, pp. 163-309. Waszink's edition contains an extensive commentary; see also Monceaux, vol. 1, pp. 337-63; Adhemar D'Alès, *La théologie de Tertullien* (Paris, 1905), pp. 134-41; and Barnes, pp. 206-10.

[16] *De natura et origine animae* 2.5.9 ((ed. Urba and Zycha), CSEL 60), p. 342; trans. Holmes and Wallis, p. 334.

Here Augustine is pointing out an internal inconsistency in the thought of Victor, who relies upon Tertullian for his chief argument while simultaneously departing from the teaching of his master. Augustine was fond of such irony. One may recall his comment that the Donatist Tyconius wrote persuasively against the Donatists. Throughout the work Augustine's condescending attitude toward a younger man is apparent. Augustine implores Victor to heed his warning 'so you may promptly return to the pathway of reason, more promptly, indeed, than when you declined therefrom, at an unstable period of your age, when you were fortified with too little prudence and less learning'[17]. Augustine takes the rather unusual tack of inviting Victor to discuss the matter with him vis-à-vis because Augustine could more easily correct Victor's errors orally than in writing.

The argument becomes especially intriguing when Victor cites the visions of Perpetua to support his position concerning the corporeality of the soul. Once again Augustine begins by making a distinction. Perpetua's dream about herself struggling against the Egyptian is different from her vision of her brother Dinocrates in the netherworld. Perpetua is alive. Dinocrates is dead.

> Some notice must be taken of sundry accounts of martyrs' visions, because you have thought it proper to derive your evidence therefrom. St. Perpetua, for instance, seemed to herself in dreams to be wrestling with an Egyptian, after being changed into a man. Now, who can doubt that it was her soul in that apparent bodily form, not her body, which, of course, remained in her own sex as a woman, and lay on the bed with her senses steeped in sleep, whilst her soul was struggling in the similitude of a man's body?[18]

In other words, she dreamed of her soul in the likeness of a body but her soul is not a body. When Dinocrates appears to his sister Perpetua, his soul also appears in the likeness of a body but his soul also is not a body. Neither of these visions implies for Augustine that the soul is a physical substance. Nor does the cancerous scar on the face of Dinocrates imply a corporeal soul. The soul cannot be wounded. The scar on the unreal body, the likeness, signifies the real suffering which Dinocrates was experiencing in his incorporeal soul.

Third, when Augustine systematically identifies and refutes eleven errors of Victor, he surrounds his remarks with explicit references to the Holy Spirit, from whom Victor is sundering himself. This is particularly evident at the beginning of book three. Vincentius Victor had assumed the name Vincentius in honor of Vincentius the successor of Rogatus. 'You (Vincentius Victor) are, indeed, only feigning yourself a catholic if you are in mind the same as he

[17] *De natura et origine animae* 3.14.20 ((ed. Urba and Zycha), CSEL 60), p. 376; trans. Holmes and Wallis, p. 351.

[18] *De natura et origine animae* 4.18.26 ((ed. Urba and Zycha), CSEL 60), p. 405; trans. Holmes and Wallis, p. 365; see Ludger Hölscher, *The Reality of the Mind: Augustine's Philosophical Arguments for the Human Soul as a Spiritual Substance* (London, 1986), pp. 11-42.

(Vincentius, successor of Rogatus) was on whom you bestow your love; and you are aware how terribly the Scripture has spoken on this subject: "The Holy Spirit of discipline will flee from the man who feigns"'[19]. Augustine refers to the Holy Spirit again in his summation at the end of the same book: 'May the Lord be present to your heart and mind, and by His Spirit pour into your soul such readiness in humility, such light of truth, such sweetness of love, and such peaceful piety, that you may prefer being a conqueror of your own spirit in the truth, than of any one else who gainsays it with his errors'[20]. Belief in direct inspiration by the Holy Spirit is another Montanist trait. At the beginning of the movement in second century Phrygia, Montanus, Priscilla, and Maximilla all claimed to speak with the authority of the Holy Spirit. They delivered oracles. Augustine considered this the chief characteristic of Montanism and he mentions it in his *De haeresibus*: 'There are the Cataphrygians whose instigators were Montanus as Paraclete, and his two prophetesses, Prisca and Maximilla.... They assert that the advent of the Holy Spirit promised by the Lord has been granted to themselves rather than the apostles'[21]. Augustine attacks Victor at the very core of his belief by denying the presence of the Holy Spirit in his teaching.

In summation, Augustine was very much aware of the Montanist character of the *Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*. The Catholic church in Africa had adopted the Montanists' martyrologies and the feast days of their saints as its own. The severe persecutions of the pre-Constantinian church and the many martyrs, who suffered and died particularly in Africa, had so formed the Christian self-consciousness that it was impossible to call any martyr into question. Martyrdom substitutes for baptism. Martyrdom washes away all actual sins. Martyrdom guarantees a place in paradise. The profound and permanent self-sacrifice of martyrdom gives the martyr an authority which no living being can ever possess. Augustine had no choice but to accept the *Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*, but he could interpret it as he saw fit. He had taken a similar stance in his controversy with the Donatists, who constantly called upon the authority of Cyprian, bishop but above all martyr. Nowhere in his anti-Donatist writings did Augustine attempt to refute Cyprian. Instead, he accused the Donatists of misunderstanding and even deforming the teaching of Cyprian. The same principle is at work here. Augustine would have gained nothing by attempting to dismiss the *Passio* as Montanist heretical propaganda. When Victor cites the *Passio* as an authority, Augustine had to deal with it and so he did because the martyrs and their stories were sacrosant.

[19] *De natura et origine animae* 3.2.2 ((ed. Urba and Zycha), CSEL 60), p. 361; trans. Holmes and Wallis, p. 344.

[20] *De natura et origine animae* 3.15.23 ((ed. Urba and Zycha), CSEL 60), p. 378; trans. Holmes and Wallis, p. 352.

[21] *De haeresibus* 26 ((ed. and trans. Heine), PMS 14 (=ed. R. Vander Plaetse and C. Beukers, CCL 46)), pp. 162-63.

Karl Barth und Augustin: Eine Sternenfreundschaft

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In Karl Barths theologischem Werk ist Augustin ein intensiver Begleiter und Gesprächspartner. Mit Thomas und Anselm, Luther und Calvin gehört er in die Reihe der Hauptzeugen, die die Theologie Barths bestätigen und bekräftigen. In unzähligen Zitaten wird Augustin herangezogen, nicht nur in der Kirchlichen Dogmatik, sondern auch in Gelegenheitsschriften und Vorlesungen. So bildet beispielsweise in der 'Erklärung des Johannesevangeliums' von 1925/26 Augustins 'Tractatus in Ioannis Evangelium' den tragenden geistigen Hintergrund der Exegese.

Barths Verhältnis zu Augustin ist allerdings nicht ungebrochen. Man könnte es eine 'Sternenfreundschaft' nennen, eine Beziehung nämlich, die sub specie aeternitatis und im Blick auf das gemeinsame Ziel von tiefer geistiger Zusammengehörigkeit zeugt, die aber, sobald Barth zu einem Gespräch über zentrale theologische Themen ansetzt, auseinanderbricht.

Besonders in der Trinitätslehre, in der Gotteslehre und in der Gnadenlehre wird deutlich, daß sich Barths Weg von Augustin trennt und daß er sich nicht in den Augustinismus einordnen läßt, dessen verführerische, aber letztlich für Kirche und Theologie verhängnisvolle Spuren er in der mittelalterlichen, in der reformatischen und in der neuzeitlichen Theologie aufweist.

So fällt etwa auf, daß die Augustin-Zitierung in Calvins Institutio von Auflage zu Auflage zunimmt — ein Indiz dafür, daß die Reformatoren dem 'süßen Gift' Augustins, wie Barth die Gnadenlehre einmal nennt, mehr und mehr verfielen, während er selbst der Droge des Augustinismus Widerstand leistete. Das Register der Kirchlichen Dogmatik jedenfalls zeigt ein Gefälle, das auf zunehmende Distanz schließen läßt: dominiert in den ersten Bänden Augustins Name noch, so tritt er in den nach dem Krieg erschienen Bänden in den Hintergrund. Im folgenden beschränke ich mich auf zwei Themenkreise, die exemplarisch sind für alle Auseinandersetzungen Barths mit Augustin und dem Augustinismus.

Der erste Themenkreis betrifft die Gnadenlehre. Im Jahre 1929 hielt Barth in Elberfeld einen Vortrag über 'Der heilige Geist und das christliche Leben'[1]. Barth grenzt das Wirken des Heiligen Geistes ab 'gegenüber allem, was unser eigenes Wirken ist'[2]. Unser eigener Geist ist verderbter Geist, er weicht allem aus, was ihm von Gott gesagt ist. Er kann nur ein schwärmender Geist sein,

[1] In: Karl Barth, *Gesamtausgabe* III. *Vorträge und kleinere Arbeiten 1925-1930* (Zürich, 1994).
[2] A.a.O., S. 477.

einer, der sich einmal mit dem Papst, einmal mit den Täufern, einmal mit den Reaktionären und ein andermal mit den Revolutionären verbündet. Das ist aber nicht der heilige, sondern der dem göttlichen Anruf ausweichende menschliche Geist[3]. Hier wird das 'eigene Wirken des Menschen zur Bedingung seiner Gemeinschaft mit Gott gemacht'[4]. Augustin habe 'hier dem Verderben zunächst Einhalt geboten, aber auch hier nicht ohne eine im Grunde noch viel gefährlichere Konzeption auf die Bahn zu bringen'. Er habe gegen die Pelagianer die menschlichen 'Werke als unverdientes Geschenk Gottes beschrieben', habe aber 'leider ebenso unzweideutig die Rechtfertigung in der direkt einsichtigen Wirklichkeit des neuen Gehorsams gesucht', d. h. er habe die 'Rechtfertigung in der Heiligung aufgehen lassen, die Gnade als "inspiratio bonae voluntatis atque operis" verstanden'[5]. Kraft der Gnade werde aus dem Sünder in einem Prozeß allmählicher Umwandlung ein Nicht-Sünder, der sich schließlich mit Gott 'ins Einvernahmen setzen' könne, 'wie dies Augustin in seinen schrecklichen "Konfessionen" geschildert' habe[6].

Diese Auffassung von Rechtfertigung und Heiligung habe den Boden für den Tridentinischen Katholizismus bereitet. Aber auch den Reformatoren macht Barth den Vorwurf, sie hätten sich zwar die antipelagianische Polemik Augustins zu eigen gemacht, sie hätten aber nicht 'laut und energisch genug vor dem süßen Gift' gewarnt, das gemeint sei, wenn Augustin von Gnade rede[7]. Barths Kritik richtet sich nicht direkt gegen Augustin, sondern gegen den Augustinismus, dessen Spuren er vom Mittelalter über Reformation und Tridentinum bis in seine unmittelbare Gegenwart zieht. Das 'süße Gift' der augustinischen Gnadenlehre sei im Augustinismus zum 'Verderben für die Kirche' geworden[8]. Der Augustinismus hebe den Synergismus nur dazu auf, 'um ihn erst recht und nun endgültig in Kraft zu setzen'. Er spreche die Sünde heilig und mache 'die Majestät der Gnade zunichte'[9].

Barth greift mit solchen Spitzensätzen seine theologischen Hauptgegner an. Die protestantische Gnadenlehre der Neuzeit sei 'fast durchweg eine Variation des Augustinischen Themas, daß die Versöhnung des Menschen mit Gott "ex utroque fit, id est, *et* voluntate hominis *et* misericordia Dei"'[10]. Augustin wird bei Barth zum Repräsentanten 'einer vom Menschen aus als bestehend vorauszusetzenden Kontinuität zwischen Gott und Mensch'[11]. Kontinuität heißt: Die misericordia Dei und die dem Menschen eigene schöpferische Kraft ergänzen

[3] Vgl. a.a.O., S. 474.
[4] A.a.O., S. 477.
[5] A.a.O., S. 478.
[6] A.a.O., S. 480.
[7] Ebd.
[8] A.a.O., S. 481.
[9] Ebd.
[10] Ebd. Das Augustin-Zitat findet sich: *Enchir.* 32, CCSL 46, 67, 83f.
[11] A.a.O., S. 512.

sich und sind aufeinander angewiesen, was aber letzten Endes heißt, daß der Mensch zu seinem eigenen Schöpfer wird: Er braucht die Gnade nur, um seine eigenen Möglichkeiten zu steigern. Die Gnade macht den glaubenden und geheiligten Menschen sichtbar. Er weiß, was Gnade ist. Gerade das sei aber 'der Grundirrtum der augustinischen, der katholischen und aller katholisierenden Rechtfertigungs-Heiligungslehre'[12]: Sie will uns sagen, was Gnade ist, sie will Gnade zu einer religiösen Qualität des glaubenden Menschen machen.

Dagegen wendet sich Barth: 'Sind wir gerechtfertigt, so sind wir es eben in Christus und nicht in uns'. Daß '*wir* es wirklich sind, das ist und bleibt uns verhüllt, indem es uns durch das Wort Gottes offenbar wird'. Der Glaube bleibt 'sich selber verborgen'[13]. Im Grunde kann der Mensch nur auf Verheißung hin glauben, daß er durch den Heiligen Geist gerechtfertigt ist. Niemals aber kann er es erfahren und sich Gewißheit darüber verschaffen. Barth spricht von der 'praktischen Verborgenheit' des Glaubens[14], die in der Anfechtung konkret werde. In ihr werde das 'Ende der menschlichen, der religiösen Möglichkeiten' sichtbar[15].

Ich kann die Frage nicht beantworten, ob Barth der Gnadenlehre Augustins gerecht geworden ist. Das ist nicht meine Aufgabe. Mir geht es vielmehr darum, zu zeigen, an welchem historischen Wendepunkt Karl Barth die Auseinandersetzung mit Augustin gesucht hat. Der Elberfelder Vortrag wurde 1929 gehalten. Am Schluß des Vortrages erwähnt Barth in einer Anmerkung das Buch von Emanuel Hirsch mit dem Titel 'Der Sinn des Gebets' und nennt dieses Buch 'durch und durch augustinisch' und fange darum 'mit Recht mit einer in deutsche Verse gebrachten Stelle aus den Konfessionen an'[16].

Damit ist ein Name gefallen, der für eine theologische Richtung steht, die vor allem die deutsche evangelische Kirche in den Abgrund führen sollte. Vom 'süßen Gift' des Augustinusmus waren nicht nur die mittelalterliche und die Tridentinische Kirche verführt, sondern in einem noch viel ausgeprägteren Maße neuprotestantische Theologen wie Ritschl, Troeltsch, Wobbermin, die jene verhängnisvolle Richtung vorbereitet hatten. Sie waren es, die 'Gottes Gnade und des Menschen Werk nur als die zwei Seiten desselben Sachverhaltes angesehen' hatten, sie konnten an der Stelle des Heiligen Geistes ebenso gut von der 'menschlich-schöpferischen Tat' sprechen[17]. Der Kampf gegen den Augustinusmus galt in erster Linie dem Kampf gegen den Neuprotestantismus.

Wenige Wochen nach dem Elberfelder Vortrag verfaßte Barth ein Pamphlet unter dem Titel 'Quousque tandem...?'[18], das wohl zu seinen schärfsten

[12] A.a.O., S. 501.
[13] A.a.O., S. 493.
[14] A.a.O., S. 495.
[15] A.a.O., S. 497.
[16] A.a.O., S. 520, Anm. dq.
[17] A.a.O., S. 482.
[18] In: Karl Barth, *Gesamtausgabe* III. *Vorträge und kleinere Arbeiten 1925-1930* (Zürich, 1994), S. 521ff.

Schriften gehört. Zwar fällt Augustins Name nicht, aber alles, was Barth in Elberfeld vorgetragen hatte, kehrt hier in einer auf die Spitze getriebenen Polemik nochmals zurück. Aus den religiösen menschlichen Möglichkeiten der augustinischen Gnadenlehre wird hier ein 'pompöses Selbstbewußtsein' der Kirche, das Barth als catilinarische 'Verschwörung gegen die Substanz der evangelischen Kirche' beschreibt[19]. Augustin ist in schlechte Gesellschaft geraten. Er wird — man kann dieser Erkenntnis nicht ausweichen — zum Kirchenvater jener Theologie, die den 'Deutschen Christen' den Weg bereitet haben. Ich brauche nicht zu betonen, daß dies für Barth nur ein Aspekt des augustinischen Einflusses ist. Die Kampfsituation jener Jahre brachte es aber mit sich, daß dieser Aspekt des 'süßen Giftes' zum Interpretationsmuster für eine ins Verderben stürzende Kirche wurde.

Im Jahre 1940 erschien der erste Band der Gotteslehre innerhalb der 'Kirchlichen Dogmatik'. Barth referiert dort gleich zu Beginn, wo es um die Erkenntnis Gottes geht, das letzte Gespräch Augustins mit seiner Mutter am Gartenfenster in Ostia. Eine Wendung im Augustin-Verständnis ist, zehn Jahre nach dem Elberfelder Vortrag, nicht zu erkennen. Barth schildert, wie Mutter und Sohn 'stufenweise die ganze körperliche Welt mit Inbegriff des sichtbaren Himmels und seiner Gestirne durchwandert' hätten und 'höher steigend auf den menschlichen Geist gestoßen' seien und dann auch diesen transzendiert hätten; wie sie in einem kurzen Augenblick des Schweigens 'jenes idipsum', die 'zeitlose Weisheit', Gott selbst gefunden hätten. Hier begegnen wir wieder der menschlichen Eigenmächtigkeit und dem Versuch der Selbsttranszendenz, die Gott gerade nicht findet, sondern mutwillig an ihm vorbeieilt[20]. Auch wenn Barth Stellen erwähnt, in denen Augustin selber gegen menschliche Eigenmächtigkeit Einspruch erhebt[21], so liege ihm, Augustin, eben doch daran, zu zeigen, daß das ascendere und transcendere eine menschliche Möglichkeit sei, die zum Ziel führt. Eine Möglichkeit, die bei Erscheinen von KD II,1 im Jahre 1940 zur furchtbaren Wirklichkeit geworden war.

Bekanntlich finden wir in der Theologie des alten Karl Barth eine Sichtweise, die in den frühen Werken noch nicht zur Geltung kommt. Von einer 'Wende' sollte man besser nicht reden, wohl aber von einem Perspektivenwechsel. Die Humanität Gottes tritt jetzt ins Blickfeld und mit ihr die menschlichen 'Lichter', die neben dem einen, großen Licht Christi ihre eigene Leuchtkraft erhalten. Ausgerechnet da, wo Barth selber dem Augustinismus zuneigt, verstummt das Gespräch mit dem Kirchenvater. In den letzten Bänden der Versöhnungslehre, vor allem in KD IV,3, wo die 'Lichterlehre' entfaltet wird, wird Augustin nur noch marginal erwähnt.

[19] E. Busch, *Karl Barths Lebenslauf* (München, 1975), S. 204.
[20] KD II,1, S. 9f.
[21] Etwa *Conf.* X,26: Optimus minister tuus est, qui non magis intuetur hoc a te audire, quod ipse voluerit, sed potius hoc velle, quod a te audierit, zit. a.a.O., S. 10.

Eine Erklärung dieses Sachverhaltes vermag ich nicht zu geben. Es besteht aber kein Zweifel, daß Barth zu Augustin gefunden hat: Im oben erwähnten Band der KD ist, um die Terminologie Hegels zu gebrauchen, der große Kirchenvater 'aufgehoben', den der frühe Barth in kritischer Absicht 'aufgehoben' hatte. Die irdische Beziehung beider Theologen war problematisch. Es darf aber als sicher gelten, daß sie durch eine Sternenfreundschaft auf ewig verbunden bleiben.

Sacrifice in Augustine's *Contra aduersarium legis et prophetarum*

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Augustine's two books, *Contra aduersarium legis et prophetarum*, were written in response to an anonyous heretical tract that came into his hands in the year 419 or 420. In the *Retractationes* he tells us that some Carthaginian Christians discovered the work as it being read to an interested crowd in a street near the harbor and promptly sent it off to Augustine with a request that he write a reply to it[1]. *Contra aduersarium* is certainly not one of his great works, and it has received relatively slight attention and has only recently been translated into English[2]. Though the work seldom contains anything startingly new, it often sums up with clarity points of doctrine that Augustine had expressed earlier, especially in his anti-Manichaean writings. In fact, at one point he suggests that, if people had read his *Contra Faustum* and *Contra Adimantum*, there would have been little or no need for this reply to the anonymous heretic[3]. Like these works against the Manichees, the present two books contain an analogical interpretation of the Law; that is, they show the accord between the Old and the New Testament[4].

Augustine tried to identify the heresy of the anonymous author who held that the creator of this world, the God of the Mosaic Law and the Prophets, was not the true God, but an evil demon, in fact, the worst of demons[5]. He concluded that the author was not a Manichee, because the Manichees admitted that the good God made the world, though he made it from some nature he had not made[6]. In the *Retractationes* he suggests that the book may have been the work of a follower of Marcion, though he elsewhere locates him among a larger group of heretics opposed to the books of the Old Testament, such as, Basilides, Carpocrates, Cerdon, Apelles, and Patricius[7]. The anonymous author twice mentioned with pride a certain Fabricius whom he found as a teacher of

[1] *Retractationes* II, 58 (85).
[2] See my forthcoming translation in *Arianism and Other Heresies*, in *The Works of Saint Augustine*, vol. 18/1 (Hyde Park, NY, 1996).
[3] See *Contra aduersarium* II, 12, 41.
[4] See *De Genesi ad litteram liber imperfectus* 2, 5.
[5] *Retractationes* II, 58 (85).
[6] *Contra aduersarium* I, 1, 1 and II, 11, 40.
[7] *Ibid.* II, 12, 40.

the truth in Rome and whose disciple he was[8]. A. von Harnack has suggested that this Fabricius may well have been the Patricius mentioned in *De haeresibus* LXI[9]. Our knowledge of the Patricians, however, is limited to a few lines about them in Philaster of Brescia, which are repeated almost verbatim in *De haeresibus*, and to some further remarks in the anonymous list of heresies, *Praedestinatus*, which bears witness to their presence in Upper Numidia and Mauretania[10]. Hence, it seems more useful to consider the author as someone in the Marcionite tradition, as Harnack does, rather than as a member of the Patricians. In his examination of the question, T. Raveaux argues that the heretic clearly fits with the Marcionite tradition in his sharp opposition between the God of the Law and the Prophets and the God of the New Testament, though he points to other characteristics that do not fit with what we know of Marcion[11].

Augustine's *Contra aduersarium* is a work that deserves more serious study. I have argued that the beginning of the first book really constitutes a sixth commentary by Augustine on the initial chapters of the Book of Genesis[12]. In the present paper I want to point out another aspect of the work well worth further attention. The anonymous author of the work to which Augustine is replying is vehemently opposed to the God of the Old Testament on almost every score. Hence, it is not surprising to find that the enemy of the Old Testament books singles out the sacrifices prescribed in these books as grounds for objecting to the God of the Law and the Prophets.

The topic of sacrifice arises in the first instance only tangentially insofar as the heretic, in accusing the God of the Law and the Prophets of cruel and excessive punishments, points to the infant sons of Heli who were killed for having sampled some of the sacrifical food prepared to be offered to God[13]. Augustine points out that Heli's sons were not infants, but men who should have known better than to have preferred themselves to God in the sacrifices. He also points out that their deaths are mild punishments compared to that which the Gospel imposes upon the man without the wedding garment. If the heretic replies that the lack of a wedding garment does not signify a slight fault, Augustine counters that in the same way, 'though the visible sacrifices are small matters among earthly realities, they are signs of great and divine realities'[14].

[8] *Ibid.* II, 2, 3 and II, 12, 41.

[9] A. von Harnack, *Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1924; reprinted, Darmstadt, 1985), Beilage X, pp. 424*-433*.

[10] See Philaster, *Diversarum haereseon liber* LXII and *Praedestinatus* I, 61.

[11] T. Raveaux, *Augustinus, contra adversarium legis et prophetarum: Analyse des Inhalts und Untersuchung des geistesgeschichtlichen Hintergrunds* (Würzburg, 1987), especially pp. 137-140.

[12] R. Teske, 'Problems with the "Beginning" in Augustine's Sixth Commentary on Genesis', *The University of Dayton Review* 22 (1994), pp. 55-67.

[13] See 1 Sm 2:12-17 and 4:10-11.

[14] *Contra aduersarium* I, 16, 30.

The topic of sacrifice again comes up when, in reference to 2 Sm 24, the anonymous heretic argues that, since David's prayer that God spare the people was only heard after he offered a sacrifice, 'we should not believe that he is the true God, since he is pleased by sacrifices'[15]. The fact that the God of the Law and the Prophets derived pleasure from sacrifices by itself counted as proof that he was not the true God, perhaps because it indicated a literal thirst for blood[16]. But the anonymous heretic also claimed that 'David, who obtained those things by sacrifice, obviously served demons'[17].

In his response, Augustine, claims that 'this fellow knows nothing at all about sacrifice'. He insists 'a demon would not demand sacrifice for himself if he did not know that sacrifice should be offered only to the true God', and points out that 'it is, above all, sacrifice that we especially owe to God'. With regard to the sort of sacrifice David offered, he adds, 'the people of God no longer offers such sacrifices to God, now that the one sacrifice has come which all those sacrifices foreshadowed'. The one and only true sacrifice is that in which the blood of Christ has been shed for us, and the sacrifices of the Old Law did not repudiate this one sacrifice, but signified it. 'Just as one reality can be signified by many expressions and in many languages, so the one true and only sacrifice was previously signified by many symbolic sacrifices'. For example, animals without blemish were offered in the old sacrifices to signify the offering of Christ who alone was without the blemish of sins. Augustine appeals to Ps 49 as prophetic of the present times in which a sacrifice of praise has replaced the animal sacrifices. On the final verse, 'A sacrifice of praise will honor me, and there is the path by which I shall show him the salvation of God' (Ps 49:23), Augustine comments that this salvation of God is Christ and asks, 'What sacrifice of praise is more sacred that that of thanksgiving? And for what should we offer more thankgiving to God than for his love through Jesus Christ our Lord?' Lest anyone miss the allusion to the Eucharist, Augustine adds, 'The faithful know that all of this is found in the sacrifice of the Church which all the kinds of previous sacrifices foreshadowed'. Hence, there is present here a two-directional signification: 'the visible sacrifices ... are signs of great and divine realities'[18], and the sacrifices of the Old Law foreshadowed the sacrifice of Christ which is now found in the sacrifice of the Church. All the visible sacrifices — whether those of the Old Law, that of Christ, or that of the Church — signify the same great and divine reality: 'the love of God through Jesus Christ our Lord'. Or as Augustine puts it more concretely, 'that sacrifice which David offered that God might show mercy regarding the lives of the people was a foreshowing of the future sacrifice. David's sacrifice signified

[15] *Ibid.* I, 18, 37.

[16] *Ibid.* for the blood of bulls and goats, as well as I, 16, 33 for human blood.

[17] *Ibid.* I, 19, 38.

[18] *Ibid.* I, 16, 30.

that God shows mercy regarding the salvation of the people through the one sacrifice of which David's was the symbol'[19].

On the basis of his faulty reading of 1 Cor 10:18-20, the anonymous heretic concluded that all who offer sacrifice offer sacrifice to demons. After pointing out minor discrepancies that might be due to a divergent translation or a faulty manuscript, Augustine indicates the crucial part of the heretic's version of the text, 'The Apostle said, "Rather, what they offer, they offer to demons and not to God", while this fellow said, "But those who sacrifice sacrifice to demons", as if all who sacrifice sacrifice only to demons'[20]. That is, the heretic took the apostle to be teaching that all who offer sacrifice offer sacrifice to demons and that David, therefore, served demons and not the true God. Augustine explains that Paul was warning the Corinthians against the practice of idolatry. Paul argued that they were in union with demons if they ate from the sacrifices offered to idols, just as Israel according to the flesh that ate from the temple sacrifices was in union with the altar in the temple. But Israel according to the spirit no longer follows the old shadows, but the truth that came later and was signified by those previous shadows. For this reason Paul asked them, 'Is not the cup of blessing that we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread we break a sharing in the body of Christ? Because the bread is one, we though many are one body, because we share in the one bread' (1 Cor 10:15-17). To show that the temple sacrifices of the Old Law were not offered to idols, Augustine cites Jesus' words sending the healed leper to make the prescribed offering (Mt 8:4) and insisting that the temple is a house of prayer (Mt 21:13), for he 'had not yet given the sacrifice of his body in place of all those sacrifices'[21].

The heretic offered proofs from apocryphal writings attributed to Andrew and John. Without citing them, Augustine merely replies that, if these writings were theirs, the Church would have accepted them, for the Church 'continues from their times right up to ours and beyond through the certain succession of bishops and offers to God in the body of Christ the sacrifice of praise'[22]. This is the true Israel which offers a sacrifice of praise, not according to the order of Aaron, but according to the order of Melchizedek. Augustine points out that those who read scripture know what Melchizedek offered and, 'if they are already partakers of it, they see that this sacrifice is now offered to God through the whole world'[23].

While it was not surprising to find the heretic opposed to the Jewish sacrifices, it was a delightful surprise to find that Augustine's reply constituted a

[19] *Ibid.* I, 18, 37, for all the quotations in this paragraph not otherwise identified.
[20] *Ibid.* I, 19, 38.
[21] *Ibid.*
[22] *Ibid.* I, 20, 39.
[23] *Ibid.*

short treatise on sacrifice that not only defended the Old Testament sacrifices against the objections of the anonymous heretic, but offered a positive understanding of sacrifice uniting in one perspective the sacrifices of the Old Law, the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, and the sacrifice of the Church.

From Separatist Sect to Majority Church: The Ecclesiologies of Parmenian and Tyconius

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Introduction

Little is known of the biography of Tyconius (ca. 330-ca. 390)[1]. The most intriguing fact is that in 380 the foremost theologian of Donatism was excommunicated by his own bishop, Parmenian of Carthage (bishop 362-391/92) who, according to all reports, was ordinarily an irenic man[2]. Augustine claimed that Tyconius was excommunicated because he maintained two teachings incompatible with Donatist theology: first, that the Church was diffused throughout the whole world; and second, that no one could be stained by the sin of another[3]. Augustine first made these claims in 408, many years after the deaths of Parmenian and Tyconius, a time when the Donatist episcopacy was far more extremist than in Parmenian's time[4]. In reality, Augustine was once again using Tyconius for his own ends. He was not addressing an old intra-Donatist controversy but a later Catholic-Donatist one, a disagreement dating from the period when hard-line Donatists clashed with Augustine and members of his circle[5]. Augustine attributed to Tyconius the inverse of the position he himself was attacking.

[1] Gennadius, *De viris inlustris* 18, edited by Ernest Cushing Richardson (Texte und Untersuchungen 14; 1896), pp. 47-97. Augustine makes his most illuminating remarks on Tyconius in *Contra Epistulam Parmeniani Libri III* 1.1.1, and 2.13.31 in *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Scripta contra Donatistas*, edited by M. Petschenig (CSEL 51-53; Vienna and Leipzig, 1908-10), 51.19-20 and 83; and *Epp.* 93.10.43-44 in *S. Aurelii Augustini Hipponensis Episcopi Epistulae*, 4 vols., edited by Al. Goldbacher (CSEL 34/1-2, 44, 57 and 58; Prague, Vienna and Leipzig, 1895, 1898, 1904 and 1923), 34.486-87. These are succinctly summarized in the notes on *Cont. Ep. Parm.* by Yves M.-J. Congar in *Œuvres de saint Augustin* (Bibliothéque Augustinienne, Quatrième Série: *Traités Anti-Donatistes*, volumes 28-32; Paris, 1963-65), 28.718-20. They are woven into lively narrative in Paul Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne depuis les origines jusqu'a l'invasion arabe*, 7 vols., (Paris, 1901-23; repr. Brussels, 1963), vol. 6, pp. 166-71.

[2] W.H.C. Frend, *The Donatist Church: A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa* (Oxford, 1952), p. 193.

[3] Augustine, *Ep.* 93.10.44 (CSEL, 34.487): '*cum talia diceret de ecclesia toto orbe diffusa et quod neminem in eius unitate macularent aliena peccata*'.

[4] See *Ep.* 93, cited above.

[5] For another example of Augustine's (mis)use of Tyconius, see Maureen A. Tilley, 'Understanding Augustine Misunderstanding Tyconius', *Studia Patristica* 27 (1993), pp. 405-408.

In the short time I am allotted I cannot argue all of the issues but I will highlight one: why was Tyconius excommunicated? I will examine Augustine's two reasons and suggest a third and more likely one. The thesis of this article is that in the late fourth century, in the face of the changing status of Donatism, both Parmenian and Tyconius tried to provide the Donatist church with new ecclesiologies to suit changing circumstances, but their solutions were so diametrically opposed that Parmenian's only option was to excommunicate Tyconius.

Catholic documents themselves give the lie to the first of Augustine's reasons for the excommunication: that Tyconius taught the Church was spread throughout the world. Tyconius did indeed teach this, but in a very nuanced way. He saw the Church as a growing body, one strong in Africa. It was at present incomplete[6]. But this would not have been a cause for excommunication as the Donatist tradition did not deny the legitimacy of churches spread throughout the world; they had their own churches in Rome and in Spain. Parmenian himself was a product of one of these overseas churches. Donatists were on good terms with other churches throughout the Mediterranean[7]. Even Augustine knew that Donatists never categorically denied the possibility of orthodox churches outside Africa[8]. Their exclusivist claims covered only the area of North Africa. It was Catholics who extrapolated the Donatist claim about the local church to the whole world as a *reductio ad absurdum*. What Donatists did object to and would continue to object to was that more and more non-Donatist churches overseas were recognizing the Catholics in North Africa as the true churches of the area[9]. Consequently, advocating the universality of the Church would not be an entirely plausible reason for excommunication, at least in Parmenian's time[10].

Augustine's second explanation, that Tyconius denied that sin was communicable like some viral contagion, would seem a more cogent one. But the *contagion* of sin is not an issue of intra-Donatist contention. Its implications do

[6] Tyconius, *Liber Regularum* 1 in *The Book of Rules of Tyconius*, edited by F.C. Burkitt (Cambridge, 1894), pp. 2-3.

[7] See Jean-Paul Brisson, *Glorie et misère de l'Afrique chrétienne* (Paris, 1948), pp. 191-92; G. Morin, 'Une lettre apocryphe inédite de st Jérôme au pape Damase', *Revue Bénédictine* 35 (1923), pp. 121-25; Alberto Pincherle, 'L'arianesimo e la Chiesa africana nel IV secolo', *Bilychnis* 25/3 (1925), pp. 97-106; Donatien DeBruyne, 'Une letter apocryphe de Jérôme fabriquée par un Donatiste', *Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 30 (1931), pp. 70-73; and Frend, p. 170.

[8] *Contr. Ep. Parm.* 2.2.4 (CSEL 51.47).

[9] Conference of Carthage (*Gesta* 3.99 in *Actes de la Conférénce de Carthage en 411*, edited by Serge Lancel (Sources Chrétiennes 194, 195, 224 and 373; Paris, 1972, 1975 and 1991), 224, p. 1060; and the analysis in Robert B. Eno, 'Some Nuances in the Ecclesiology the Donatists', *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 18 (1972), pp. 46-50.

[10] On the other hand, it may have seemed plausible in Augustine's own time when hard-line Primianists drew the circle of the Church even tighter than their predecessors. See the *Gesta* of the third session in SC 224.

not impact on Parmenian's own pastoral practice. There is no evidence he counsels separation from sinners *qua* sinners but only from Catholics, the descendants of a particular kind of sinner. In a period of dual churches and amicable relations, of people attending each others' churches, it would be just too easy to suffer the erosion of community solidarity. Boundaries were not between Donatist saints and Catholic sinners — average North Africans knew their neighbors better than that — but the divide was simply between Donatists and Catholics. Again Augustine took particular Donatist claims and universalized them. He did this not so much in response to Parmenian but to his contemporaries, Petilian and Cresconius[11].

If neither of Augustine's reasons seems entirely persuasive, we must examine other evidence. We need to turn our attention away from Augustine's charges made in the early fifth century and turn toward the events and writings of the late fourth century when both Parmenian and Tyconius were still alive. Then we can examine the context for their dispute and the ecclesiologies of both men.

Context

From 321 to 361, Donatists had been persecuted several times. However, in 361 circumstances changed radically. In a policy of 'divide and conquer', the emperor Julian began to support Donatists against Catholics[12]. Between his death in 363 and the death of Parmenian thirty years later there is precious little evidence that Donatism *qua* Donatism was persecuted[13]. On the contrary, the period seems to have been one of tremendous growth for Donatism and a time when Catholics and Donatists came to a *modus vivendi* which included dual lines of authority in major and minor cities[14]. Then, as majority church in many areas and one that enjoyed state support, Donatism contained all sorts of people, good and bad, pious and not so pious. It was subject to an erosion not from external persuasion but from internal fissures. Both Parmenian and Tyconius recognized the necessity for a change in ecclesiologies. There could be no pretense of being the minority church of the poor or the martyrs or exclusively that of the holy. Within months of Parmenian's treatise on Baptism, the Rogatist schism would offer counterevidence to any such contention, for the

[11] See especially *Contr. litt. Pet.* 2.102.237 (CSEL 52.151) written in 405, and *Contr. Cresc.* 2.23.28 (CSEL 52.387) wrtten 406/409.

[12] See Frend, pp. 187-92.

[13] *Cod. Th.* 16.6.1, dated 373, prohibiting rebaptism, but no penalty attached; and *Cod. Th.* 16.6.2, dated to 377, providing for confiscation of property. There is no evidence of their enforcement; both in *The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions*, translated by Clyde Pharr (Princeton, 1952), pp. 463-64.

[14] See Frend, pp. 199-201; for the dual lines of bishops, see *Gesta* 2.116-31 (SC 195.76-87).

Rogatists separated from the Donatists in 363 to become the church of the pure and the non-violent. So the issue is not the *contagion* of sin but the *presence* of sin within the Church.

Parmenian

In that atmosphere Parmenian developed an ecclesiology which claimed holiness for the Donatist church. He reconfigured it from the holiness of the individual persecuted Donatist saints, the faithful remnant, to that of a stable institution, the Church.

Parmenian's ecclesiology centered on the *dotes* or distinguishing gifts which God bestowed not on individuals but on the one and true Church. These were: 1) the *cathedra*, or authority of the Church; 2) the *angelus* (a rightly consecrated bishop or the guardian angels of the churches like those in Revelation); 3) the *Spirit*; 4) the *fountain* (of true Baptism); 5) the *seal* of the fountain; and finally, 6) the *umbilicus*, the nucleus of worship, a properly consecrated altar[15]. These gifts guaranteed the holiness of the institution even when individual members were not holy. And only the church which had the *dotes* could confer Baptism. Members of the church which possessed the *dotes* could baptize *no matter what the state of their personal sanctity*[16]. Thus, if a holy person in communion with the Donatist church (no matter how tenuous) administered a sacrament, well and good; it was a true sacrament because the minister was a member of the true Church. If a sinful member of the Donatist church administered a sacrament, there was no problem. The *dotes* of the Church, not the spiritual gifts of the individual member, were the requirement. Truly *Ecclesia supplet*[17].

Parmenian's ecclesiology justified the Donatist church as an institution, not as a collection of individuals. He minimized evil, attempting to protect the church against Catholic attacks which focused on the evil deeds of individual priests and bishops. So much then for Catholic charges about Optatus of Thamugadi (the Gildonian) or about the circumcellions. Parmenian provided a

[15] *S. Optati Milevitani Libri VII*, 2.2-8, edited by Carolus Ziwza (CSEL 26; Prague, Vienna and Leipzig, 1893), pp. 36-44. Optatus reports that Parmenian counted six *dotes*, but that he himself counts only five true *dotes*, omitting the *umbilicus*.

[16] Thomislaus Sagi-Bunić provides a well-nuanced reconstruction of Parmenian's sacramental theology in 'Controversaria de baptismate inter Parmenianum et S. Optatum Milevitanum', *Laurentianum* 3 (1962), pp. 167-209, especially, p. 172.

[17] Optatus 2.9 (CSEL 26.45). Lest there be any confussion at this point, Parmenian's stand was not that of Augustine who, in his search for the power of the sacrament, would move it even farther from the individual minister of the sacrament, not to the Church, but to God (Augustine, *Contr. Ep. Parm.* 2.11.23-24 and 2.14.32-2.15.33 (CSEL 51.73-74 and 84-85)). Thus Augustine could affirm the validity of Baptism by not only a schismatic, but also a heretic or someone completely outside the Church.

pastoral theology which would serve his church as it expanded and became the majority church (including both committed Christians and believers of convenience).

Tyconius

Tyconius also took the problem of evil within the Church very seriously[18]. If the Donatist church were to flourish as a church of the majority, it had to come to grips with the existence of evil members *within* the Church, a Church which then could not claim absolute purity as a collection of individuals. So far, so good: Parmenian the realist and Tyconius the idealist would agree on the problem.

But Tyconius' solution to this problem was radically different. Tyconius could not minimize evil as his bishop had. He taught that the Church as it existed in history was not established to exist without evil. He posited a single Church with a good side and a bad side. Evil and evil-doers were not accidents of the historical Church (whose import could be minimized by people like Parmenian); no, they were constitutive elements within the Church. This teaching focused on the individual and maximized the need for repentance[19].

If both Tyconius and Augustine admitted that there were sinners within the Church, what differentiated the two? *Inter alia*, Augustine's purpose was to justify the lack of separation between sinners and pure, the good and the bad, until the end, the time when God would separate the wheat from the chaff. Augustine pushed judgment as far into the future as he could, obviating any eschatological preaching[20]. Tyconius, on the other hand, preached not only individual repentance but the urgency of penance. He believed that what the prophets predicted of the end time was happening in Africa right then[21]. This was not some sense of the world coming to an end, but it was the use of eschatological language to increase the importance of penance in the present moment[22].

The difference between the Catholic position and Tyconius' must have seemed fairly slim in Parmenian's eyes. Individual repentance might be well and good, but such an emphasis would have undercut his teaching which

[18] This discussion presumes continuity between Tyconius' earlier writings and the surviving *Liber Regularum*, published within months of his excommunication.

[19] On Tyconius' individualism, see Frend, p. 205; on repentance, see Frend, p. 204, and cf. Pamela Bright, *The Book of Rules of Tyconius: Its Purpose and Inner Logic* (Notre Dame, 1988), pp. 114-15, and Maureen A. Tilley, *The Use of Scripture in Christian North Africa: An Examination of Donatist Hermeneutics* (Dissertation, Duke University, 1989), p. 236.

[20] See Tilley, 'Understanding Augustine', pp. 405-408.

[21] *Liber Regularum* 1 and 6 (Burkitt, pp. 2 and 67).

[22] See Tilley, *The Use of Scripture*, pp. 252 and 255-59, on Tyconius not being a millennialist.

minimized a focus on evil and the individual. Coincidentally, it played into the hands of the Catholic party which still charged that Donatists could not be the pure and true Church because their congregations included sinners. Finally, the emphasis on eschatology made Tyconius different not only from Augustine but also from late fourth-century Donatism which during this era toned down any use of eschatological language[23]. It ill-suited their position as a majority church learning to live in and with history.

Contradicting the bishop was serious business but giving aid and comfort to the Catholic enemy made Tyconius a traitor to Donatism. Tyconius' solution to the pressing ecclesiological problems of the late fourth century was too seriously different from his bishop on both a theoretical and a pastoral level. Thus he had to be excommunicated.

[23] The appeal to eschatology would be revived under Parmenian's successor, Primianus.

The Implications of the Doctrine of *Creatio ex nihilo* in St. Augustine's Theology

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The doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* provides a vital element of Christian belief regarding the relationship between God, the world, and humanity. In essence, the doctrine holds that all reality other than God was brought into existence by a free, generous act of the Divine will. This teaching assumed a prominent role in Patristic replies to the dualistic theology of the Gnostics[1]. One of the most pronounced expressions of this outlook emerged in Manichaeism, a religious phenomenon that has been characterized as 'the last and greatest manifestation of Gnosticism'[2]. A wide-ranging critique of Manichaeism was developed by St. Augustine of Hippo, in an extended polemic that spanned the period from his composition at Rome of the *De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae et de Moribus Manichaeorum* (A.D. 387/388) until the completion of the *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* (A.D. 398/400)[3]. To a great extent, Augustine's challenge to the Manichaean vision of reality hinged upon the affirmation that ultimately, God created everything which exists from nothing. But the importance of this dictum for Augustine extended well beyond the parameters of his anti-Manichaean polemic. In effect, it decisively shaped some of the dominant themes in his theology. This paper will explore Augustine's use of the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* (or alternately, *de nihilo*) in these distinct, but overlapping contexts. At the outset, a brief synopsis of Mani's creation-myth will set the stage for my investigation.

The Manichaean Account of Creation

According to Mani's cosmogony, the production of the visible universe resulted from the conflict between Light and Darkness, the coeternal principles of Good and Evil, respectively. Once the invasion of Darkness was checked,

[1] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 2,i(1); 2,ii(1); 2,vi(1); 2,x(4); Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem* I,15.

[2] Gerald Bonner, *St. Augustine of Hippo, Life and Controversies* (Norwich, 1986), p. 161.

[3] For purposes of this discussion, the other relevant anti-Manichaean writings (and dates of composition) are the following: *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* (A.D. 388/389); *De Musica* (A.D. 389); *Contra epistulam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti liber* (*c.* A.D. 397); *De Natura Boni Contra Manichaeos* (*c.* A.D. 399).

provision was made for the liberation of the luminous particles which had been devoured by its agents, and thereby, commingled with their nature. As recounted in *The Fihrist* (IX,1), the celestial and terrestial spheres were crafted to serve as mechanisms for distilling the residue of Light still entrapped in corporeal substance[4]. In this fanciful account, we find the mythical underpinnings of a basic premise of Manichaean belief: matter was viewed in disparaging terms as the very embodiment of Evil. This premise prompted a pessimism toward the world and human existence that placed Manichaeism in radical opposition to *Genesis* (I, 31) and its proclamation that *God saw* that *all that He had made was very good*. Augustine's theology exhibits an optimism toward the created order that was firmly grounded upon this fundamental biblical presupposition. The initial focus of his anti-Manichaean polemic, in fact, was an apology against attacks on Old Testament teachings concerned with God and the origin of the world.

Augustine's Anti-Manichaean Polemic

In Manichaean terms, the Creator of the world portrayed in *Genesis* could only be inferior to the Father of Light that resisted the incursion of *Hyle*, the god of the race of Darkness (*Contra Faustum Manichaeum* XXII,4). Augustine's earliest effort to counter such invective was the *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, an elaborate exegesis which yielded a comprehensive theory of creation. In the teaching that *God made the heavens and the earth* (*Genesis* I,1), Augustine perceived a reference to the single, undifferentiated act whereby amorphous matter was brought into being, for the purpose of forming all things (*De Genesi contra Manichaeos* I,5,9). If matter was created from nothing, however, then everything comprised of matter can be said to be created from nothing as well (*De Genesi contra Manichaeos* I,6,10). But implicit in this depiction of the complete contingency of creatures lies a recognition of God's unqualified omnipotence. In this respect, God depends upon nothing (including any preexistent matter) in His role as Creator (*De Genesi contra Manichaeos* I,2,4; *De Fide et Symbolo* I,2,2; *De Genesi ad litteram* IV,16,27).

The understanding of creation which Augustine forged in an exegetical setting provided the touchstone for his refutation of Manichaean dualism. His rebuttal of this perspective rested upon two closely related claims deeply rooted in Scriptural teachings: *first*, that God is the Author of all natures, and *second*, that every nature, insofar as it is nature, is good (*De Natura Boni Manichaeum* 19; *Contra epistulam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* XXXIII,36). Because the Manichaeans viewed Good and Evil as mutually exclusive principles, they

[4] Cf. the account of Theodore bar Khoni, *Liber Scholiorum* in text of H. Pognon, *Inscriptions mandaïtes des coupes de Khouabir* (Paris, 1898), pp. 128(188)-129(189).

could endorse neither of these contentions. In the face of this obstinacy, Augustine appealed to the persuasive power of reason, or, to the inconsistencies in their own doctrines. The Manichaeans, for example, would readily acknowledge that every good can have its existence only from God (*De Natura Boni Manichaeum* 2). But they were at an impasse in explaining the relationship between God and their region of Light, the repository of all good things. If they maintained that Light was part of God, they were guilty of subjecting the Divine nature itself to the hostile invasion of Darkness; if they held that God made Light from a distinct nature, then they would designate something in addition to God as good, or, something in addition to Darkness as evil (*Contra epistulam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* XXIV,26).

Augustine offered his adversaries an uncompromising solution to this dilemna: in order to free the Divine nature from any limitations or corruptibility, they must acknowledge that God made the region of Light from nothing at all (*Contra epistulam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* XXIV,26). This thesis, however, could only present a stumbling block for these extreme dualists. For, once they accepted that God created a great good like the region of Light from nothing, they would open themselves to the possibility that He produced a hierarchy of lesser goods as well (*Contra epistulam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* XXIV,26). This observation has a specific applicability to the region of Darkness. By means of an incisive *reductio ad absurdum*, Augustine undermines the very notion of such a nexus of absolute evil. As detailed by the Manichaeans themselves, this realm contained many features (e.g., form, classification, life, and productivity) that might well be viewed in positive terms (*Contra epistulam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* XXIX,32; XXXIII,36). They must admit, therefore, that even what they designated as evil in a thoroughgoing sense displayed at least some good (*Contra epistulam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* XXIX,32; XXX,33).

Augustine's denial of the substantiality of evil, of course, was correlative with his contention that everything which exists is fundamentally good. But while creatures all participate in God's Goodness, they do so in varying degrees (*Contra Faustum Manichaeum* XXI.5; *De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae et de Moribus Manichaeorum* II,IV,6). In contrast to the rigidly bifurcated scheme of his opponents, the order of creation envisioned by Augustine constitutes a rich tapestry comprised of diverse spiritual and corporeal natures (*De Natura Boni Manichaeum* 8; *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* XXI,4-5; *De Musica* VI,11,29-30). Consequently, creatures exhibit a seemingly paradoxical commingling of good and evil, or, perfection and defect. But a qualification is required here: for Augustine, evil can only be discerned in a subordinate relation to the good (*Contra epistulam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* XXXIII,36). In this regard, evil merely exists as a corruption of the nature in which it is perceived (*Contra epistulam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* XXXV,39). Augustine succinctly frames his argument in this manner: '... if corruption is

the only evil and corruption is not nature, then no nature is evil' (*Contra epistulam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* XXXV,39). In Augustinian terms, then, all creatures are good, but only to a limited extent, according to their place and status in the created cosmos. This position reflects a sophisticated hierarchical vision that admits a broad spectrum of realities extending from God (the highest exemplar of being and goodness) to spiritual natures (which are immaterial, but mutable in temporal, cognitive, and moral terms), to corporeal natures (which are mutable in regard to time and place)[5].

Augustine's interpretation of evil in wholly negative terms clearly set him apart from Manichaeism. But it also distanced him from the Neoplatonism that inspired his response to this problem[6]. Augustine appropriated the mainlines of Plotinus's conception of evil, but recast it by means of insights inherent in the Christian understanding of creation[7]. In this way, the notion of absolute non-being (the counterpoint of God's creative act) was operative in Augustine's broad characterization of evil as a privation of the good (*De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae et de Moribus Manichaeorum* II,4,6). Here, we must remember, *privatio boni* is tantamount to a lack of being. But in the Plotinian system, evil assumes a necessity, and thereby, at least some ontological status as the terminus in the continuum of being that extends from the One to matter (*Ennead* I,8 (51).7). Although Plotinus vaguely described evil as 'something other than being', he never identified it with the complete ontological sterility that Augustine conceives in this context (*Ennead* I,8(51).3).

The metaphysics of creation, then, served to refine Augustine's own comprehension of evil. But in the process, it directed his rebuttal of the flawed theodicy of the Manichaeans. In their scheme, God is exculpated from responsibility for evil at the expense of His inviolability. By investing a malevolent principle with a causal efficacy of its own, they severely compromised the integrity of the Divine nature[8]. Augustine, however, annuls the possibility that any existent thing can be antithetical to God. If God can be said to have a contrary, it can only be non-being (*De Natura Boni Manichaeum* 19).

[5] For Augustine's triadic understanding of reality (and his teaching concerning the degrees of mutability attaching to creatures), see *Epistola* 140,2(3); *De Doctrina Christiana* II,38(57); *De Civitate Dei* VIII,6; XI,27; *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*, q. 45; *De Vera Religione* 10,18; *Confessiones* VII,17(23).

[6] For an assessment of the process whereby Augustine gained access to the Plotinian theory of evil, see Pierre Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de Saint Augustin* (Paris, 1950), pp. 124-125.

[7] For a delineation of the differences between Plotinus and Augustine on this topic, see Gerald Bonner, *St. Augustine of Hippo, Life and Controversies* (Norwich, 1986), pp. 201-204 and R. Jolivet, *Le problème du mal d'après saint Augustin* (Paris, 1936), pp. 131-162.

[8] In *De Natura Boni Manichaeum* (42-43), Augustine charges that the very fact that the Father of the region of Light was compelled to engage in a struggle with *Hyle* suggests a weakness and corruptibility in the Divine nature even before the incursion of Darkness.

By way of a partial summary, the doctrine of creation provided a dialectical component in Augustine's refutation of the Manichaean world-view on three levels: *first*, the recognition of God's status as ultimate Creator undermines the idea that any reality is coequal with God, or, that He creates under constraint from any source; *second*, the teaching that a supremely good God created all things from nothing invalidates the theory that evil can exist as an independent, efficacious, or necessary principle; *third*, the notion of creation in its most literal sense presupposes that God is ontologically distinct from what He creates. For Augustine, the failure to observe this key distinction leads to the sacrilege of equating what is begotten out of God's own Nature with that which he has made from nothing (*De Natura Boni Manichaeum* 10). A consideration of the divergence between the Divine Nature and created natures provides a useful vantage point for assessing the broader implications of creation *ex nihilo* in Augustine's theology.

Implications of *Creatio ex nihilo* for Augustine's Theology

In Augustinian terms, the distinguishing mark of Divine Being is immutability (*De Civitate Dei* XII,2). Accordingly, God alone deserves the title of *esse*, that is, Being Itself, which exists 'always in the same way' (*De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae et de Moribus Manichaeorum* I,14,24; *In Iohannis Evangelium tractatus* XXX.10). In the attribute of immutability, Augustine found an effective means of fixing the ontological demarcation between God and creatures. This boundary, however, is not impassable: through the act of creation, God causally bridges the gap which separates infinite from finite being. But while God imparts existence to creatures, He does so in a manner commensurate with their limited capacity to participate in His perfection. As the supreme expression of Being, God is the Author of everything which does not exist in the fullest sense, as He alone exists (*De Civitate Dei* XII,2; *Soliloquia* I,1,3; *Enchiridion* IV,12).

In contrast to God, creatures are bound up with change and its degenerative effects (*Sermo* 7,7). This mutability coincides with a deficiency in their very constitution that is rooted in their creation from nothing (*De Natura Boni Manichaeum* 1). Some commentators have loosely characterized this negativity as a 'metaphysical' evil[9]. Strictly speaking, however, this defect does not stem from sin or privation, but merely points to the absence of perfections greater

[9] For discussions of the apparent evil accompanying mutability, see Rudolf Schneider, *Das Wandelbare Sein. Das Hauptthemen der Ontologie Augustins* (Philosophische Abhandlungen, Band VIII; Frankfurt am Main, 1938), pp. 47-49; Etienne Gilson, *Introduction à l'Étude de Saint Augustin* (Paris, 1943), pp. 185-186.

than those which a thing should possess by nature[10]. Thus, creatures share in Being, but tend toward non-being and corruption as well (*Confessiones* VII, 11,17). On the one hand, corporeal natures are subject to a physical corruption which results in their dissolution or outright annihilation. Created rational spirits, on the other hand, are corruptible in a more acute moral sense. While the souls of such beings are immortal, they are also mutable, and therefore, capable of destructive choices.

For Augustine, moral evil or sin originates in the will's voluntary movement from God (*Confessiones* VII,16,22; *De libero arbitrio* II,20,54; *De Doctrina Christiana* I,3,3). But this formula merely establishes the efficient cause of sin. In order to explain why this defective movement occurs at all, we must look to the character of creaturely origins. As Augustine asserts, 'everyone that is able to sin is made from nothing' (*Opus Imperfectum contra Julianum* V,39). While rational beings do not sin of necessity, their finitude and mutability as creatures open them to the possibility of a misuse of their free will. From Augustine's perspective, this faultline is only magnified by the legacy of Adam's fall. In consequence of this catastrophe, creation as a whole was disordered and humanity deprived of the gifts gratuitously bestowed upon it by God (*De Civitate Dei* XXI,12; XXII,24).

But just as God alone could bring creatures into being from nothingness, only a Divine Mediator could restore fallen humanity to a state of fellowship with its Creator (*De Civitate Dei* XX,6). Through Christ's perfect sacrifice, mankind was redeemed from the penal condition justly incurred by Original Sin. Despite this redemptive act, however, the effects of primal sin persist, including a clouding of reason and a drastic weakening of the will's capacity to avoid wrongdoing (*De libero arbitrio* III,18,52). For Augustine, this situation requires a further remedial measure: vitiated human nature must be continually 'assisted and healed by God's grace' (*De Perfectionis Justitiae Hominis* ii,3). By means of this unmerited gift, God supplants a delight in the commission of evil deeds with a delight in the performance of good ones, but only in a way that preserves the integrity of free will (*De gratia et libero arbitrio ad Valentinum* XX,41). In practical moral terms, grace liberates the will from an endless striving after elusive goods, so as to focus upon that immutable Good which can never be lost involuntarily.

Augustine's unequivocal affirmation of the necessity of grace must be placed in the context of his controversy with Pelagius. In opposition to Pelagius's theory of moral self-sufficiency (both before and after the Fall), Augustine emphasized our inability to do good in any resolute manner on our own. In the absence of grace, the finite will would be chronically susceptible to sin. From

[10] A. Anthony Moon, *The De Natura Boni of Saint Augustine*. A translation with introduction and commentary (The Catholic University of America Patristic Studies, Volume LXXXVIII; Washington, D.C., 1955), pp. 33-34.

this standpoint, humans cannot consistently will the good without Divine assistance, no more than they could have come into being without God's creative efficacy. Indeed, the contingency of humans as moral agents is an outgrowth of their ontological contingency as creatures. Thus, the doctrine of creation can be said to have shaped the core of Augustine's response to Pelagianism. In this connection, he even extends human contingency to a still unrealized, conditional future. According to his theology of grace (and the theory of predestination which it generated), no one is saved unless God wills it (*Enchiridion* XXVII, 103). In this sense, individual salvation hinges upon the mysterious dictates of the Divine will (*De correptione et gratia ad Valentinum* XIII,40). In effect, God provides the means to salvation to those whom He foresees as most receptive to His efficacious graces. Hence, our future can be said to be predestined, but only insofar as God infallibly anticipates whether we will freely accept or reject His incentives (*De libero arbitrio* III,3,8; *De Civitate Dei* V,9).

But while Augustine strove to reconcile human freedom with God's providential governance of all things, he never questioned the absolute sovereignty of the Divine will. In one of his clearest articulations of this position, Augustine contends that human wills are so bound by God's power that 'He can bend them wherever and whenever He pleases ... as He Himself ordains by His decrees' (*De gratia et libero arbitrio ad Valentium* XX,41). In the final analysis, humans are utterly reliant upon God for their personal salvation, just as they rely upon His gratuitousness for their redemption, their moral rectitude, and ultimately, their creation.

Conclusion

The doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* is a pervasive feature of Augustine's theology. Initially, it provided a pivotal element in his defense of orthodoxy against Manichaeism. But this seminal Christian teaching would exert an ongoing influence upon his work. In broad terms, the doctrine enabled Augustine to define the very character of created being: everything made from nothing is finite, mutable, and corruptible. On the basis of this presupposition, he would attempt to explain the motive of sin, the urgency of redemption, the necessity of grace, and the justness of predestination. In a very real sense, then, the topic of creation can be said to have established the general framework in which Augustine's theology developed. But commentators have rarely addressed this theology in its entirety. A major reason for this lacuna lies in the fact that Augustine's writings reveal an ongoing inquiry concerning a variety of compelling problems. Despite this dynamic quality, however, the internal unity of his theology must not be overlooked. While it was continually evolving, it was very much an evolving whole that displayed a marked continuity over his lifetime. In the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*, we find an illuminating referent

which enables us to grasp both the unity and the continuity of Augustine's thought, and potentially, to achieve a more systematic understanding of its contents.

Communis Loquendi Consuetudo: Zur Struktur von Augustinus, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*

Dorothea Weber, Vienna

Als Augustinus in den Jahren 388 bis 390 sein antihäretisches Werk[1] *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* verfaßte[2], befand er sich, wie man annehmen muß, in einem ihm bis dahin unbekannten Dilemma: Er, der aufgrund seiner Ausbildung und seines persönlichen Werdeganges als Rhetor[3] gewohnt war, für eine intellektuelle Elite mit hohen literarästhetischen Ansprüchen zu schreiben, erhielt, wie er selbst berichtet[4], von Freunden die wohlgemeinte Aufforderung, in seinem literarischen Kampf gegen die Manichäer auf die Ungebildeten Rücksicht zu nehmen, seine Interpretation der biblischen Schöpfungsgeschichte also dem geistigen Horizont jenes Personenkreises anzupassen, dem komplexe theologische bzw. philosophische Beweisführung noch fremd war. — Welchen Ausweg Augustinus aus diesem Zwiespalt gefunden hat, scheint auf den ersten Blick sehr deutlich zu sein: Die behutsame Einführung in die Interpretationsprinzipien[5], die Wiederholung von Argumenten und Schlüssen, die Untermauerung einzelner Thesen durch Beispiele aus dem täglichen Leben[6]

[1] Der antihäretische Charakter dieser Schrift scheint für Augustinus mehr als der exegetische im Vordergrund gestanden zu sein (cf. gen. ad litt. 8, 2, 5: *nam et ego contra Manichaeos, qui has litteras veteris testamenti non aliter quam oportet accipiendo errant, sed omnino non accipiendo et detestando blasphemant, duos conscripsi libros recenti tempore conversionis meae, cito volens eorum vel confutare deliramenta vel erigere intentionem ad quaerendam in litteris quas oderunt christianam et evangelicam fidem*); vgl. epist. 25, 2, wo Paulinus von Nola für die Werke gen. c. Manich., mor. eccl., mor. Manich., vera relig. und lib. arb. die Bezeichnung *Pentateuchus ... contra Manichaeos* findet.

[2] Die Verfasserin bereitet eine Ausgabe dieser Schrift für das CSEL vor.

[3] Den Einfluß der Rhetorik auf seine frühen Schriften kritisierte Augustinus selbst in conf. 9, 4,7: *ibi* (auf dem Landgut in Cassiciacum) *quid egerim in litteris iam quidem servientibus tibi, sed adhuc superbiae scholam tamquam in pausatione anhelantibus, testantur libri disputati cum praesentibus et cum ipso me solo coram te.*

[4] Gen. c. Manich. 1, 1,1: *placuit enim mihi quorundam vere Christianorum sententia, qui ... me benevolentissime monuerunt, ut communem loquendi consuetudinem non desererem.*

[5] Vgl. z. B. 1, 22, 34, wo Augustinus über die kausative Bedeutung bestimmter Verba in der Bibelsprache handelt.

[6] Z. B. 1, 6, 10 (*non enim debemus esse similes istis, qui omnipotentem deum non credunt aliquid de nihilo facere potuisse, cum considerant fabros et quoslibet opifices non posse aliquid fabricare, nisi habuerint unde fabricent. et ligna enim adiuvant fabrum, et argentum adiuvat argentarium, et aurum aurificem, et terra figulum adiuvat, ut possit perficere opera sua*); 1, 16, 25 (*si enim in alicuius opificis officinam imperitus intraverit, videt ibi multa instrumenta quorum causas ignorat et, si multum est insipiens, superflua putat...*).

und aus der Umgangssprache[7] zeigen, daß er sein Zielpublikum nie aus den Augen verlor. Dieser erste Eindruck findet in der bewußt einfachen Sprache des Werks seine Bestätigung: Komplizierte Perioden und rhetorische Figuren sind die Ausnahme, eine effektvolle Rhythmisierung wird eher selten eingesetzt[8]; Augustinus kam also der Mahnung seiner Freunde nach, von der *communis loquendi consuetudo* nicht abzuweichen. — All dies sowie die Tatsache, daß er im Verlaufe seines Lebens weitere, profundere Genesis-Exegesen[9] vorlegte, mögen schuld daran gewesen sein, daß *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* erst in den letzten Jahren Beachtung von seiten der Wissenschaft, in erster Linie der Theologie[10], gefunden hat. — Im folgenden sollen erstmals Beobachtungen zur Struktur des Werkes vorgestellt werden[11].

Obwohl erst der neuzeitlichen Bibelkritik die Erkenntnis vorbehalten blieb, daß die Schöpfungsgeschichte von gen. 1-3 aus zwei unterschiedlich alten Erzählungen zusammengesetzt ist[12], war bereits der christlichen Spätantike bewußt, daß sie in zwei Partien vorgetragen wird[13]; den heute als Priesterbericht bezeichneten Teil (gen. 1, 1 - 2, 4a) kommentiert Augustinus in Buch 1, den sogenannten Jahwistenbericht in Buch 2 (gen. 2, 4b - 3, 24). Der Prolog am Beginn von Buch 1 rechtfertigt zunächst (1, 1, 1), wie bereits erwähnt, den Entschluß, die Interpretation auf einem allgemein verständlichen Niveau vorzutragen, dann (1, 1, 2) erfolgt die Begründung des Themas: Nur jene, die über die orthodoxe Exegese Bescheid wüßten, könnten gegenüber den provokanten Fragen der Manichäer bestehen[14], die ja die Authentizität der biblischen

[7] Z. B. 1, 7, 11 (*innumerabiles tales locutiones in scripturis divinis inveniuntur sicut in consuetudine sermonis nostri, cum id quod certissime speramus futurum dicimus iam factum* (Mauriner: *iam factum puta*)); 1, 22, 34 (*talibus locutionibus etiam abundat nostra consuetudo, cum dicimus laetum diem, quia nos laetos facit, et pigrum frigus, quia nos pigros facit, et fossam caecam, quia nos eam non videmus, et linguam politam, quia verba polita facit; postremo etiam quietum ab omnibus molestiis tempus dicimus, in quo nos ab omnibus molestiis quieti sumus*).

[8] Eine solche findet sich am ehesten in den polemischen Partien (z. B. 1, 1, 2).

[9] *De Genesi ad litteram liber imperfectus* (393-394), die letzten Bücher der *Confessiones* (397-401) und das 12 Bücher umfassende Werk *De Genesi ad litteram* (vollendet 416).

[10] Vgl. z. B. R.J. O'Connell, 'The *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* and the Origin of the Soul', *RÉA* 39 (1993), S. 129-141, mit älterer Sekundärliteratur. R.J. Teske (Saint Augustine on Genesis. Two Books on Genesis Against the Manichees and On the Literal Interpretation of Genesis: An Unfinished Book (The Fathers of The Church 84; Washington, 1991)), der eine kritische Edition des Werks als Desiderat bezeichnete (37), machte die vermeintliche negative Bewertung des Werks in retract. 1, 10 für das Desinteresse der theologisch orientierten Fachwelt verantwortlich (36f.).

[11] Eine Publikation über Probleme der Textkritik ist in Vorbereitung.

[12] Ein Überblick über die Forschungsgeschichte bei H.-J. Kraus, *Geschichte der historisch-kritischen Erforschung des Alten Testaments* (Neukirchen, ²1969).

[13] Vgl. bereits Philon, opif. 129: ἐπιλογιζόμενος ... τὴν κοσμοποιίαν ... φησίν· 'Αὕτη ἡ βίβλος γενέσεως ...' Das Wort ἐπιλογιζόμενος hat bei Augustinus in *quaedam conclusio* (2, 1, 1; s. u.) eine Entsprechung.

[14] 1, 1, 2: ... *multi ad quaerendum pigri sunt, nisi per molestias et insultationes haereticorum quasi de somno excitentur et de imperitia sua erubescant sibi et de illa imperitia sua periclitari se sentiant. qui homines si bonae sunt fidei, non cedunt haereticis, sed quid eis respondeant diligenter inquirunt.*

Schöpfungsgeschichte leugneten. Der Prolog zu Buch 1 umfaßt also zwei Abschnitte. Definiert man — ganz schematisch — den Epilog am Ende von Buch 2 als jenes Textstück, das nach der Bibelerklärung steht, so zeigt sich, daß auch er zweigeteilt ist und daß in diesen zwei Teilen auf die beiden Abschnitte des Prologs in umgekehrter Reihenfolge Bezug genommen wird: Im ersten (2, 28, 42 - 29, 43) referiert Augustinus die Fragen, die die Manichäer an den Genesis-Text stellen (etwa: *quis fecit diabolum?* (2, 28, 42)), und fügt ihnen jeweils die von katholischer Position aus richtige Antwort bei. Die einleitende Wendung (*interrogent secundum morem suum, et respondeamus sicut dominus donare dignatur*) greift auf den zweiten Teil des Prologs zurück (1, 1, 2: *sed ideo divina providentia multos diversi erroris haereticos esse permittit, ut cum insultant nobis et interrogant nos ea quae nescimus, vel sic excutiamus pigritiam et divinas scripturas nosse cupiamus*) und erzeugt ebenso wie das knapp zuvor (2, 25, 38) aus dem Prolog (1, 1, 2) wiederholte Zitat von I Cor. 11, 19 eine Brücke zu jenem. Im zweiten, abschließenden Teil, der nur wenige Sätze umfaßt (2, 29, 43: *cum ergo illa illi et nos ista dicimus...*), beteuert Augustinus, das vorliegende Werk nach bestem Wissen abgefaßt zu haben. — Es kann also festgehalten werden, daß der Prolog und der Epilog sorgfältig aufeinander abgestimmt sind und wie ein zweifacher Rahmen die Exegese umschließen.

Abgesehen vom Prolog bietet Buch 1 zuächst eine historische Erläuterung des Priesterberichts (capp. 2, 3 - 22, 34), die durch einen Binnenepilog abgeschlossen wird. Dann, in einem weiteren Großabschnitt, deutet Augustinus den Text *secundum prophetiam*: Auf einer ersten Ebene weisen die sieben Schöpfungstage auf die sieben Epochen der Menschheitsgeschichte voraus (capp. 23, 35 - 41), wie dies in der Hexaëmeron- bzw. Heptaëmeron-Literature bereits vorgegeben war[15]; in einem zweiten exegetischen Ansatz (capp. 24, 42 - 25, 43) repräsentieren die sieben Tage die sieben Phasen im Leben jedes Gläubigen, vom ersten Erwachen des Glaubens bis zur Ruhe in Gott nach dem Tod[16]. Im ersten Buch wird demnach kenntlich, daß die Zweiteilung, die den Interpretationsprinzipien *secundum historiam* und *secundum prophetiam*[17] entspricht, von einer Dreiteilung überlagert wird, indem der Abschnitt *secundum prophetiam* seinerseits in zwei Partien unterteilt ist.

In Buch 2, der Erklärung des Jahwistenberichts, wird vor Beginn der Exegese die Struktur deutlich gemacht: *hic ... totus sermo primo secundum historiam discutiendus est, deinde secundum prophetiam* (2, 2, 3). Es liegen also auch hier zwei Großabschnitte vor (capp. 3, 4 - 23, 36 und 24, 37 - 27, 41); wiederum

[15] Dazu K.-H. Schwarte, *Die Vorgeschichte der augustinischen Weltalterlehre* (Antiquitas Reihe 1, Bd. 12; Bonn, 1966).

[16] Diese Interpretation hat ihre Wurzeln in der im Hellenismus beliebten Analogie zwischen Individuum und Kosmos; vgl. auch Philon, opif. 105.

[17] 1, 23, 41: *... ista expositio per ordinem dierum sic indicat tamquam historiam rerum factarum, ut praedicationem futurorum maxime observet.*

wird der zweite in zwei Ansätzen vorgetragen, deren einer (cap. 24, 37) auf die Situation eines Menschenkollektivs abzielt, der andere (capp. 25, 38 - 27, 41) auf jene des Individuums; ihre Abfolge entspricht jener von Buch 1: Zunächst erklärt der Autor, mit der Erschaffung Adams und Evas sei auf Christus und die Kirche vorausgewiesen, dann deutet er den Sündenfall auf die Bedrohtheit jedes einzelnen rechtgläubigen Christen, von den satanischen Häretikern verführt zu werden. — Das Werk weist also eine konsequent durchgehaltene Struktur auf, indem sich die beiden Bücher jeweils in zwei bzw. drei Abschnitte gliedern und durch den — zweifachen — Rahmen, den Prolog und Epilog gemeinsam bilden, zusammengehalten werden. Im folgenden sollen jene Bereiche vorgestellt werden, die dieser strengen Parallelität zu widersprechen scheinen.

Die erste diesbezügliche Beobachtung betrifft die Partien der historischen Exegese: In Buch 1 zitiert Augustinus jeweils eine Passage des Bibeltextes und fügt ihr seine Interpretation an; die Haupteinschnitte fallen naturgemäß jeweils mit dem Ende des einen bzw. dem Anfang des nächsten Schöpfungstages zusammen[18]. In Buch 2 hingegen wird der gesamte Jahwistenbericht geschlossen und in voller Länge auszitiert (2, 1, 1 - 2) und erst dann die Exegese angeschlossen. Freilich konnte Augustinus mit Lesern rechnen, die nun, durch Buch 1 vorbereitet, einer durchgehenden Interpretation bereits gewachsen waren, doch darf man wohl auch eine gestalterische Absicht des Autors hinter diesem Vorgehen vermuten: Die genannte Variation in der Präsentation erweist sich aus einem anderen Blickwinkel als Weiterführung der Disposition von Buch 1; Augustinus behält nämlich die nach Schöpfungstagen gegliederte Darstellung insofern bei, als nun, im Jahwistenbericht, nach der Textform, die Augustinus vor sich hatte, nur ein einziger Tag genannt wird, an dem die gesamte Schöpfung stattfindet (*... cum factus esset dies, quo fecit deus caelum et terram...*). Eben diesen Unterschied zwischen den zwei Genesis-Teilen hebt Augustinus besonders deutlich hervor (2, 3, 4: *superius septem dies numerantur, nunc unus dicitur dies...*) und kommentiert ihn sorgfältig (s. u.).

Ein weiterer und letzter Punkt ist zu nennen, in dem die Struktur der Erwartung des Lesers, zumindest des modernen Lesers, zuwiderläuft. Es handelt sich um den Prolog von Buch 2: Mit einem Blick läßt sich feststellen, daß die wenigen Sätze, die vor dem ausführlichen Bibelzitat stehen, diese Bezeichnung nicht verdienen, da sie eine von jeder Prologtopik freie, bloß auf das Textverständnis abzielende Überleitung vom ersten zum zweiten Schöpfungsbericht enthalten. Jene Partie hingegen, die sehr wohl die Funktion eines Prologs erfüllt, indem sie die Gliederung des Buchs und die wichtigsten Interpretationskriterien vorstellt, findet sich — auffälligerweise — erst nach dem langen Zitat des Jahwistenberichts (2, 2, 3). Augustinus rückte durch dieses Vorgehen die beiden biblischen Erzählungen ganz eng aneinander, und dafür hatte er

[18] Vgl. z. B. die Buchgliederung von Ambr., hex., nach den Schöpfungstagen.

einen guten Grund; dieser liegt im Wortlaut der lateinischen Bibel: Die Schnittstelle nämlich zwischen dem Priesterbericht und dem Jahwistenbericht (gen. 2, 4a) befindet sich mitten im Satz: *hic est liber creaturae caeli et terrae, cum factus esset dies*[19], *quo fecit deus caelum et terram*[20] (Textform der Vetus Latina). Der Hauptsatz gehört nach Augustins Verständnis gleichsam als Explicit zur ersten, der Nebensatz zur zweiten Erzählung (2, 1, 1: *post enumerationem et expositionem dierum septem interposita est quasi quaedam conclusio, et appellatus est liber creaturae caeli et terrae quidquid superius dictum est...*; bzw. 2, 3, 4, am Anfang der Exegese des Jahwistenberichts: *factus est ergo dies, quo die fecit deus caelum et terram...*). Um das lange Schriftzitat zu Beginn des zweiten Buchs nicht mit einem fragmentierten Satz beginnen zu müssen, sah sich Augustinus offenbar gezwungen, die Buchgrenze zu verwischen und den eigentlichen Prolog erst hinter dem Zitat zu placieren. Diesen zunächst ungünstig wirkenden Sachzwang konnte Augustinus in zweierlei Hinsicht nutzen. Für die Struktur des Werks ergibt sich folgender Aspekt: Dadurch, daß sich das Zitat des Jahwistenberichts gewissermaßen als 'Gelenk' zwischen Buch 1 und 2 erweist — der Prolog zu Buch 2 ist ihm ja nachgesetzt —, ist die Zweiteilung (Buch 1, Buch 2) von einer Dreiteilung überlagert (Buch 1; 2, 1, 1 - 2 (Überleitung und auszitierter Jahwistenbericht); Rest von Buch 2). Es kehrt also hier im Großen wieder, was für jedes einzelne Buch bereits festgestellt wurde. Dafür, daß dies nicht bloßer Zufall ist, sondern einer gestalterischen Absicht entsprungen sein dürfte, spricht die Beobachtung, daß in dieser Dreier-Gliederung der erste sowie der dritte Teil etwa denselben Umfang aufweisen. Doch auch für die Intention des Werks ergeben sich aus der verwischten Buchgrenze Konsequenzen: Die Manichäer hatten am sogenannten Priesterbericht nicht zuletzt deswegen Kritik geübt, weil ihnen die dort vorliegende Konzeption der Zeit als unsinnig bzw. in sich widersprüchlich erschien[21]. Indem nun Augustinus die beiden Teile der biblischen Erzählung durch Überlappung von Buchgrenze und Dispositionselementen eng aneinanderrückt, ja sogar die syntaktische Einheit des biblischen Schöpfungsberichts

[19] In gen. ad litt. 5, 1, 3 erwägt Augustinus, diese Worte noch zum Abschluß des ersten Schöpfungsberichts zu zählen; dies entspricht übrigens dem modernen Verständnis der Stelle (vgl. J. Scharbert, *Genesis 1-11, Kommentar zum Alten Testament mit der Einheitsübersetzung* (Die neue Echter Bibel; Würzburg, ³1990)).

[20] In der Vulgata lautet der Text: *istae generationes caeli et terrae quando creatae sunt in die quo fecit dominus deus caelum et terram.* In Vorwegnahme des neuzeitlichen Verständnisses dieser Stelle hatte — abgesehen von Augustinus (s. Anm. 19) — z. B. Beda (princ. gen. 1, 2 (CC 118A, lin. 1225)) die Worte *in die quo* etc. als eigenen Satz aufgefaßt.

[21] Vgl. 1, 2, 3 - 2, 4 (zu *in principio fecit deus caelum et terram*; eine ausführliche Darstellung der Reaktion Augustins in gen. c. Manich. auf die manichäische Kritik an gen. 1, 1 bei G. Pelland, *Cinq études d'Augustin sur le début de la Genèse* (Coll. Théologie, Recherches VIII; Montréal / Tournai, 1972) S. 19-22); 1, 10, 16 (zu *et facta est vespera et factum est mane, dies unus*); 1, 14, 20 (zur Erschaffung der Sonne erst am vierten Tag).

dem Leser vor Augen führt[22], gewinnt er ein starkes Argument für die Einheit der Aussage in beiden Partien: Die sieben Tage von gen. 1 bedeuteten keine wie auch immer gearteten Zeiteinheiten, sondern seien nur eingeführt, um als *prophetia* auf die Geschichte bzw. die Entwicklung des Menschen vorauszuweisen.

Dadurch, daß Augustinus in diesem Werk, das er für ein ungeschultes Publikum verfaßte, mit einer an sich einfachen Disposition eine Lesehilfe gab, die ebenso wie die explizit angeführten Argumente dem manichäischen Genesisverständnis den Boden entzog, erweist er sich als Rhetor und Pädagoge in einem.

[22] Vgl. die das Zitat einleitende Wendung *sic enim se continet* (2, 1, 1), was etwa mit 'so lautet der Text im Zusammenhang' übersetzt werden kann. Zu *continere* in dieser Bedeutung cf. quaest. hept. 7, 3 (CC 33, 336, 44: *ita se narrationis ordo continet*). Dies ist eine der wenigen Stellen, an der die an sich verdienstvolle Übersetzung von Teske ('this is its content') zu verbessern ist.

Quem iudicem potes Ambrosio reperire meliorem? (Augustinus, *op. impf.* 1,2)

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Mit der als Titel gewählten Frage und dem Hinweis auf die lobenden Worte des Pelagius über Ambrosius[1] beginnt Augustinus die Widerlegung der zweiten gegen ihn gerichteten Schrift Julians, in der sich der verbannte Pelagianer noch einmal bemühte, Augustinus als Manichäer zahlreicher Denkfehler und Irrlehren in der Erbsündenlehre und der Auffassung von Ehe und Taufe zu überführen. Nur den um eine Sammlung möglichst aller Augustinuswerke bemühten Zisterziensern ist es zu verdanken, daß das zur Unterscheidung von der ersten Stellungnahme *Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* bezeichnete letzte Werk Augustins eine gewisse Verbreitung gefunden hat. Vollständig bewahrt ist es neben einer aus der Grande Chartreuse stammenden Handschrift des 12. Jh.[2] nur in Zisterziensercodices, zwei davon sind erhalten und einige weitere aus Bibliothekskatalogen und aus der Edition der Mauriner nachweisbar[3]. Wenn auch manche Aussagen aus dieser Refutation Augustins öfter zitiert werden, etwa in Artikeln zu 'Erbsünde' oder 'Erbschuld'[4], wird der eigentliche Wert dieses Opus darin gesehen, daß der Bischof von Hippo die langatmigen, scharf formulierten Aussagen seines Gegners Satz für Satz abschreiben und jedem Abschnitt oder Satz seine ebenfalls weitschweifigen und harten Entgegnungen hinzufügen ließ. Er arbeitete daran neben der Retractatio seiner Werke: im Jahr 428 war er, wie aus einem Brief hervorgeht[5], bei der Widerlegung des vierten Buches angelangt, und als ihn zwei Jahre später der Tod ereilte, hatte er sechs der acht Bücher Julians widerlegt und damit erhalten. Mit den Argumenten und der Argumentationstechnik der beiden erbitterten Kontrahenten

[1] *De quo magister tuus Pelagius ait quod eius fidem et purissimum in scripturis sensum ne inimicus quidem ausus est reprehendere.* Dieses Zitat findet sich mehrfach bei Augustinus, z.B. *Grat. Chr.* 47; *nupt. conc.* 1,40; *c. Iul.* 1,30; *op. impf.* 1,48; 3,56; 4,106.118; 6,21.

[2] Heute in Grenoble (Codex 212).

[3] Troyes 40 (aus Clairvaux), s. XII, und Madrid Bibl. Nac. 520, s. XIV (den Maurinern unbekannt); dazu kommen der im zweiten Buch abbrechende Codex London BL Royal 5 C. VI, s. XIV (den Maurinern nicht bekannt), und die von den Maurinern herangezogenen, nicht erhaltenen Hss. *Mar.* (aus der Prämonstratenserabtei St. Marien, Auxerre), *Reg.* (aus dem Zisterzienserkloster Port-Royal-des-Champs bei Versailles) und *d* ('alius codex d in octavo emendatus').

[4] Z.B. von J. Auer, *LThK* 3², 970 s.v. Erbsünde (Verweis auf 1,48 und 6,22) und von L. Scheffczyck, *Hb. theol. Grundbegriffe* 1,330 s.v. Erbschuld (Verweis auf 1,48).

[5] *Ep.* 224 an den karthagischen Diakon Quodvultdeus.

hat sich zuletzt N. Cipriani in seiner These 'La contoversia tra Giuliano d'Eclano e S. Agostino nell'opus imperfectum. Due teologie a confronto'[6] ausführlich auseinandergesetzt.

Die erste Hälfte dieses umfangreichen, über 550 Migne-Spalten umfassenden Werkes habe ich vor zwanzig Jahren im CSEL herausgebracht als erste moderne Edition seit der dreihundert Jahre zurückliegenden Ausgabe der Mauriner[7]. Die Erstellung des zweiten Teiles, der Bücher vier bis sechs, mußte ich zurückstellen zugunsten der von O. Faller begonnenen Edition der Briefe des Ambrosius; erst jetzt kann ich, nach Abschluß des vierten Bandes dieser Edition, wieder zu Augustinus zurückkehren und hoffe, im nächsten Jahr das *opus imperfectum*, soweit es die Edition betrifft, zu einem 'opus perfectum' zu machen.

Augustinus beruft sich darin zum Beweis seiner Rechtgläubigkeit auf zahlreiche bekannte und manche heute weniger bekannte Gewährsmänner, wie Basilius von Cäsarea, Johannes Chrysostomus, Gregor von Nazianz, Hieronymus, Hilarius von Poitiers, Reticius von Autun[8], keinen von ihnen jedoch nennt er so oft wie den *catholicus Ambrosius*, und von keinem anderen Autor führt er auch so viele wörtliche Zitate an, wenn auch zugegebenermaßen gewisse Stellen sehr oft wiederholt werden. Entnommen sind sie folgenden Schriften des Ambrosius: dem großen Lukaskommentar, *De paenitentia, De Noe, De Isaac vel anima, De Apologia prophetae David* und zwei nicht erhaltenen Schriften, dem Isaiaskommentar, den Cassiodor im 6. Jh. vergeblich aufzutreiben versuchte[9], und einem Werk, das Augustinus schon während seines Aufenthaltes in Mailand studiert hatte, mit dem Titel *De sacramento regenerationis sive de philosophia*[10]. Mehrfach bezeichnet Augustinus in diesem Werk Ambrosius ausdrücklich als seinen Lehrer und zweimal als seinen Taufspender[11], während er in seinem übrigen großen Œuvre nur ganz selten auf die Taufe Bezug nimmt und sich in keiner seiner großen theologischen Abhandlungen auf Ambrosius beruft. Von den Confessiones abgesehen, die in ihrer Thematik einen Sonderfall darstellen, wird Ambrosius erst häufiger genannt in jenen Schriften, in denen sich Augustinus mit der Lehre der Pelagianer auseinandersetzt. Augustinus' seltene Berufung auf Ambrosius ist sicher der Grund dafür, daß dem Mailänder Bischof und seiner Wirkung auf den großen Bischof von Hippo lange Zeit wenig Beachtung geschenkt wurde.

Um eine Darstellung der Forschungslage zu dieser Frage bemühte sich Ernst Dassmann in dem 1986 im Augustinus-Lexikon erschienenen Artikel

[6] Roma, 1992 (Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum).

[7] CSEL 85/1 (Wien, 1974). PL 45,1049-1608.

[8] Z.B. *op. impf.* 1,55.59.

[9] Vgl. *Inst.* 1,3,6.

[10] Vgl. A. Pincherle, 'Ambrogio ed Agostino', *Augustinianum* 14 (1974), 385-407 (392); G. Madec, *Saint Ambroise et la philosophie* (Etudes Augustiniennes; Paris, 1974), 247ff. mit einer Zusammenstellung der Fragmente.

[11] Vgl. z.B. 5,5.41; 6,6.21.

'Ambrosius'[12]. Er zeigt darin nicht nur, wie wenig dessen theologischer Einfluß mangels Detailstudien erforscht ist, 'schwer abschätzbar', meinte er, müsse auch die Hilfe bleiben, die der Mailänder Bischof angesichts der nicht sehr tiefgreifenden persönlichen Beziehungen dem Augustinus bei der Überwindung seiner intellektuellen Schwierigkeiten geleistet habe, und betont die große Wirkung des neuplatonischen Gedankengutes, das Augustinus durch Kontakt zu christlichen Neuplatonikern und eigene Lektüre in Mailand kennengelernt hat; in den Confessiones habe Augustinus, meint Dassmann, die Wirkung dieser Schriften abgeschwächt und setze 'allein auf die durch Ambrosius verkörperte Autorität der Kirche bzw. Hl. Schrift, der zu glauben allein vernünftig ist'. Als äußerst umstritten bezeichnet Dassmann auch die Frage, 'ob sich Augustinus zu Recht oder Unrecht in seinem Kampf gegen Pelagius und seine Anhänger auf Ambrosius beruft, und in welchem Maß der Mailänder Bischof wirklich als Wegbereiter der augustinischen Gnadenlehre auf dem Boden einer neubelebten Paulusexegese betrachtet werden kann', und betont, daß sich im Streit mit den Pelagianern 'die Inanspruchnahme des Ambrosius durch Augustinus im wesentlichen auf nur drei Textstellen beschränkt'.

Dieses Urteil ist noch stark geprägt von einer lange Zeit herrschenden Beurteilung des Mailänder Bischofs allein als eines großen Kirchenpolitikers, nicht aber als bedeutenden theologischen Schriftstellers; seine literarische Leistung war belastet vom Vorwurf enger Abhängigkeit von Vorgängertexten, angefangen mit der Kritik seines Zeitgenossen Hieronymus, der ihn mit einer *informis cornicula* verglich, die sich mit fremden Federn schmückt[13], bis etwa in unsere Tage: in dem noch immer viel zitierten Werk von H. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics*, ist Ambrosius als 'an unscrupulous plagiarist' abgeurteilt[14]. Erst in den letzten Jahren setzte ein Umdenken ein in der Beurteilung der literarischen Leistung des Mailänder Bischofs, wofür auch meine Forschungen, speziell zum Briefcorpus, etwas beitragen konnten[15]. Für das moderne Originalitätsdenken erscheint seine Art der Quellenbenützung, Vorgängertexte ohne Namensnennung zu übernehmen, zwar äußerst bedenklich, sie war jedoch durchaus üblich in der Antike, der Autorenrecht bzw. Urheberrecht volkommen unbekannt war. Der Bearbeiter, vor allem eines Schul- oder Fachtextes, gab die überarbeitete Form einer Schrift immer unter seinem eigenen Namen heraus, weswegen solche Schriften, etwa zu Grammatik, Rhetorik oder Geographie, fast ausschließlich nur in spätantiker Form erhalten sind. Es entsprach daher der Tradition der Fachliteratur, daß Ambrosius griechische Auslegungen, wie des Origenes, Basilius,

[12] Vol. 1 (Basel, 1986-1994), 270-285.

[13] Vgl. *Translat. libri Didymi de spiritu sancto, praef.*

[14] Göteborg, 1958, 372.

[15] Vgl. CSEL 82 tom. II (*Epistularum* libri VII-VIII) und tom. III (*Epistularum* liber decimus, *Epistulae extra collectionem, Gesta concili Aquileiensis*), rec. M. Zelzer (Wien, 1982. 1990); ead., 'Symmachus, Ambrosius, Hieronymus und das römische Erbe', *Studia Patristica* 28 (1993), 146-157; Ch. Jacob, 'Ambrosius', *LThK* 1[3] (1993), 495-497.

Athanasius und Philon, übernommen und unter eigenem Namen publiziert hat. Die Übernahme erfolgte jedoch nicht kritiklos; wie Strukturuntersuchungen zeigen konnten, ging er recht selbständig und oft sehr raffiniert mit dem vorgegebenen Material um[16]. Die Fragestellung muß sich ändern: die Frage, welcher Quellen sich der Mailänder Bischof bedient hat, ist wesentlich zu ergänzen durch die Untersuchung, was er daraus gemacht hat[17].

Für Ambrosius waren die Jahre, die Augustinus in Mailand verbrachte, eine Zeit wichtiger kirchenpolitischer Tätigkeit. In das Jahr, in dem Augustinus, vom Heiden und Stadtpräfekten Symmachus vermittelt, als Rhetoriklehrer nach Mailand kam, fällt der Versuch des Stadtpräfekten, in einer kunstvoll gestalteten Bittschrift die Rücknahme der heidenfeindlichen Maßnahmen Gratians zu erreichen[18]. Wie Ambrosius mit seiner kompromißlosen Haltung die Ablehnung der den Kaiserhof beeindruckenden Relatio erreichte, ging er zwei Jahre später als Sieger im Streit mit dem arianisch gesinnten Kaiserhaus hervor nach seinem für damalige Verhältnisse revolutionären Grundsatz, *imperator intra ecclesiam non supra ecclesiam est*[19]. Diesen harten und für die Arianer letztlich erfolglosen Kampf um die Abtretung einer Kirche hat Augustinus miterlebt und im neunten Buch seiner Confessiones berichtet[20]. Erst nach Augustins Rückkehr nach Afrika war der Mailänder Bischof, wegen der Affaire um die Zerstörung der Synagoge von Kallinikum politisch beiseite geschoben[21], wieder für einige Zeit intensiv literarisch tätig; aus dieser Schaffensperiode stammen u.a. die große Lukaserklärung und das Pflichtenwerk De officiis, zwei von Augustinus geschätzte und benützte Werke[22]. Die bewußte Anknüpfung an alte literarische Traditionen und die für uns auffällige Verwertung heidnisch-philosophischer Quellen in dem nach Cicero gestalteten ethischen Werk geht auf das Bestreben des Ambrosius zurück, der als römischer Adeliger stark geprägt war von der Renaissance des 4. Jh. und ihren wiederbelebten literarischen Traditionen, vor allem seinen eigenen Stand zum neuen, zukunftsträchtigen Glauben zu bekehren; erst mit der Schlacht am Frigidus 394 fanden die letzten heidnischen Restaurationsbestrebungen ein Ende.

[16] Vgl. M. Gleissner, *Aufbau und Argumentationstechnik in Ambrosius 'De excessu fratris II'* (Wien, 1989, maschinschr.); M. Wandl, *Studien zu Ambrosius' drei Büchern 'De virginibus'* (Wien, 1990, maschinschr.).

[17] Diese geänderte Fragestellung gilt etwa auch für das Verhältnis der Regula Benedicti zu ihrer Quelle, der Regula Magistri.

[18] Seine beiden Stellungnahmen hat Ambrosius zusammen mit der Relatio des Symmachus in das von ihm zusammengestellte zehnte Briefbuch aufgenommen (*ep.* 72,72a,73 (Maur. 17,17a,18)).

[19] Vgl. *ep.* 75a, 36. Dokumentiert ist dieser Streit in den Ambrosiusbriefen 75,75a,76 (Maur. 21,21a,20) aus dem zehnten Briefbuch.

[20] Vgl. *Conf.* 9,7,15.

[21] Vgl. M. Zelzer, CSEL 82/3, XXXIII und LXXXVI (zu den Briefen 74, extra coll. 1 und 1a).

[22] Vgl. *ep.* 82,21, wo Augustinus das ambrosianische Ethikwerk als *libros utilium praeceptionum plenos* bezeichnete, und *ep.* 147,18ff.52.

In die letzten Lebensjahre des Ambrosius fällt der Beginn des fruchtbaren Wirkens Augustins als Bischofs von Hippo und wohl in das Todesjahr des Ambrosius, 397, die Abfassung der Confessiones, in denen Augustinus auf berührende Weise die ersten Begegnungen mit dem Mailänder Bischof schildert; erinnert sei nur an die Worte: *paterne me suscepit ille homo dei*[23]. Er bewunderte den Lebenswandel des erfolgreichen und vielbeschäftigten Bischofs, der nach dem Vorbild des Eusebius von Vercelli in einer Priestergemeinschaft lebte; auf sie verweist er nicht nur mehrfach[24], sie diente auch ihm später zum Vorbild, was bisher zu wenig beachtet wurde. Wie nicht anders zu erwarten, fiel es ihm — schon auf Grund seiner Herkunft — aber schwer, mit dem immer auch politisch aktiven Bischof aus römischem Adel in Kontakt zu kommen[25].

Wie Ambrosius das Schrifttum der alexandrinischen Theologen herangezogen hat zum Lernen und Lehren, als er überraschend vom Staatsmann zum Bischof avancierte[26], verspürte Augustinus das Bedürfnis, sich auf sein Amt mit Werken seines Mailänder Lehrers 'einzustimmen', und verschaffte sich von Paulinus von Nola Abschriften von Ambrosiuswerken[27].

Trotz seiner großen schöpferischen Leistungen baut auch Augustinus auf Quellen auf, die er nach antiker Manier nicht nennt, und seine Leistungen werden nicht geschmälert, wenn der theologische Einfluß des Ambrosius auf ihn als bedeutend angesetzt wird. Es war nicht so sehr die Bedrängnis durch die Argumentation Julians, die Augustinus sich auf Ambrosius als seinen Lehrer berufen ließ, seinen *doctor* und Julians *destructor*[28]; daß jedenfalls Augustinus — anders als von Dassmann im zitierten Artikel vertreten — die von Ambrosius gewährte Hilfe bei der Überwindung seiner Schwierigkeiten als hoch bewertet hat, geht aus dem um 413/414 verfaßten Lehrbrief *De videndo deo* hervor, worin er Ambrosius als seinen *plantator* und *rigator* bezeichnete, da *per illius os potissimum* ihn der Herr vom Irrtum befreite[29].

Bei der Verteidigung ihrer Standpunkte setzten Julian und Augustin wie in einem Rechtsstreit alle verfügbaren rhetorischen Stilmittel ein und scheuten auch nicht vor gegenseitiger Beschimpfung zurück[30]; in einem solchen Fall mußten beide Seiten selbstverständlich die verwendeten Quellen und ihre Verfasser nennen.

[23] *Conf.* 5,13,23.

[24] Vgl. *conf.* 6,3,3; 8,6,15 (*erat monasterium Mediolani plenum bonis fratribus extra urbis moenia sub Ambrosio nutritore*); *mor. eccl. cath.* 1,33,70.

[25] Auf Ambrosius und sein nicht erhaltenes Werk *De sacramento regenerationis sive de philosophia* ist wohl die Angabe *Sol.* 2,26 zu beziehen, wo er bedauert, seine Zuneigung nicht zeigen zu können.

[26] Vgl. *de off.* 1,4.

[27] Vgl. *ep.* 31 aus der Jahreswende 395/396.

[28] Z.B. *op. impf.* 5,41. Vgl. E. Dassmann, 'Tam Ambrosius quam Cyprianus' (c. Iul. op. impf. 4,112). Augustins Helfer im pelagianischen Streit', *Oecumenica et Patristica, Festschr. W. Schneemelcher* (Chambéry-Genf, 1989), 259-268.

[29] *Ep.* 147,52.

[30] Vgl. Cipriani (o. Anm. 6), XXff.

Mit vollem Recht und nicht nur aus großer Bedrängnis heraus versicherte daher Augustinus knapp vor seinem Tod im letzten Buch des opus imperfectum: *Meus est praeceptor Ambrosius, cuius non solum libros legi sed verba etiam loquentis audivi et per eum lavacrum regenerationis accepi.* Und glaubte hinzufügen zu müssen: *Longe sum quidem impar meritis eius, sed confiteor et profiteor me in hac causa nihil ab hoc meo praeceptore differre*[31].

[31] *Op. impf.* 6,21.

XV. JEROME

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Saint Jérôme et l'*Altercatio Luciferiani et Orthodoxi*: '*A nimia salsitate Sardorum*'

Aline CANELLIS, Saint-Etienne

L'*Altercatio Luciferiani et Orthodoxi*, première œuvre polémique de Jérôme, composée sans doute en Orient dans les années 378-379 est un débat fictif entre un disciple de l'Evêque sarde Lucifer de Calaris, et un Orthodoxe anonyme, qui présente les idées de Jérôme. Tous deux sont en désaccord sur le sort que doivent subir les hérétiques ariens, partisans du prêtre Arius.

Le contexte historique et théologique évoqué dans l'*Altercatio* était complexe. Les évêques occidentaux, faillis de Rimini, s'étaient ressaisis après les mesures d'apaisement prises par Hilaire de Poitiers en 360, le concile d'Alexandrie en 362 et le pape Libère en 362/363. Lucifer de Calaris et Grégoire d'Elvire refusèrent cependant ces mesures, et ne reçurent dans leur communion aucun des faillis de Rimini.

Selon Jérôme, les schismatiques luciférien avaient une attitude illogique. Ils pensent en effet que les évêques souillés par l'hérésie d'Arius, une fois admis à la pénitence, doivent être réduits à la communion laïque. Toutefois ils admettent dans leur église, en tant que pénitents et après imposition des mains, les laïcs baptisés par les évêques ariens ou arianisants. Finalement, parmi les Luciférien, seuls les Hilariens, compagnons du diacre romain Hilaire, sont cohérents: ils s'accordent avec les Luciférien pour le traitement à imposer aux évêques, mais ils considèrent aussi qu'il faut rebaptiser les laïcs, car le baptême des hérétiques n'est pas valable.

Jérôme s'efforce de démontrer dans l'*Altercatio* que la position luciférienne ne peut être soutenue.

* * *

Dans le cadre de notre doctorat dont le sujet est:

Saint Jérôme, *Altercatio Luciferiani et Orthodoxi*, édition critique, recherches littéraires, historiques et doctrinales,

nous avons collationné de bout en bout soixante quinze manuscrits sur les quatre vingt huit connus du VIIIème au XVIème s., transmettant notre texte.

Notre étude a abouti à la réalisation d'un *stemma* et à la sélection de onze manuscrits[1], représentant les témoins les plus intéressants des deux familles que nous avons mises en lumière. Le plus ancien de ces manuscrits, date du VIIIème s.

Kassel, Landesbibliothek., Theol. fol. 21, ff.: 51r-58v, VIIIème s., Fulda[2]

Ce manuscrit présente plusieurs leçons très nouvelles. Nous en avons choisi une pour cette communication.

* * *

Le paragraphe XIV constitue le centre et le tournant de l'*Altercatio* hiéronymienne: à la joute oratoire entre Helladius et son antagoniste (*altercatio*, altercation) succède un exposé dogmatique presque continu de l'Orthodoxe. L'*Altercatio* de Jérôme imite en cela le mouvement du *De finibus* de Cicéron où la polémique cède le pas à l'*oratio perpetua* par deux fois[3].

L'édition de J.-P. Migne de 1845[4] qui reprenait l'édition de D. Vallarsi datant du siècle précédent présentait le texte suivant:

PL 23, col. 168 (14)

ORTHODOXUS DIXIT:

6 – Gratulor interim tibi, et Christo Deo meo **gratias ago, quia animo bono a falsitate Sardorum ad totius orbis te saporem contulisti**, nec dicis more quorumdam: *Saluum me fac, Domine, quoniam defecit sanctus.*

L'ORTHODOXE DIT:

6 – En attendant, je te félicite et **je remercie le Christ, mon Dieu, parce que c'est de bonne grâce que tu es passé de la fausseté des Sardes à la saveur du monde entier**, et que tu ne dis pas, à la manière de certains: *Sauve-moi, Seigneur, puisqu'il n'y a plus de saint!*

[1] *Onze manuscrits sélectionnés*

Famille 1
- Z : ZÜRICH, Zentralbibliothek, Car. C. 116, IXème s.
- E : EL ESCORIAL, Biblioteca del Monasterio, Lat. a. II. 3., Xème s.
- B : BERLIN, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Theol. fol. 119, Niederrhein, 1er quart du XIIème s.
- D : DOUAI, Bibliothèque municipale, 246 Anchin XIIème s.

Famille 2
- K : KASSEL, Theol. fol. 21. Fulda, VIIIème s.
- P : PARIS, Bibliothèque Nationale, Lat. 1952, Xème s.
- Q : PARIS, Bibliothèque Nationale, Lat. 12223, XIIème s., Saint Germain-des-Prés, qui remplacera P.
- A : AVRANCHES, Bibliothèque municipale, 72, Mont-Saint Michel, XIème s.
- F : SANKT-FLORIAN, Stiftsbibliothek, XI.75, Saint-Florian, XIème s.
- H : BERLIN, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, 18 (Phillipps 1675), XIIème s., Collège de Clermont, Paris
- V : VATICANO, CITTA DEL, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 360, XIIème s.

[2] Il est malheureusement amputé du début de notre texte: inc.: *et heretici omnes gentiles sunt* (II-6).

[3] *En* 2, 1 et 2, 17.

[4] PL 23, col. 155-182.

Un note de D. Vallarsi nous avait mis la puce à l'oreille:

Vallarsi, col. 185-6, note c

Olim erat 'a falsitatis ardore', uel 'odore'. Sed neque istud 'a falsitate Sardorum', quod e Cluniacensi ms. Martianaeus reposuit, satis puto emendatum; **nam ut 'Sardorum' nomen 'Orbi' elegantissime opponatur, ita 'falsitati' inepte respondeat 'sapor'. Forte 'insulsitate' scripserit Hieronymus pro 'falsitate', aut si Latine diceretur, 'SALSITATE'**. Sardiniam insulam pestilentis aeris uitio laborare omnes dicunt; sed et Sardos homines mendances audire, notum.

Il y avait jadis *a falsitatis ardore* ou *odore*. Mais la leçon *a falsitate Sardorum* que Martianay a donnée d'après son manuscrit de Cluny, n'est pas non plus selon moi, satisfaisante. **De fait, alors que le nom des Sardes (*Sardorum*) s'oppose très élégamment au monde (*orbis*), *sapor* (saveur) répond maladroitement à *falsitas*** (fausseté). Jérôme a peut-être écrit à la place de ***falsitate, insulsitate* (absence de sel ou de goût, sottise) ou si cela se disait en Latin *salsitate*.** Tout le monde dit que l'Ile de la Sardaigne souffre de son air pestilentiel et vicié. Et, c'est bien connu, les Sardes sont réputés menteurs.

Le mot *salsitas*, qui n'existait pas en Latin, d'après D. Vallarsi, avait attiré toute notre attention d'autant plus que ce passage était très altéré dans la plupart de nos manuscrits et que le manuscrit le plus ancien (K) donne la leçon *salsitas*.

ORTHODOXUS DIXIT:

6 – Gratulor interim tibi, et **Christo Domino meo gratias refero, quia a nimia salsitate Sardorum ad totius orbis te saporem contulisti**, nec dicis more quorumdam: *Saluum ne fac, Domine, quoniam defecit sanctus*[b].

L'ORTHODOXE DIT:

6 – En attendant, je te félicite et **je rends grâces au Christ, mon Seigneur, parce que tu es passé de l'excessive salure des Sardes à la saveur du monde entier,** et que tu ne dis pas, à la manière de certains: *Sauve-moi, Seigneur, puisqu'il n'y a plus de saint*[b]!

6 – domino K: deo *cett.* || refero Z^{pc} *cett.*: -re E ago Z^{ac}, *Riess. Sac. Era. Vic. Mar. Val. Mig.* || **a nimia KQ: a nima Z animo E A animo bono BD FHV, *Riess. Sac. Era. Vic. Mar. Val. Mig.* non *Sweyn.* || salsitate sardorum K: falsitate sardorum Q a falsitate sardorum AF, *Mar. Val. Mig.* fasitate sardorum H^{ac} falsitatis ardorum Z falsitates sardorum H^{pc} a falsitatis ardore B V, *Riess. Sac. Era. Vic.* falsitatis ardore ED falsitatis ardorem *Sweyn.*** || ad *cett.*: sed *Sweyn.* || orbis *cett.*: cibi *Sweyn. Sac.* || saporem *cett.*: te *add. Riess.* || nec — sit *cett.*: *om.* Q || defecit *cett.*: in me *add. Sweyn. Sac. Era.* || sanctus *cett.*: spiritus *Sweyn. Sac. Era.*

b - Ps. XI 2.

En fait, nous avons choisi la *lectio difficilior*. Lu de cette façon, le texte de Jérôme est bien plus fin. La leçon de K est retenue dans sa totalité.

Quelles sont les raisons de notre choix:

a) La logique:

— D'après le *Thesaurus Hieronymi*[5], Jérôme n'emploie jamais l'expression *nimia falsitas*. D'ailleurs, il y a ou il n'y a pas de fausseté, mais il ne peut en aucun cas y avoir de fausseté excessive comme le laisse entendre la leçon du manuscrit Q.

— Inversement, l'excès de sel, au sens propre, est courant, comme en témoigne cet exemple tiré d'*in Ez.* (XIV-47, PL 25, col. 473): *Ipse istud mare, quod est salsissimum, et* nimia amaritudine *mortuum, sua morte sanauit.* L'amertume excessive équivaut ici à l'excès de sel.

b) L'erreur dans les manuscrits s'explique aisément:

— *Erreur de graphie*: Elle provient de la confusion presque générale dans les manuscrits entre 'f' et 's'. Mais K différencie ces deux lettres.

— *Erreur de compréhension*: Il est possible, grâce aux manuscrits, de faire la chronologie de la faute: de *a nimia* à *a nima* et de *a nima* à *anima*, les passages sont faciles. *Anima* désignant le souffle vital de l'individu, le texte n'avait ici qu'un sens médiocre; c'est par ses qualités intellectuelles que le Luciférien se range à l'avis de l'Orthodoxe. Aussi les copistes ont-ils préféré *animo* à *anima*, et, comme il était naturel, d'après le contexte évoquant une trêve, de 'qualités intellectuelles', les copistes sont passés à l'idée de 'bonne volonté, bonne grâce' (*animo bono*).

— *Nouveauté et originalité du mot*: Ce mot, dérivé de *sal*, apparaît, semble-t-il, pour la première fois sous la plume de Jérôme. Il l'a sans doute créé, mais nous n'excluons pas l'hypothèse que ce mot ait pu exister avant Jérôme et qu'il n'ait jamais été transmis par écrit avant lui, d'après le C.L.C.L.T.[6].

c) Le jeu de mot est à plusieurs niveaux:

— *L'allitération en s* joue en faveur de *salsitas*.

[5] *Corpus Christianorum Thesaurus Patrum Latinorum, Thesaurus sancti Hieronymi* (CETEDOC, Université catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1990).

[6] *Cetedoc Library of Christian Latin Texts* (Université Catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1994).

— *Référence économique*: *Salsitas* caractérise les Sardes; or les Sardes — et tout le bassin méditerranéen — sont réputés pour leurs salaisons, leur production de sel et surtout d'aluns[7].

— *Souvenir littéraire*: Derrière la *salsitas* des Sardes se cache en filigrane l'idée de *falsitas, tromperie* légendaire des Sardes que Cicéron décrit dans son *Pro Scauro*[8].

— *Référence biblique et patristique*: *Salsitas* s'oppose à *sapor*. Le sel, le mordant, le mauvais goût des Sardes et des Luciférien, contrastent avec la suavité, le bon goût des Chrétiens orthodoxes. A l'opposition terme à terme s'ajoute une reprise ironique du thème biblique du sel: les Apôtres sont le sel de la terre, ainsi que les évêques (cf. Act. V 1 - 2 sqq.). Ce thème est traité dans l'*Altercatio*, c'est une reprise du *De Unitate Ecclesiae Catholicae* de Cyprien.

— *L'antithèse sal/sapor* n'apparaît pas que dans ce passage de l'*Altercatio*: déjà, au chapitre V, Jérôme a fait dire à Helladius: *Tu mihi nunc infatuato* sale, *Ecclesiae* saporem *contaminas* (toi, avec du sel maintenant affadi, tu me souilles la saveur de l'Eglise). Pour les Luciférien, les Ariens 'manquent de sel'. Pour répondre à ce jugement de l'intégriste, l'Orthodoxe s'en prend à 'l'excès de sel' des Luciférien et se félicite de voir son antagoniste revenir à la 'saveur' de l'Eglise.

Ainsi donc, Jérôme, à travers cette antithèse, fait le tableau de l'Eglise: le *sapor* de l'Eglise est entouré par l'absence de sel de l'hérésie et la salure de l'intégrisme. En outre, l'adverbe *nimium* caractérise les Luciférien (cf. *nimium religiosi immo nimium profani* en XV, *nimium religiosos*, en XIX).

Jérôme a donc beaucoup travaillé son texte. Mais le 'néologisme' *salsitas* n'est pas tombé dans l'oubli.

* * *

[7] Pline l'Ancien évoque la production d'aluns en Sardaigne dans son *Histoire naturelle*, 35, 184 (éd. J.-M. Croisille (Paris, 1985), p. 117).

[8] Dans les fragments conservés du *Pro Scauro*, l'expression *falsitas Sardorum* ne figure nulle part; toutefois, il n'est pas impossible que cette expression ait été utilisée par Cicéron dans un passage perdu. A titre d'exemple, nous ne citerons qu'un extrait du *Pro Scauro*. cf. Cic. *Scaur.* 17, 38; 18, 41: *Etenim fidem primum ipsa tollit consensio, quae patefacta est compromisso Sardorum et coniuratione recitata (...) At creditum est aliquando Sardis! Et fortasse credetur aliquando, si integri uenerint, si incorrupti, si sua sponte, si non alicuius impulsu, si soluti, si liberi. Quae si erunt, tamen sibi credi gaudeant et mirentur. Cum uero omnia absint, tamen se non respicient, non gentis suae famam perhorrescerent?* En effet, ce qui d'abord leur enlève tout crédit, c'est leur unanimité, qui a été relevée par la lecture du compromis des Sardes et de leur conjuration. (...) Mais, dira-t-on, on a parfois ajouté foi à des Sardes! — Peut-être même leur ajoutera-t-on foi un jour encore, s'ils se présentent de bonne foi, sans s'être laissé corrompre, d'eux-mêmes, sans être poussés par personne, en pleine indépendance et liberté. Ces conditions

Ce nom, créé par Jérôme, semble avoir été repris uniquement par saint Augustin[9], trois fois dans ses *Enarrationes in Psalmos*[10]:

Ps 64, 9, l. 16 Mare enim in figura dicitur saeculum hoc, **salsitate** amarum, procellis turbulentum …
En effet, la mer est, dit-on, la figure de ce siècle, amère par la salure, agitée par les ouragans …

Ps 65, 11, l. 3 Mare erat mundus: amarus **salsitate**, turbulentus tempestate …
La mer, c'était le monde: amer par la salure, agité par la tempête …

Ps 73, 17, l. 8-11 *Tu disrupisti fontes et torrentes*, ut manarent liquorem sapientiae, ut manarent diuitias fidei, ut irrigarent **salsitatem** gentium, **ut omnes infideles in fidei dulcedinem sua irrigatione conuerterent.**
Tu as fait jaillir les sources et les torrents, pour qu'il déversent la liqueur de la sagesse, pour qu'ils déversent les richesses de la foi, pour qu'ils irriguent la salure des Nations, pour convertir à la suavité de la foi tous les incroyants …

Dans le troisième passage, il nous semble déceler une influence hiéronymienne: le contexte est presque le même, puisqu'il s'agit, chez Augustin, d'amener à la suavité de L'Eglise ceux qui ne croient pas. L'opposition *salsitas/dulcedo*, n'est pas sans rappeler celle de Jérôme entre *salsitas* et *sapor*. Augustin a donc, selon nous, lu l'*Altercatio*, dont il reprend l'un des mots les plus originaux.

étant réalisées, qu'ils n'en soient pas moins heureux et étonnés d'être crus. Mais comme elles ne le sont pas, n'ouvreront-ils pas malgré cela les yeux sur leur réputation qui est celle de leur race? éd. P. Grimal (Paris, cf. p. 5 Grimal en marge ajouté au crayon 1976), p. 197 et 198. L'éditeur renvoie aussi à Homère (*Od.* 14, 287 sqq.; 15, 415 sqq.) où la mauvaise réputation des Sardes est déjà attestée.

[9] D'après le *CLCLT*.

[10] *CCSL* 39, p. 832, 847 et 1015.

Pastoral Theology at the End of the Fourth Century: Ambrose and Jerome

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Jerome's attitude towards Ambrose in the year 393 is summed up in his notoriously caustic entry for the bishop of Milan in his *De uiris illustribus* 124: *Ambrosius, Mediolanensis episcopus, usque in praesentem diem scribit, de quo, quia superest, meum iudicium subtraham, ne in alterutram partem aut adulatio in me reprehendatur aut ueritas*[1]. This judgement is consonant with the series of anonymous shafts directed at Ambrose which can be traced throughout Jerome's *œuvre* from the mid-380's. In his prologue to his version of Didymus's treatise on the Holy Spirit, or again in his preface to his translation of Origen's homilies on Luke's gospel, Jerome scorns Ambrose for producing dogmatic and exegetical works of undistinguished style whose substance was shamelessly plundered from Greek authors[2]. The reasons for this hostility have attracted much scholarly speculation. Paredi, whose catalogue of Jerome's attacks on Ambrose is the most thorough, proposes that 385 was a watershed: Jerome's hitherto enthusiastic endorsement of Ambrose as a champion of orthodoxy and promoter of virginity gave way to rancour at this point, perhaps because Ambrose may have failed to support him on his expulsion from Rome by the *senatus Pharisaeorum*[3]. It can, however, be shown that Jerome was already scathing in 384, and with reference to Ambrose's *De uirginibus*, too[4].

The origins of the animosity are beyond the scope of my concern in this paper. My own feeling is that Jerome nursed a rather deep resentment of Ambrose's intellectual versatility and especially of his reputation as an orator. Jerome's accusations of plagiarism, especially in the context of Ambrose's exegetical competence, are a case of the pot calling the kettle black, for Jerome himself makes extensive use of a range of Christian authorities in both

[1] On the dating of this to 393, see P. Nautin, 'La date du "De uiris illustribus" de Jérôme, de la mort de Cyrille de Jérusalem et de celle de Grégoire de Nazianze', *RHE* 56 (1961), pp. 33-5; *id.*, 'Hieronymus', *TRE* 15 (Berlin and New York, 1986), p. 306. Others prefer 392: e.g., T.D. Barnes, *Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 233-5.

[2] Jerome, *Did. Spir. Sanct.*, praef.; *Orig. Hom. Luc.*, praef.

[3] A. Paredi, 'S. Gerolamo e S. Ambrogio', *Mélanges Eugene Tisserant*, 5 (Studi e Testi 235; Rome, 1964), pp. 183-98.

[4] N. Adkin, 'Ambrose and Jerome: The Opening Shot', *Mnem* 46 (1993), pp. 364-76, *pace*, besides Paredi, G. Nauroy, 'Jérôme, lecteur et censeur de l'exégese d'Ambroise', in Y.-M. Duval (ed.), *Jérôme entre l'Occident et l'Orient* (Paris, 1988), pp. 173-203.

his scriptural works and his epistles. But whatever the causes of his feelings, it is enough here to record that we do not find Jerome saying anything positive about Ambrose after 384 at the latest. Yet, for all the malice, Jerome obviously continues to read Ambrose's works; indeed, he shares opinions with, and I shall suggest, lifts ideas from, the very author whom he affects to despise for lack of originality. I should like briefly to point out an example of this ambivalence, to be found in one of the most celebrated of Jerome's epistles.

Jerome writes his *Ep.* 52 to Nepotian, the nephew of his old friend Heliodorus of Altinum, in 393[5]. This *breuis libellus* (*Ep.* 60.11.2) is a response to the request of the young man Nepotian, who has given up his career in the palace guard at Altinum in order to be ordained, for *praecepta uiuendi* (*Ep.* 52.1.1) suitable for his new vocation. It is an important example of late fourth-century pastoral theology, advice offered to one coming to the moral, spiritual, and practical challenges of the ecclesiastical life for the first time. I wish to suggest that there is a remarkable resemblance between this letter and the most renowned of Ambrose's works, his *De Officiis*, a treatise based on sermons to his clergy and published as a written work some time between 388 and 390, intended as a replacement for Cicero's ethical handbook of the same name[6]. In the space of this paper, I have the opportunity only to sketch the outlines of the evidence for Jerome's reference to Ambrose's text[7].

There are certain very general similarities of style and didactic approach in the two works. Just as Cicero writes for his son Marcus (and for young politically aspiring Romans in general), so Ambrose addresses his spiritual 'sons', the clergy of Milan (*Off.* 1.24; cf. 1.1-2, 23, 72, 184; 2, 25, 134, 149, 152-6; 3.132, 139), and he expresses a particular care for younger men (*Off.* 1.65-6, 81, 87, 212, 217-8; 2.97-101). Jerome assures Nepotian that he is no longer the youthful zealot who endeavoured in florid language to persuade Heliodorus to join him in his ascetic life in Syria almost twenty years earlier (*Ep.* 14); he writes now with mature, quasi-paternal wisdom and concern, comparable to that of Greek sages, or OT patriarchs, or David in his old age (though Jerome was probably not yet fifty)[8]: *audi fratrem collegio, patrem senio* (*Ep.* 52.4.3).

[5] So P. Nautin, 'Etudes de chronologie hiéronymienne (393-397), *REAug* 20 (1974), pp. 251-3, and S. Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis: Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart, 1992), p. 202 n. 382, *contra* F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme: sa vie et son œuvre* (2 vols., Louvain and Paris, 1922), 1, p. 183 n. 2; 2, p. 44; J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London, 1975), p. 190 n. 59, who date it to 394. The reference in *Ep.* 52.17.1 to writing *post annos decem* since the time of *Ep.* 22 (384) is a case of inclusive reckoning.

[6] See I.J. Davidson, 'Ambrose's *De Officiis* and the Intellectual Climate of the Late Fourth Century', *VC* 49 (1995), pp. 313-33.

[7] I hope to publish a much fuller presentation of the data elsewhere. I cite Ambrose's text from the Budé edition of M. Testard, *Ambroise: Les Devoirs* (2 vols., Paris, 1984-1992), and Jerome's from the edition of I. Hilberg (*CSEL* 54; Vindobon and Leipzig, 1910).

[8] That is, if his birth is to be dated to 347/8, rather than 330/1: see F. Cavallera, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 2, pp. 1-63; P. Jay, 'Sur la date de naissance de saint Jérôme', *REL* 51 (1973), pp. 262-80; A.D. Booth, 'The Date of Jerome's Birth', *Phoen* 33 (1979), pp. 346-53.

Both authors utter conventional expressions of literary modesty. Ambrose presents himself as a reluctant teacher, one who still needs to learn himself yet is obliged, by virtue of an office to which he did not aspire, to instruct his people (*Off.* 1.1-4)[9]. His work makes no pretensions to stylistic merit; its worth ultimately lies in its citation of biblical *exempla* (*Off.* 1.29; 3.139). Jerome's *captatio beneuolentiae* includes the claim that he has yielded only to the persistent requests of Nepotian (*Ep.* 52.1.1; 17.1; cf. *Ep.* 60.11.1, where Heliodorus himself is said to have pressed Jerome); his suggestions are to be taken *qualiacumque sunt* (*Ep.* 52.4.4), and ought just to supplement Heliodorus's own recommendations. He claims to shun rhetorical ornament (*Ep.* 1.2; 4.1). It comes as no surprise, however, that both Ambrose and Jerome in fact allude to Cicero, Vergil, and other classical authors, and exploit the resources of *genres* such as satire in order to denounce the hypocrisies of some contemporary clerical behaviour[10]. Jerome enthusiastically commends the cardinal virtues, the Socratic-Stoic tetrad which, mediated *via* Cicero, forms the framework for Ambrose's articulation of *honestas* in *Off.* 1.115ff. (*Ep.* 52.13.2-3).

These parallels are plainly inconclusive: they clearly do not of themselves demonstrate that Jerome has referred to Ambrose's text. There are, though, some far more compelling pieces of evidence. Take, first of all, Jerome's counsel to Nepotian to read the Scriptures frequently. The general injunction to read is also Ambrosian (*Off.* 1.88), but the way in which Jerome couches the advice is significant: *disce, quod doceas* (*Ep.* 52.7.1). It is highly likely that he is parodying Ambrose, *Off.* 1.3-4 with this juxtaposition of *discere-docere*. Ambrose says: *homines autem discunt prius quod doceant ... quod ne ipsum quidem mihi accidit. ego enim ... docere uos coepi quod ipse non didici. itaque factum est ut prius docere inciperem quam discere. discendum igitur mihi simul et docendum est, quoniam non uacauit ante discere*. Jerome similarly plays with *discere-docere* in *Ep.* 53.7.1, where the context is clearly a swipe at Ambrose, quoting Horace, *Ep.* 2.1.117 (cf. also Jerome, *Ep.* 53.3.1; 10.1-2)[11]. Nepotian is urged not to seek *clamor populi* (*Ep.* 52.8.1) when preaching; only *indocti homines* like to excite the admiration of the crowd by rhetorical display, readily swaying an *indocta contio* (*Ep.* 52.8.1-2) by their verbal fluency. The advice to season one's *sermo* instead with scriptural matter (*Ep.* 52.8.1) is

[9] Ambrose's self-depreciation is so strong that it has been suggested that his opening section (*Off.* 1.1-22) belongs to an independent sermonic piece which is to be dated early in his episcopate. I shall discuss this in my forthcoming introduction to and commentary on the text of *Off.* On the stock traditions of modesty, see T. Janson, *Latin Prose Prefaces: Studies in Literary Conventions* (Stockholm, 1964), pp. 116-61.

[10] On Jerome, see H. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics* (Gothenburg, 1958), pp. 191-5; D.S. Wiesen, *St. Jerome as a Satirist* (Ithaca, NY, 1964), esp. pp. 75-81.

[11] I am indebted here to M. Testard, 'Jérôme et Ambroise. Sur un "aveu" du *De officiis* de l'évêque de Milan', in Y.-M. Duval, *op. cit.* (n. 4), pp. 227-54, esp. pp. 238ff. On *Ep.* 53.7.1-2, see also N. Adkin in *VetChr* 29 (1992), pp. 261-8; *CQ* 44 (1994), pp. 559-61.

Ambrosian (*Off.* 1.100; cf. 1.101), yet it is set alongside an attack on the unlearned man moving the unlearned mob by hollow rhetoric, which sounds very much like a jibe at Ambrose, the theologically untutored preacher who could bowl over the vulgar crowd, at whose *clamor* he had been elected bishop in the first place.

In this passage, Jerome is critical of his own former teacher, Gregory of Nazianzus (*Ep.* 52.8.2)[12], but the continued use of *indoctus*, following on from *Ep.* 52.7.1, may well imply that Ambrose is still within his sights. He associates Ambrose with the declamatory style which he knows and disdains in Gregory. Ambrose's reputation as a preacher (confirmed, famously, by Augustine in *Conf.* 5.13.23) travelled far, and doubtless did little to endear him to Jerome, whose sermons reveal an almost austere simplicity and lack of ornamentation of delivery. Derision of Ambrose's pulpit style, fostered by jealousy of his gifts, is just what we might expect from Jerome in the context of advice on public speaking.

Jerome uses the word *officium* more than once in *Ep.* 52 (5.3; 15.1), and he specifically contrasts ecclesiastical *officium* with secular military service (5.3). The development of the *militia Christi* motif is clearly apt in address to Nepotian (*Ep.* 52.1.1; 5.3; 13.1), though this biblical imagery is also to be found in Ambrose, *Off.* 1.185-7, 238. The comparison of secular and spiritual *officium* is notable in Ambrose (e.g., *Off.* 1.25-9,175), and in *Off.* 1.185 Ambrose says that it is even more necessary for Christ's soldiers than it is for secular troops *ab omni usu negotiationis abstinere* (*int. al.*). Jerome counsels Nepotian to avoid like the plague the cleric who engages in business (*Ep.* 52.5.3). He explains the meaning of the term *clericus*: the clergy are so named, *uel quia de sorte sunt Domini uel quia Dominus ipse sors, id est pars, clericorum est*, just as was the case for the priest and the Levite of old, who received no *funiculus hereditatis* among the Israelite tribes, but lived on tithes and offerings, since the Lord was their portion (*Ep.* 52.5.1-2). In *Off.* 1.246, Ambrose explains the etymology of the name 'Levite' as *ipse meus vel ipse pro me*[13]. Ambrose evokes Num. 18:20-4 and Dt. 10:9; his allusion to these verses includes the words *funiculus hereditatis*, which are not to be found in the OT text in either place but appear in Dt. 32:9, where Jacob is said to be the Lord's *funiculus hereditatis*. It is striking that Jerome also evokes Dt. 32:9 in the same context of referring to the Levites' lot as described in Num. 18:20-4. Ambrose makes the etymology the basis for a warning against the desire for

[12] *Pace* P. Gallay, *La vie de S. Grégoire de Nazianze* (Lyon, 1943), pp. 179ff.; F. Trisoglio, *S. Gregorio di Nazianzo in un quarantennio di studi (1925-1965)* (Turin, 1974), p. 243 n. 220; see further N. Adkin, 'Gregory of Nazianzus and Jerome: Some Remarks', in M.A. Flower and M. Toher (eds.), *Georgica: Greek Studies in Honour of George Cawkwell (BICS* suppl. 58; London, 1991), pp. 13-24.

[13] See further R. Gryson, 'L'interprétation du nom de Lévi (Lévite) chez saint Ambroise', *SE* 17 (1966), pp. 217-29.

riches among the clergy: on this warning (also in *Off.* 1.23, 137, 182, 184-5, 192-3, 241-6; 2.25, 66-7, 89, 108, 129-33; 3.57-8), cf. Jerome, *Ep.* 52.5.3-4; 6.1-5; 10.2-3; 16.1-3.

One particular financial temptation is the evil of legacy-hunting, mentioned by Ambrose in *Off.* 3.57-8. Jerome speaks against this in *Ep.* 52.6.1 (cf. 6.4-5), referring to the ruling of Valentinian I of July, 370, which debarred priests from inheriting property (*CTh* 16.2.20): *nec de lege conqueror, sed doleo, cur meruerimus hanc legem* (cf. Ambose, *Ep.* 73 (18).13ff.). *cauterium bonum est, sed quo mihi uulnus, ut indigeam cauterio?* It is interesting that Ambrose also uses the image of cauterization in *Off.* 2.135, albeit in a more general context of church discipline, healing, and, as a last resort, severance from the body of Christ.

On the positive potential afforded by money, Jerome, like Ambrose (*Off.* 1.147; 2.76,102,122-3), speaks of the need for almsgiving to be undertaken to the point of personal sacrifice, and not for the sake of display or in order to win a reputation (*Ep.* 52.9.2-3; 16.1,3). The bishop knows who should be given the task of *dispensatio* to the poor (*Ep.* 52.9.2); Ambrose advises that the bishop should appoint each cleric to the role to which he is suited (*Off.* 1.216, 134), and he speaks of the *dispensator*'s duties (e.g. in *Off.* 2.69). Jerome maintains that the cleric must never be cautious or timid with money when confronted with the pressing needs of the poor and the hungry (*Ep.* 52.16.2), a principle reminiscent of Ambrose's defence of his selling of church plate to ransom prisoners in *Off.* 2.70-1, 136-43. Jerome's criticism of those who spend lavishly on church buildings (*Ep.* 52.10.1-3) could be a reference to the situation in Milan, where at the bishop's initiative the church's physical presence was extended in impressive style beyond the city walls through large-scale construction of basilicas in suburban areas[14]. Ambrose speaks positively of the expediency of adorning temples of God in *Off.* 2.110-11. Both authors assert that hospitality is a duty: Ambrose, *Off.* 1.39, 86, 167; 2.103-8; Jerome, *Ep.* 52.5.3; cf. 3.2; Jerome's references to *peregrini* in particular may hark back to Ambrose's insistence that *peregrini* must not be mistreated in a time of civic crisis (*Off.* 3.45-52).

Like Ambrose (*Off.* 1.85-6), Jerome encourages the cleric to refuse invitations to dinner-parties (*Ep.* 52.15.2); both advocate sensible fasting (Ambrose, *Off.* 2.122; 3.10; Jerome, *Ep.* 52.12.1-2) and abstinence from wine (Ambrose, *Off.* 1.247; Jerome, *Ep.* 52.11.3-4). It is better, they agree, to stay at home and pray than to be in the company of the ungodly (Ambrose, *Off.* 1.88; Jerome, *Ep.* 52.11.1-2) — even, says Jerome, if the pretext for their company is ecclesiastical *intercessio*, a duty mentioned by Ambrose (*Off.* 2.102; cf. 138). Ambrose advises against female company, counselling his men never to visit unmarried

[14] See R. Krautheimer, *Three Christian Capitals: Topography and Politics* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1983), pp. 69-92, for details.

women without older males present (*Off.* 1.87); Jerome says the very same thing (*Ep.* 52.5.6). Jerome also warns of the dangers of women crossing the clergyman's threshold, even to tend him if he is sick; he thinks of both the obvious sexual temptation and the risk of gossip (*Ep.* 52.5.5-8), the same perils which Ambrose has in mind in his advice about visitation (*Off.* 1.87).

Ambrose forbids the ordination of a twice-married man (*Off.* 1.248), even if the first marriage was contracted prior to baptism: *quomodo autem potest hortator esse uiduitatis qui ipse coniugia frequentauerit?* (cf. also his *Ep. extra coll.* 14 (63).63-4). Jerome elsewhere disputes this view, arguing for the consensus Eastern understanding that a marriage contracted prior to baptism did not count (*Ep.* 69; *Comm. in Tit.* 1.6). He does not say anything specifically about this rule in *Ep.* 52, but he does ask: *qui de monogamia sacerdos est, quare uiduam hortatur, ut* διγαμος *sit?* (16.1); the reference to promoting the state of widowhood in the same context of priestly 'monogamy' is surely significant.

Ambrose follows Cicero in commending modesty of gait as an index of a modest disposition generally (*Off.* 1.71). Jerome mentions with approval the Hippocratic oath, which includes prescriptions for *incessus* among other things (*Ep.* 52.15.2). Both advocate simplicity of clothing (Ambrose, *Off.* 1.83; Jerome, *Ep.* 52.9.1; cf. 5.6; 13.2-3). Ambrose's desire that the outward character of the church's personnel should be modest yet impressive in its order and dignity is shared by Jerome: the status of the church is enhanced by an almost theatrical presentation of its clerical manners and its liturgy[15]. The speech of the cleric is a related area of concern (Ambrose, *Off.* 1.99-103; Jerome, *Ep.* 52.8.1-3; 14.1-2). Ambrose extols silence as the spiritually-mature response to provocation (*Off.* 1.5-22, 31-5, 68, 234, 236), and he claims that the five-year vow of silence which Pythagoras imposed on his novices was copied from the example of David's silence before his enemies (*Off.* 1.31; cf. 1.21). Jerome says that silence should be natural for the cleric (*Ep.* 52.5.4), and he praises the Hippocratic oath of silence (*Ep.* 52.15.2) — possibly in correspondence to Ambrose's classical reference to Pythagoras? Both condemn the seeking and the giving of flattery (Ambrose, *Off.* 1.88, 209, 226; 2.96, 114, 116ff.; 3.134-5; Jerome, *Ep.* 52.13.1; 5.7-8). Good clerical relations, expressed in familial warmth and mutual deference, are a further important dimension of the church's unity (and its consequent impression upon society: Ambrose, *Off.* 2.121-3; Jerome, *Ep.* 52.7.2-5); within the body, each member must exercize the ministry to which it is suited (Ambrose, *Off.* 2.134-5; 3.18-19; cf. 1.213-16; Jerome, *Ep.* 52.9.3).

Quite a bit more evidence could be adduced, but I believe that enough has been said to demonstrate a cumulative case for asserting Jerome's reference to

[15] On Ambrose, see esp. N.B. McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan: Church and Court in a Christian Capital* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1994), pp. 54-5, 237-51, 252-6. On the clerical ideals, see R. Gryson, *Le prêtre selon saint Ambroise* (Louvain, 1968); A. Bonato, 'L'idea del sacerdozio in S. Ambrogio', *Aug* 27 (1987), pp. 423-64.

Ambrose. Of course, not all of what Jerome says need have come from Ambrose: the challenges and dangers of the clerical life inevitably repeat themselves in different situations, and call for similar advice. However, the degree of detailed thematic overlap between the two documents is surely too substantial to be attributed merely to the repetition of commonplace professional tips for junior clerics who are about to take up new and onerous responsibilities. Overall, Jerome's advice really is remarkably close to Ambrose's. In addition, Jerome's juxtaposition of *discere* and *docere*, and his criticism of cheap, attention-seeking oratory, are very likely to be here, as elsewhere, thinly-veiled denunciations of the bishop of Milan. Neither author, of course, aspires to produce an exhaustive manual of clerical duties: Ambrose's Ciceronian patterning, and Jerome's epistolary form, alike tell against this. Both are supplying practical advice in different, but similarly *ad hoc*, ways.

Ambrose was highly successful at spreading his model of Christianity through the cultivation of a clerical order whose *mores* no less than its theology were calculated to elevate the profile of the church in Italian society. Nepotian, for his part, did not live long to put *his* mentor's advice into practice. Only three years after *Ep.* 52, Jerome writes his justly famous *consolatio* to Heliodorus (*Ep.* 60). He claims — with charming modesty — that Nepotian had been delighted with *Ep.* 52, and had made it his constant reading (*Ep.* 60.11.2); the young man is presented as a shining exemplar of the virtues which his teacher had sought to inculcate. Whatever the truth of that claim, the inspiration for much of the counsel seems to have come from one for whom Jerome felt no affection, a brother whom he derides even as he assimilates his pastoral precepts. The process is, I suppose, a testimony to the extent to which the exigencies of pastoral theology can be met while personal resentments among its practitioners remain undisturbed.

Un Nuovo Indizio per la Datazione della *Vita S. Pauli* di Girolamo?

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I. Introduzione

Fino ad oggi esistono diverse proposte riguardo la composizione di questa opera geronimiana. Tradizionalmente essa è stata considerata un'opera giovanile. A favore di questa tesi vi è non solo l'elencazione dello stesso autore, nella quale non è specificata alcuna data ma la *Vita S. Pauli* compare al primo posto[1], ma vi è la celebre frase del capitolo 6 della *Vita*: 'et uidere'[2], che colloca la composizione nello stesso periodo del primo ritiro nel deserto di Calcide. Contro questa tesi si oppone una datazione molto tardiva, posticipata persino agli ultimi anni della vita di Girolamo, obiettando fondamentalmente che la frase-chiave 'et uidere' sia un'aggiunta posteriore[3].

Il presente articolo intende richiamare l'attenzione sul testo critico ormai pubblicato, ma anche allargare lo sguardo ad altri elementi finora trascurati, dello stesso capitolo 6 che recita:

'Affinché ciò non sembri impossibile a qualcuno, chiamo a testimone Gesù e i suoi santi angeli che — in quella parte desertica che attraverso la Siria si unisce ai Saraceni —, ho visto dei monaci, e tuttora li vedo, tra i quali uno, chiuso **da trent'anni, vive di pane d'orzo** e di acqua fangosa. Un altro in una vecchia cisterna, che i Siri chiamano nella lingua del paese '**gubba**', si sostiene con cinque fichi secchi al giorno'[4].

[1] Cf. Hieronymus, *De uiris inlustribus* 135, 1-2. Sebbene la lista non sia rigorosamente cronologica, è tuttavia legittimo pensare che l'autore ricordi con precisione almeno la sua prima opera in assoluto.

[2] Hieronymus, *Vita S. Pauli Primi Eremitae* 6, in R. (R.=B.) Degórski, *Edizione critica della 'Vita Sancti Pauli Primi Eremitae' di Girolamo* (Roma, 1987), p. 94.

[3] Per una rassegna bibliografica sulla discussione circa la composizione della *Vita*, cf. P. Hamblenne, 'Traces de biographies grecques 'païennes' dans la 'Vita Pauli' de Jérôme?', in *Cristianesimo Latino e cultura Greca sino al sec. IV. XXI Incontro di studiosi dell'antichità cristiana, Roma, 7-9 maggio 1992* (Studia Ephemeridis 'Augustinianum', 42; Roma, 1993), p. 210, n. 5; da aggiungere ad essa: A. de Vogüé, 'La "Vita Pauli" de saint Jérôme et sa datation. Examen d'un passage-clé (ch. 6)', in G.J.M. Bartelink — A. Hilhorst — C.H. Kneepkens (ed.), *Eulogia. Mélanges offerts à Antoon A.R. Bastiaensen à l'occasion de son soixante-cinquième anniversaire* (Instrumenta Patristica, 24; Steenbrugis, 1991), pp. 395-406.

[4] Hieronymus, *Vita S. Pauli Primi Eremitae* 6, 2-3, in R. Degórski (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 93-95: 'Quod ne cui impossibile uideatur, Iesum testor et sanctos angelos eius in ea parte eremi, quae iuxta Syriam Saracenis iungitur, et uidisse me monachos et uidere, e quibus unus triginta iam per annos clausus hordeaceo pane et lutulenta aqua uiuit. Alter in cisterna ueteri, quam gentili sermone Syri 'gubbam' uocant, quinque caricis per singulos dies sustentatur'.

II. L'analisi testuale

Il tono del capitolo è solenne, poiché Girolamo, per avvalorare la realtà della vita angelica di san Paolo di Tebe e la storicità dello scritto, riporta la sua testimonianza personale di anacoreti del deserto di Calcide, che hanno suscitato in lui l'ammirazione profonda e lo stupore durante la sua esperienza monastica. Si tratta, dunque, di una testimonianza verace. Ma ciò che interessa ai fini della datazione è che tale testimonianza sia anche contemporanea a quanto Girolamo scrive, cioè che il Dalmata stia scrivendo un'esperienza nel momento stesso in cui la vive.

Per affermare la simultaneità è importantissima l'espressione 'et uidere' che, prima dell'edizione critica, è stata ritenuta da alcuni un'aggiunta. In realtà, essa fa parte del testo originale, come è stato evidenziato dallo studio critico, cui rimando per l'insieme delle scelte testuali[5], limitandomi in questa sede a richiamarne solo alcuni tratti salienti.

'Et uidere' è presente inequivocabilmente nei codici più significativi, anzi, addirittura, già in essi suscitò difficoltà di interpretazione, la qual cosa conferma indirettamente la sua presenza fin dal testo primigeno[6]. Il verbo ripetuto proprio al tempo presente, dunque, è già di per sé un forte indizio a favore della sincronia dello scritto con l'esperienza eremitica di Girolamo.

L'osservazione sul tempo verbale può essere messa in parallelo con i successivi verbi dello stesso capitolo, quelli che esprimono l'agire degli anacoreti della Siria ammirati da Girolamo: 'uiuit' e 'sustentatur'[7], ugualmente coniugati al tempo presente perché san Girolamo si trova ancora nel deserto di Calcide. La particella 'iam', indubitabilmente presente nel testo originale[8], rafforza la scelta del presente per questi verbi a cui è riferita, in quanto implica un'azione ancora perdurante.

L'osservazione della costruzione dei tempi del testo, possibile a seguito dell'edizione critica, propende decisamente per la simultaneità tra la narrazione e il ritiro eremitico di Girolamo.

III. L'analisi contenutistica

Andando oltre l'analisi formale del testo, si possono ricavare ulteriori indizi per la datazione a livello di contenuto, cioè prendendo in considerazione i per-

[5] Cf. l'apparato critico in R. Degórski, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

[6] Ad esempio, alcuni codici antichi presentano delle abrasioni posteriori di lunghezza coincidente con 'et uidere'; altri accomodano con 'et uideri' o 'et uideri ab eis'; cf. l'apparato critico in R. Degórski, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

[7] Cf. l'apparato critico in R. Degórski, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

[8] Viene omessa solo da rarissimi manoscritti, poco attendibili. Cf. l'apparato critico in R. Degórski, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

sonaggi che Girolamo 'uidisse et uidere' e di cui riferisce con fugace cenno. Infatti, è legittimo supporre che Girolamo, incline alla precisione storica, si stia riferendo a personaggi reali, a monaci orientali realmente esistenti, come tanti altri protagonisti di altrettanta letteratura monastica, la cui santità suscitava grande notorietà fra i cristiani e fungeva da sprone per i monaci; si può, quindi, tentare di identificare di quali anacoreti si tratti.

Il Dalmata parla di un padre del deserto che, recluso da trent'anni, si nutre solo con pane d'orzo e acqua melmosa; l'altro, chiuso in una cisterna, assume solo cinque fichi secchi[9] al giorno.

Il primo elemento caratterizzante è, dunque, il fatto di nutrirsi per trent'anni solo di pane d'orzo; non era raro, anzi, era piuttosto comune per i monaci mangiare orzo[10], ma non costituiva per essi l'unico nutrimento. Solo di un monaco siriano si tramanda che sia stato l'unico cibo per decenni: san Macedonio, un celebre anacoreta siriano, il solo sostenuto esclusivamente dall'orzo, tanto da essere soprannominato 'Critofago'; ce ne informa Teodoreto di Cirro nella sua importante storia di monaci siri:

'Tutti, fenici, siri e cilici, conoscono Macedonio soprannominato **Critofago** (infatti il suo nutrimento gli aveva fatto aggiungere il soprannome). (...). Per cibo egli non prendeva né pane né legumi, ma grani di orzo schiacciati e impastati solo con acqua'[11].

[9] Il testo parla di 'carica'; essa era una specie di fico originario della Caria, regione dell'Asia Minore, da cui prende il nome. Veniva coltivato comunemente nel bacino del Mar Mediterraneo; una volta divenuto secco, veniva venduto come cibo dei poveri. Per questo motivo costituiva solitamente il nutrimento preferito dai monaci (cf. anche Hieronymus, *Vita S. Hilarionis* 3, 1, in A.A.R. Bastiaensen (ed.), in A.A.R. Bastiaensen — J.W. Smit (ed.), *Vita di Martino, Vita di Ilarione, In memoria di Paola* (Vite dei Santi, 4; (s.l.) 1983²), p. 78: '(...) quindecim tantum caricis post solis occasum comedens (...)'; *ibidem*, 3, 5, in A.A.R. Bastiaensen (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 78: '(...) paucis caricis post triduum vel quatriduum deficientem animam sustentabat (...)').

[10] Cf. Theodoretus, *Historia Religiosa* 2, 2. L'orzo costituiva il cibo quotidiano anche dell'altro eroe lodato da Girolamo — sant'Ilarione (cf. Hieronymus, *Vita S. Hilarionis* 5, 3, in A.A.R. Bastiaensen (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 84: 'A tricesimo autem primo usque ad tricesimum quintum sex uncias hordeacei panis et coctum modice olus absque oleo in cibo habuit'; Hieronymus, *ibidem*, 13, 10, in A.A.R. Bastiaensen (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 104: '(...) simplicitate rustica decem auri libras offerens, hordeaceum ab eo panem accepit, audiens quod qui tali cibo alerentur, aurum pro luto ducerent'.

[11] Theodoretus, *Historia Religiosa* 13, 1. 3 (trad.: A. Gallico (ed.), Teodoreto di Cirro, *Storia di monaci siri* (Collana di testi patristici, 119; Roma, 1995), pp. 182-183), SCh 234, 474, 476: 'Μακεδόνιον δὲ τὸν ἐπίκλην Κριθοφάγον — ἡ γὰρ τοιάδε τροφὴ ταύτην αὐτῷ τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν ἐπέθηκεν — ἴσασι μὲν ἅπαντες, Φοίνικές τε καὶ Σύροι καὶ Κίλικες (...). (...). Τροφῇ δὲ ἐκέχρητο οὐκ ἄρτῳ οὐδ' ὀσπρίοις, ἀλλὰ κριθαῖς πτισσομέναις καὶ μόνῳ ὕδατι δευομέναις (...)'.

A proposito di san Macedonio, cf. Theodoretus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 5, 19; S. Le Nain de Tillemont, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique des six premiers siècles*, XII (Paris, 1712), pp. 486-490; Socii Bollandiani (ed.), *Acta Sanctorum Ianuarii*, II (Venezia, 1734), pp. 593-598; H. Delehaye, 'Le Synaxaire de Sirmond', in *Analecta Bollandiana* 14 (1895), pp. 420-421; F. Halkin, *Bibliotheca hagiographica Graeca* (Bruxelles, 1957³), p. 1011 (in seguito, per indicare questo libro ci serviremo dell'abbreviazione: BHG); A.-J. Festugière, *Antioche païenne et chrétienne. Libanius, Chrysostome et les moines de Syrie* (Paris, 1959), pp. 283-289; J.-M. Sauget 'Macedonio', in *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, VIII (Roma, 1967), coll. 441-442; P. Canivet, *Le monachisme syrien...*, *op. cit.*, §8 s.; I. Gobry, *Storia del monachesimo*, I (Roma, 1991), p. 294; K. Augustyniak, 'Historia mnichów syryjskich', in K. Augustyniak — R. Turzyński (ed.), Teodoret Biskup Cyru, *Dzieje miłości Bożej. Historia mnichów syryjskich* (Źródła monastyczne, 7; Kraków-Tyniec, 1994), 42. 46; K. Augustyniak — R. Turzyński (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 184-196; A. Gallico, *op. cit.*, pp. 24, 43, 44, 78, 87, 119, 173, 175, 179, 182-192, 206, 262.

'Critofago' è un soprannome assai raro: non compare tra i nomi greci[12] e si incontra raramente nel greco classico[13]. Solo in Siria il vocabolo non doveva essere raro, dato che i nomi di origine alimentare si incontrano frequentemente[14], eppure non viene detto di alcun altro monaco se non di Macedonio, fedele a questa ascesi per ben quarant'anni, rotti da un piccolo pezzo di pane[15].

Il secondo elemento importante del testo geronimiano è il nome 'Gubba', cioè la traslitterazione siriaca per 'pozzo'. È un dettaglio che riconduce ugualmente a Macedonio, di cui sempre Teodoreto ci dice:

'Egli, dunque, aveva come palestra e stadio le vette dei monti; però non si stabilì in un solo posto, ma ora visse in questo luogo, ora si recò in quello. Faceva ciò, non perché non gli erano cari quei luoghi, ma per evitare la moltitudine di coloro che si recavano da lui e a lui accorrevano da ogni parte. Visse in questo modo per quarantacinque anni ininterrotti: non aveva né tenda né capanna, ma dimorava in una fossa profonda. Perciò alcuni lo chiamavano anche **Gubba**: questo nome, tradotto dal siriaco in greco, significa 'pozzo'[16].

Stando alla narrazione di Teodoreto, molto attendibile in quanto amico personale di Macedonio, si tratta della stessa persona che, pur avendo il nome (Μακεδόνιος) e il soprannome (Κριθοφάγος) greci, doveva essere noto a tutta quella popolazione siriana, dal momento che soleva cambiare spesso

[12] Cf. W. Pape — G.E. Benseler, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennamen* (Braunschweig, 1911 (rist. Graz 1959)).

[13] I vocabolari citano soltanto un frammento di Dione Cassio e uno scolio ad Aristofane, *Uccelli* 232.

[14] Cf. L Robert, *Noms indigènes dans l'Asie mineur gréco-romaine*, I (Paris, 1963), pp. 170-171; P. Canivet, *Le monachisme syrien...*, *op. cit.*, p. 244; P. Canivet — A. Leroy-Molinghen (ed.), Théodoret de Cyr, *Histoire des moines de Syrie. Histoire philothée I-XIII* (SCh 234; Paris 1977), p. 475; A. Gallico, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

[15] Cf. Theodoretus, *Historia Religiosa* 13, 3 (trad.: A. Gallico (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 184: 'Infatti — disse — anch'io, che per quaranta anni, come tu sai, ho preso solo grani d'orzo, ieri, quando mi ha colto una tale debolezza, ho chiesto al mio compagno di cercare e portarmi un piccolo pezzo di pane'), SCh 234, p. 478: 'Καὶ γὰρ ἐγώ, ἔφη, τετταράκοντα ἔτη ταῖς κριθαῖς, ὡς οἶσθα, μόναις χρησάμενος, ἀσθενείας μοι τῇ προτεραίᾳ προσγενομένης τινός, τὸν σύνοικον ἐκέλευσα ἄρτον βραχὺν αἰτῆσαί τέ μοι καὶ κομίσαι'.

[16] Theodoretus, *Historia Religiosa* 13, 2 (trad.: A. Gallico (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 183), SCh 234, p. 476: 'Οὗτος τοίνυν παλαίστραν ἔσχε καὶ στάδιον τὰς τῶν ὀρῶν κορυφὰς οὐκ ἐφ' ἑνὸς ἱδρυμένος χωρίου, ἀλλὰ νῦν μὲν τούτῳ ἐνδιαιτώμενος, νῦν δὲ εἰς ἐκεῖνο μεταβαίνων. Ἐποίει δὲ τοῦτο τὰ χωρία δυσχεραίνων, ἀλλὰ τῶν ὡς αὐτὸν συνιόντων καὶ πάντοθεν συνθεόντων ἀποδιδράσκων τὰ πλήθη. Πέντε δὲ καὶ τετταράκοντα ἔτη τοῦτον διάγων διετέλεσε τὸν τρόπον, οὐ σκηνῇ χρώμενος, οὐ καλύβῃ, ἀλλ' ἐν ὀρύγματι βαθεῖ τὴν στάσιν ποιούμενος, ὅθεν καὶ Γουββᾶν αὐτόν τινες ἐπωνόμαζον — ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς σύρας εἰς τὴν ἑλλάδα φωνὴν τοῦτο μεταφερόμενον λάκκον σημαίνει τὸ ὄνομα'.

dimora. Gli indigeni, perciò, gli diedero anche un soprannome siriaco: 'Gubba' (Γουββᾶς), ossia — 'cisterna', 'pozzo'.

La notizia giunge alle orecchie di Girolamo ancora dimorante in Siria[17], sebbene sdoppiata in due distinti anacoreti; questo sdoppiamento meriterebbe di essere ulteriormente approfondito, ma non disturba essenzialmente la presente indagine perché, comunque, uno dei due anacoreti è san Macedonio e viene detto ancora vivente.

Non resta che chiedersi se è possibile stabilire una cronologia di Macedonio che faccia luce sulla composizione della *Vita*.

Le notizie biografiche su Macedonio ci sono fornite sempre da Teodoreto, in quanto l'ordine delle vite della *Historia Religiosa* è in parte cronologico e in parte geografico. Le prime sette descrizioni di monaci siri concernono asceti non conosciuti direttamente da Teodoreto. Trattando, infatti, di Giacomo[18], Teodoreto informa che, dopo aver presentato alcuni monaci che sono già morti, si occuperà di quelli che sono ancora in vita[19]. Le notizie comprese tra la 8 e la 19 vita[20] riguardano monaci morti prima dell'elevazione di Teodoreto a vescovo di Cirro, avvenuta nel 423. Ora, di san Macedonio si parla al capitolo 13; egli, perciò, morì sicuramente prima del 423. Poiché la sua vita monastica durò settant'anni[21], si può presumere che sia iniziata almeno intorno al 353.

Possediamo ancora altre notizie su Macedonio, anzitutto sulla sua ordinazione sacerdotale:

'Dopoché il grande Flaviano fu ordinato pastore del grande gregge di Dio e venne a conoscenza della virtù di quest'uomo (era, infatti, celebrato ed era sulla bocca di tutti), lo condusse dalla vetta del monte, come se ci fosse un'accusa contro di lui. E, mentre si celebrava il mistico ufficio, lo condusse all'altare, e lo ordinò sacerdote'[22].

[17] Lo stesso soprannome di 'Gubba' può essere orientativo della composizione della *Vita S. Pauli* in ambiente siriaco e non gerosolimitano, come dovrebbe essere, invece, se si suppone una composizione tardiva.

[18] Cf. *BHG* 1, 771.

[19] Cf. Theodoretus, *Historia Religiosa* 21, 1.

[20] Ossia circa i seguenti asceti siri: Afraate (cf. *BHG* 3, 147; Theodoretus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 4, 23), Pietro il Galata (cf. *BHG* 3, 1507; Theodoretus, *ibidem*, 4, 25), Teodosio (cf. *BHG* 3, 1779), Romano (cf. *BHG* 3, 1603; Theodoretus, *ibidem*, 4, 24), Zenone (cf. *BHG* 3, 1885; Theodoretus, *ibidem*, 4, 25), Macedonio, Mesima (cf. *BHG* 3, 1013), Acepsima (cf. *BHG* 3, 14), Marone (cf. *BHG* 3, 1173), Abramo (cf. *BHG* 3, 9), Eusebio (cf. *BHG* 3, 637), Salamane (cf. *BHG* 3, 1614).

[21] Cf. Theodoretus, *Historia Religiosa* 13, 2.

[22] Theodoretus, *Historia Religiosa* 13, 4 (trad.: A. Gallico (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 184), SCh 234, p. 480: "Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ὁ μέγας Φλαβιανὸς τὴν μεγάλην τοῦ θεοῦ ποίμνην ποιμαίνειν ἐτάχθη, τὴν δὲ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἔμαθεν ἀρετήν — ἤδετο γὰρ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἁπάντων ἐφέρετο στόμασιν —, ἄγει μὲν αὐτὸν ἐκ τῆς τοῦ ὄρους κορυφῆς ὡς γραφῆς κατ' αὐτοῦ γενομένης. Τῆς δὲ μυστικῆς προκειμένης ἱερουργίας προσάγει τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ καὶ τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν ἐγκαταλέγει'.

L'avvenimento deve aver avuto luogo, ovviamente, dopo l'ordinazione vescovile di Flaviano[23] sulla sede di Antiochia nel 381 e non dopo il 404, l'anno in cui Flaviano cessò di essere vescovo[24]; forse si verificò persino prima del 386[25]. Per quella data Macedonio era già noto per la sua vita penitenziale ed era 'celebrato sulla bocca di tutti'. Naturalmente, questo episodio si colloca all'interno di un lungo ritiro monastico, che gli aveva procurato tanta fama di santità, sull'inizio e sulla prosecuzione del quale abbiamo delle notizie orientative.

Era cominciato molto tempo prima, già intorno al 365, come riporta Teodoreto:

'Un giorno venne da lui un comandante famoso per la sua religiosità (e chi non conosce la virtù di Lupicino?)'[26].

Flavius Lupicinus era cristiano[27], filosofo e retore[28], di grande valore militare, sebbene descritto da Ammiano Marcellino anche come un uomo avido di denaro, arrogante, presuntuoso, duro e crudele[29]. Lupicino fu *magister equitum* in Gallia e, a partire dal 364, ottenne l'incarico di *magister equitum per Orientem* sotto l'imperatore Gioviano; in seguito aiutò Valente contro Procopio, ed infine, nel 367 divenne console. Il suo incontro con san Macedonio, perciò, si situa tra il 364 e il 367.

E il ritiro si protrasse per lunghi anni, di cui quaranta di strettissimo digiuno; possediamo, infatti, due racconti a questo proposito, che ci confermano, inoltre, la sua carismatica autorevolezza. Il primo riguarda l'intervento di Macedonio a favore degli Antiocheni, ribellatisi a Teodosio. Teodoreto descrive questo episodio in due sue opere; nella *Historia Religiosa* è più succinto:

'Un'altra volta, essendo stati i cittadini resi folli da un maligno demonio e manifestando questa loro follia contro le statue dell'imperatore, vennero i migliori comandanti con l'ordine di distruggere completamente la città. Macedonio, allora, sceso dal monte, trattenne entrambi i comandanti che passavano per la piazza'[30].

[23] A proposito di Flaviano, cf. Philostorgius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3, 13; Sozomenus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3, 20.

[24] Cf. G. Fedalto, *Hierarchia Ecclesiastica Orientalis* (Padova, 1988), p. 628.

[25] Cf. P. Canivet, *Le monachisme syrien...*, *op. cit.*, §117.

[26] Theodoretus, *Historia Religiosa* 13, 7 (trad.: A. Gallico (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 190), SCh 234, p. 500: 'Καί ποτε πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀφικόμενος στρατηγὸς εὐσεβείᾳ λαμπρυνόμενος — τίς δὲ ἀγνοεῖ Λουπικίνου τὴν ἀρετήν; (...)'.

[27] Cf. P. Petit, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

[28] Cf. Libanius, *Autobiographia* 164.

[29] Cf. Ammianus Marcellinus, *Historia* 20, 1, 2; 20, 9, 9. Cf. anche A.H.M. Jones — J.R. Martindale — J. Morris, *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, I (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 520-521.

[30] Theodoretus, *Historia Religiosa* 13, 7 (trad.: A. Gallico (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 186), SCh 234, p. 486: '"Ἀλλοτε δὲ τῆς πόλεως ὑπό τινος πονηροῦ δαίμονος βακχευθείσης καὶ τῇ μανίᾳ κατὰ τῶν βασιλικῶν χρησαμένης στηλῶν ἀφίκοντο μὲν οἱ ἄριστοι τῶν στρατηγῶν πανωλεθρίας ψῆφον κατὰ τῆς πόλεως φέροντες· καταβὰς δὲ οὗτος ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄρους ἄμφω κατέσχε κατὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν παριόντας τοὺς στρατηγούς'.

Nella *Historia ecclesiastica* è più preciso[31], spiega che la rivolta fu provocata ad Antiochia a causa dell'imposizione di nuovi tributi da parte dell'imperatore Teodosio[32]. In quell'occasione, gli Antiocheni rovesciarono le immagini e le statue di Teodosio e della sua defunta moglie, Aelia Flacilla. Vengono precisati anche i nomi dei suddetti 'migliori comandanti': Ellebichus e Flavius Caesarius[33]. Il primo di essi esercitava l'incarico di *magister militum per Orientem*[34], l'altro, invece, quello di *magister officiorum*[35]. Lo stratega Ellebico era pagano e Flavio Cesario, invece, cristiano: il *comes Orientis* e il *consularis Syriae* erano rispettivamente cristiano e pagano; le responsabilità erano così divise, perché sia pagani che cristiani avevano preso parte alla rivolta[36].

Teodoreto colloca questo fatto dopo la legge che sant'Ambrogio aveva fatto promulgare per Teodosio a seguito del massacro di Tessalonica[37], ma in realtà la rivolta ebbe luogo all'inizio di febbraio o di marzo del 387. Il racconto enfatizza la figura di Macedonio che 'scende dal monte' della sua santità e derime con carismatica autorità la questione.

Il secondo episodio che informa sul ritiro monastico di Macedonio tocca in prima persona i genitori di Teodoreto, che ottennero dall'eremita l'intercessione per la sua nascita:

'Sebbene abitasse con mio padre da **tredici anni**, mia madre ancora non era divenuta madre di figli (...). (...). Macedonio (...) s'impegnò in termini precisi che avrebbe chiesto al Creatore dell'universo un figlio e promise che Dio avrebbe accolto la sua richiesta. Passarono **tre anni** e la promessa non aveva avuto compimento. Mio padre di nuovo accorse da lui per sollecitare l'adempimento della promessa. (...). Mia madre tornò da lì con la benedizione della promessa; e dopo **quattro anni** concepì e fu incinta'[38].

[31] Cf. 5, 20.

[32] Cf. anche Libanius, *Orationes* 19-23; Iohannes Chrysostomus, *De statuis* 1-21; Sozomenus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 7, 23; P. Petit, *Libanius et la vie municipale à Antioche au IV^e siècle après J.-C.* (Paris, 1955), pp. 238-244; A.-J. Festugière, *Antioche païenne et chrétienne...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 285-287.

[33] Cf. Theodoretus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 5, 19. Essi vengono ampiamente lodati da Libanio (cf. *Orationes* 21-22). Cf. A. Gallico, *op. cit.*, p. 186, n. 17.

[34] Cf. A.H.M. Jones — J.R. Martindale — J. Morris, *op. cit.*, pp. 278-279.

[35] Cf. *ibidem*, p. 171.

[36] Cf. P. Canivet — A. Leroy-Molinghen (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 487, n. 2.

[37] Cf. Theodoretus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 5, 17-18; cf. *Codex Theodosianus* 9, 40, 13, del 15 agosto 390.

[38] Theodoretus, *Historia Religiosa* 13, 16 (trad.: A. Gallico (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 190-191), SCh 234, pp. 502. 504: 'Τρία καὶ δέκα ἔτη συνοικήσασα τῷ ἐμῷ πατρὶ ἡ μήτηρ παιδῶν οὐκ ἐγένετο μήτηρ (...). (...) ὁ δὲ θεῖος οὗτος ἄνθρωπος διαρρήδην αἰτήσειν ἐπηγγείλετο υἱὸν ἕνα παρὰ τοῦ τῶν ὅλων δημιουργοῦ καὶ λήψεσθαι τὴν αἴτησιν ὑπισχνεῖτο. Τριῶν τοίνυν διελθόντων ἐνιαυτῶν καὶ τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τὸ τέλος οὐ δεξαμένης, πάλιν ἔτρεχεν ὁ πατὴρ τὴν ὑπόσχεσιν ἀπαιτῶν· (...). (...). Ἐπανῆκεν ἐκεῖθεν ἡ μήτηρ τὴν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας εὐλογίαν κομίζουσα· καὶ τῷ τετάρτῳ τῆς ὑποσχέσεως ἐνιαυτῷ κύει καὶ τὴν γαστέρα φορτίζεται (...)'.

I dati di questo racconto consentono di ricostruire la cronologia della *Historia Religiosa* e della stessa vita di Teodoreto[39], e consentono di sapere ancora qualcosa sulla cronologia di san Macedonio: Teodoreto nacque nel 393[40], dopo che suo padre si era recato per due volte da Macedonio a distanza di tre anni, e dopo un anno dalla seconda visita all'anacoreta la moglie concepì. Quindi bisogna sottrarre al 393: quasi un anno di gravidanza, un anno di attesa fra la seconda visita e il concepimento, tre anni di attesa precedente; vuol dire che il padre di Teodoreto si era recato da Macedonio quasi cinque anni prima del 393, cioè nel 388[41], un periodo che corrisponde pienamente alle altre date raccolte su san Macedonio.

In sintesi, di questo santo eremita sappiamo che morì almeno prima del 423, che si era ritirato in eremitaggio settant'anni prima — quindi già intorno al 350, se non prima — e sicuramente nel 364 era già un celebre anacoreta, che la sua santità aveva raggiunto grande notorietà negli anni 390 circa, tanto da renderlo protagonista di eventi miracolosi e da essere ordinato sacerdote quasi forzatamente. Sappiamo, inoltre, che dall'inizio della sua ascesi monastica per quarant'anni si era nutrito solo con grano d'orzo — cioè circa fino al 390, se non prima —, interrotto dall'ingestione di un pezzo di pane; sappiamo, infine, che Girolamo ne ode notizia una decina di anni prima, perché, infatti, non parla di questa interruzione e parla di una trentina di anni di digiuno, cioè circa nel 380, se non prima.

Questi dati si approssimano al primo periodo eremitico di Girolamo. Egli, infatti, si recò nel 374 ad Antiochia, passando per la Tracia, la Bitinia, il Ponto, la Galazia, la Cappadocia e la Cilicia. Nella capitale siriana fu ospitato dall'amico Evagrio[42]. Ma presto, fermo nel suo proposito di vivere *solus cum Deo solo*, si trasferì prima a Maronia, piccolo villaggio situato a trenta miglia a oriente di Antiochia[43], e in seguito nel deserto di Calcide ai confini fra la Siria e la zona occupata dalle tribù seminomadi dei Saraceni[44], ove si stabilì

[39] Cf. P. Canivet, *Le monachisme syrien...*, *op. cit.*, § 9-14; P. Canivet — A. Leroy-Molinghen (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 503.

[40] P. Garnerius, in PG 84, 90, appoggia la datazione del 386. Per quanto riguarda la data della nascita di Teodoreto, cf. H.G. Opitz, 'Theodoretos', in G. Wissowa — W. Kroll — K. Mittelhaus, *Paulys Realencyklopädie der klassischen Altertumwissenschaft*, V A_2 (Stuttgart, 1934), coll. 1791-1792; P. Canivet, *Le monachisme syrien...*, *op. cit.*, § 5. La data del 393 sembra, però, più verosimile.

[41] Il Festugière tradusse la frase finale nel seguente modo: 'au quatrième anniversaire (mensuel)', cf. A.-J. Festugière, *Antioche païenne et chrétienne...*, *op. cit.*, p. 284, intendendo la parola ἐνιαυτός nel senso di 'ciclo mestruale', cf. P. Canivet — A. Leroy-Molinghen (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 504. Il conto, quindi, si presenterebbe nel seguente modo: 3 + 4 mesi + 9 mesi = 4 anni e un mese circa. Ciò modifica il computo di meno di un anno, concludendo all'anno 389.

[42] Cf. Hieronymus, *Epistula* 3, 1-2.

[43] Cf. Hieronymus, *Vita Malchi* 2, 1, in E.M. Morales (ed.), *Edición crítica de 'De Monacho captivo' ('Vita Malchi') de San Jerónimo*, Institutum Patristicum 'Augustinianum' (Roma, 1991), p. 277: 'Maronias triginta ferme milibus ab Antiochia urbe Syriae, haud grandis ad Orientem distat viculus'.

[44] Cf. Hieronymus, *Vita S. Pauli Primi Eremitae* 6, in R. Degórski (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94: '(...) in ea parte eremi, quae iuxta Syriam Saracenis iungitur (...)'.

dal 375 al 379 circa[45]. Nel deserto di Calcide, Girolamo ebbe modo di conoscere molti anacoreti, che suscitarono in lui un'altissima ammirazione per la loro austerità ed ebbe notizia di Macedonio. Girolamo ce ne riferisce con l'immediatezza e il trasporto di chi ne sta condividendo l'esperienza.

IV. Rilievi conclusivi

Il presente contributo ha inteso apportare nuove conferme a favore della tesi tradizionale secondo la quale la *Vita S. Pauli* è un'opera giovanile del Dalmata e va collocata durante il suo ritiro monastico nel deserto di Calcide.

Se il testo critico propende decisamente per la versione al presente 'et uidere' insieme a tutto il suo contesto, si è tentato di acquisirlo come punto di partenza e di andare oltre, tentando cioè di identificare l'uomo eletto proposto da Girolamo come esempio di virtù monastica. Gli scarsi, e persino imprecisi, indizi del testo bastano comunque a condurre a san Macedonio, l'unico passato alla tradizione come 'Critofago' e come 'Gubba', di cui ci parla più diffusamente Teodoreto di Cirro nell'intento di stilare una storia del monachesimo siriano.

Certamente, non si può esigere una dovizia biografica e una assoluta esattezza cronologica da questi autori antichi, la cui concezione di storia non implica necessariamente quella di 'data' ma piuttosto di 'reale accadimento', e il cui intendimento primario è quello spirituale. Perciò, non otteniamo né da Girolamo né da Teodoreto, seppure più generoso di notizie, un riferimento esplicito sulle date di nascita, di morte e di ritiro eremitico di Macedonio, che chiuderebbero definitivamente la discussione sulla datazione della *Vita S. Pauli*. Ciò che riusciamo a sapere complessivamente del santo anacoreta ci riporta in ogni caso, con una buona dose di certezza, alle ultime decadi del IV secolo.

Se si vuole considerare la sfida ancora aperta, sarà opportuno, comunque, mettersi sulle tracce dei monaci che Girolamo sicuramente 'et uidere'.

[45] San Girolamo fornisce i particolari sull'esperienza eremitica di questo periodo specialmente in una lettera, del 384, alla sua discepola Eustochio, cf. *Epistula* 22.

The Polemical Use of Genealogies: Jerome's Classification of Pelagius and Evagrius Ponticus

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Late Antique scholarship has in recent years witnessed a resurgence of interest in the forms and structures of rhetoric as 'a key to social power' and, more specifically, towards unravelling the ways in which Christianity developed 'a totalizing discourse'[1]. Studies such as Averil Cameron's *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire*, Peter Brown's *Power and Persuasion*, and Maud Gleason's *Making Men* have again sharpened our perception of the arsenal of rhetorical stratagems available to ancient writers, be they non-Christian or Christian, and their lingering effect on our present perceptions of periods such as Late Antiquity[2].

One specific genre lends itself in particular to such rhetorical analysis: ancient heresiology. This genre posits a number of unique challenges to the modern historian. Anti-heretical writings are, as is well-known, indispensable sources for the development of theology and institutions. These works were, however, also fundamental in shaping an intellectual discourse through sophisticated strategies that provided classifications, sharp oppositions and other means of defining in — and outsiders. This essentially rhetorical character begs the question as to where 'mere rhetoric' ends and 'historical truth' begins[3]. To phrase it differently, the modern scholar has to be cautious when relying on categories created by the heresiologists themselves, such as the opposition between pagan and Christian, sophist and philosopher, between teacher and bishop (will say, academic versus sacerdotal concerns), magician and prophet, Pelagian and Catholic, since such categories are neither purely polemical constructs nor accurate descriptions of opposing doctrinal positions, but rather constantly changing indicators of 'the particular concerns of the institutions

[1] I would like to thank Rebecca Lyman for her many stimulating insights. This resurgence has been deeply influenced by the works of philosophers and literary critics, most of all Michel Foucault. See A. Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire. The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley, 1991), pp. 1-6, quotes 1 and 2.

[2] P. Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity. Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison, 1992); id., *Authority and the Sacred. Aspects of Christianisation of the Roman World* (Cambridge, 1995); and M. Gleason, *Making Men. Sophists and Self-Presentation in Ancient Rome* (Princeton, 1995).

[3] Cameron, *Christianity*, pp. 26-31.

and individuals who use them'[4]. In order to understand more clearly the complex nature of such 'road-maps', scholars need to search even further for methodological categories that circumvent those intentionally provided by our sources.

Recent studies have shown ways of addressing this problem through a stringent application of the insights gained in the contemporary rediscovery of rhetoric[5]. It is, however, necessary to combine this approach with a detailed examination of the social, historical and intellectual context that informed the choice of this rhetoric, in short its *Sitz-im-Leben*. Significantly, though, even ground-breaking studies such as Alain Le Boulluec's do this, following Foucault's intentions, still far too rarely[6].

Studies that combine a detailed analysis of social context and rhetorical strategies, for example Allen Brent's article on 'Diogenes Laertius and the Apostolic Succession'[7], Elizabeth Clark's fundamental work on the *Origenist Controversy*, complemented by Stephan Rebenich's study on *Hieronymus und sein Kreis*[8], show that, despite manifest and significant theological differences, the protagonist's anti-heretical polemic is caused not only by *de facto* theological divergence, but by fierce competition between rivaling philosophical schools, and for patronage and friendships, vital for the realization of specific theological and then ascetic concepts. In other words, by expanding the methodological focus to include networks of patronage in addition to doctrinal adherence, these studies have made it clear that the sharp divisions of anti-heretical polemics reflect a multiplicity of social, political and theological concerns. As

[4] For recent discussions of the problem see esp. R. Lyman, 'A Topography of Heresy: Mapping the Rhetorical Creation of Arianism', in *Arianism after Arius. Essays on the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflicts*, ed. by M.R. Barnes and D.H. Williams (Edinburgh, 1993), pp. 45-62, quote 47; and R. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 1-17; J.Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine* (Chicago, 1990), pp. 1-53.

[5] For example A. Pourkier's *L'Hérésiologie chez Épiphane de Salamine* (Christianisme Antique 4; Paris, 1992).

[6] A. Le Boulluec, *La notion d'hérésie dans la littérature grecque (IIe-IIIe siècles)* 1-2 (Paris, Études Augustiniennes, 1985); significantly influenced by both the Nag Hammadi findings and M. Foucault's work, especially id., *Folie et deraison: Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (=*Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (New York, 1988); cf. ibid. 1, p. 7.

[7] *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 44 (1993), pp. 367-389. Brent's identification of the concept of *diadoche* as intrinsic to the rhetoric of competing philosophical schools (apparently made independently of Le Boulluec's), and not, as posited by e.g. H. v. Campenhausen (*Kirchliches Amt und geistliche Vollmacht in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (Beiträge zur historischen Theologie 14; Tübingen, 1963²), pp. 163-215), and A.A.T. Ehrhardt (*The Apostolic Succession in the First Two Centuries of the Church* (London, 1953), pp. 44-61), to the hieratic succession of the Maccabees, significantly strengthens the notion of early Christianity as a 'collection of philosophical schools', cf. ibid., pp. 368-370.

[8] E.A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, 1992); S. Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis. Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Historia Einzelschriften 72; Stuttgart, 1992).

did the leaders of the early churches' competing philosophical schools[9], fourth century teachers such as Rufinus, Jerome, or Pelagius, needed to draw (perhaps overly) sharp distinctions between their own and an opponent's doctrinal position not only because of the *de facto* divergences, but also to secure access to systems of patronage necessary for their own advancement[10]. Superior literary talent, a keener ear for the taste of the Roman aristocracy, better self-promotion as a *doctor scientiae scripturarum*[11], in short, the persuasion of the right *amici maiores*[12], may have been as decisive for the establishment of 'orthodoxy' as many other factors, traditionally perceived as substantially theological.

What has been shown by these scholars for Rome, Constantinople and the Holy Land is, *mutatis mutandis*, also the case in Alexandria and Milan, as clarified by Christopher Haas who emphasizes the links between Arian asceticism, suburban groups of herdsmen intensely loyal to their ascetic teachers, and upper-class *bouleutai*, 'indicat<ing> that the issue at stake was patronage, not theology'[13]; and by Harry Maier who stresses the significance of households and house churches with their own, often travelling teachers, for the survival of heterodox, i.e. Priscillian, Pelagian, Manichaean movements[14].

Yet despite the significant shift away from classifications provided by the heresiologists themselves towards ones based on sociological models as represented by these studies, they, too, still remain in a very significant way indebted to one specific and perhaps ultimately unavoidable heresiological taxonomy: that resulting from the polemical use of genealogies, as I would like to show through a brief analysis of Jerome's classification of Evagrius Ponticus and Pelagius.

In the year 414 or 415, an 'aging and … anxious' Jerome associated Evagrius Ponticus — some fifteen years after Evagrius Ponticus' death and at a point in time when the so-called Origenist controversy had to all intents and purposes

[9] Brent, 'Diogenes', pp. 368-370. For the social context see P. Lampe, *Die stadtrömischen Christen in den ersten beiden Jahrhunderten* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2; Tübingen, 1987), pp. 78-123, 219-245, and especially 301-341.

[10] Thus a Jerome's *mulierculae* are a Rufinus' *patronae*; a rival group's satirically chastised lavish life-style is in one's own case simply a functioning aristocratic *fundus*; cf. Jer. *Ep.* 117 and 123; Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, pp. 154-180; 288.

[11] Whose talents were vital for the inculcation of the *pars melior generis humanae* with the appropriate *sancta superbia*, Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, pp. 181-192; M. Vessey, 'Jerome's Origen: The Making of a Christian Literary *Persona*', *Studia Patristica* 25 (1993), pp. 135-145.

[12] 'Who founded their social prestige on *honos, litterae, domus* (*Paulinus of Nola*, carm. 24,481)', Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, pp. 138, n. 690, and 299-301.

[13] 'The Arians of Alexandria', *VigChr* 7 (1993), pp. 234-245; quote 240.

[14] H.O. Maier, 'Private Space as the Social Context of Arianism in Milan', *JThS* n.s. 45 (1994), pp. 72-93, and id., 'Religious Dissent, Heresy and Households in Late Antiquity', *VigChr* 49 (1995), pp. 49-63, where he argues that 'in many instances the households formed a kind of frontier dividing orthodox and heterodox topographies', ibid., p. 52.

passed its zenith[15] — for the first time with Origen by mentioning him in a long list of names that originated with the Pythagoreans and Stoics, and lead directly via Origen to Evagrius, and then on to Rufinus, Palladius, Mani, Priscillian and Jovinian to reach, finally, the true focus of Jerome's anxiety: Pelagius[16]. Jerome mentions Evagrius twice more in lists containing exactly these names, all three times in works that have but one principal aim, to refute Pelagius' teachings on *apatheia* (or *inpassibilitas*) and *inpeccantia*[17].

Jerome's aim here is clear: by listing a particular sequence of names, he creates an *ad hoc* historiography, that — standing here paradigmatic for many others — irrefutably links the present teachings of Pelagius via an uninterrupted chain of discipleship through Origen back to the Pythagoreans and Zeno, thus establishing their 'pagan' and hence suspect origin. In addition, he provides his readers with an instant classification that assigns each name a well-defined position within a highly contested doctrinal spectrum, calibrated precisely to combat the charges Jerome himself is refuting at the moment.

In fact, Pelagius' recent arrival in the Holy Land led to the revival of two kinds of charges against Jerome: that he had once fully espoused the notion of the preexistence of the soul together with that of differing degrees of merit acquired prior to a descent into material bodies, as made clear in his *Commentary on Ephesians*[18]; and, secondly, that his emphasize on a hierarchy of merit even in the hereafter against Jovinian's assertion that all who keep their baptismal vows will receive only one reward, implied a deprecation of marriage verging on condemnation[19]. Both charges aligned him, Jerome, directly with Origen on the one, and rigorists such as the Manichees on the other hand[20]. Indeed,

[15] J.G. Bunge, 'Origenismus-Gnostizismus. Zum geistesgeschichtlichen Standort des Evagrios Pontikos', *VigChr* 40 (1986), pp. 24-54, esp. 24-26. For Evagrius' role in the controversy see now Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, pp. 43-84.

[16] Jer. *Comm. in Hieremiam Prophetam* 4. 1, 2, ed. S. Reiter (*CCSL* 74; Turnholt, 1960). For dating see F. Cavallera. *S. Jérôme. Sa vie et son œuvre*. 1: 2 (Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense 2; Louvain, 1922), pp. 55-56; Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*, p. 148; R.F. Evans. *Pelagius. Inquiries and Reappraisals* (New York, 1968), pp. 7-9, quote 7; and J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome. His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London, 1975), p. 322.

[17] Namely in his *Ep.* 133, 2 *ad Ctesiphontem* (in: *S. Eusebii Hieronymi Epistulae 1-3*, ed. I. Hilbert, CSEL 54-56. Vienna/Leipzig, 1910-13; repr. New York, 1961), and in the Prologue to his *Dialogue against the Pelagians*, *PL* 23: 495-497.

[18] Jer. *In Hierem.* Prol. 3; also ibid., 4. 41. 6; a point first raised by Rufinus in his *Apologia contra Hieronymum*, CCL 20: 1. 23-44. Cf. Jer. *Comm. in Eph.* 1. 2. 12; 1.2. 15ff. (written *ca.* 387-89); cf. also id. *Comm. in Eccl.* 1.9-10 '... fuit ergo homo, antequam sub sole fieret', and Origen, *De princ.* 3.5.3. Cavallera, *St. Jérome*, I, p. 138, n. 2; and E. Clark, 'The Place of Jerome's Commentary on Ephesians in the Origenist Controversy: The *Apokatastasis* and Ascetic Ideals', *VigChr* 41 (1987), pp. 154-171.

[19] *In Hierem. Prol.* 4 and ibid. 3.60. 3; Cavallera, *S. Jérôme*, pp. 153-164.

[20] Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, pp. 148-151; ead., 'Jerome's Commentary', p. 165; Evans, *Pelagius*, pp. 8-31; but see Y.-M. Duval, 'Pélage est-il le censeur inconnu de l'*Adversus Iovinianum* à Rome en 393? ou: Du "portrait-robot" de l'hérétique chez S. Jérôme', *RHE* 75 (1980), pp. 525-557, especially 528-540.

Jerome's own use of Origen, his self-fashioning as an exegete and *doctor ecclesiae* after Origen's example[21], and his own admission that his views on sin and differing degrees of merit may be interpreted as Manichaean, are well known facts[22].

It is thus hardly surprising that Jerome in his defense simply reverses the equation by declaring that not his, but Pelagius' teachings on *apatheia* and *inpeccantia* are Origenist and Manichean: they stem directly from the *diadoche* of 'pagan' Pythagorean and Stoic teachers, Origen, and noted 'rigorists' such as the Manichees, Evagrius Ponticus and Jovinian, linked by their alleged advocacy of human perfectionism[23].

Jerome's historiographical reconstruction of Pelagian teachings is, however, not a purely polemical artifact. It not only corresponds to accusations that Jerome himself feared at that particular moment[24], but also highlights issues raised by Pelagius himself that were of acute concern to the ascetic and ecclesiastical community as a whole. Pelagius had reopened questions of divine justice, the potential of human perfection and free will already at stake in the 'Origenist' debates, in the context of which he expressedly rejected both Manichaean and Origenist positions that might imply divine determinism, though he, too, remained deeply indebted to Origen's writings[25]. Yet, while Augustine's debate with Pelagius was to carry these questions further to focus on the origin of the soul and, ultimately, on original sin[26], Jerome attacked instead the issue of 'sinlessness', i.e. of human perfection, an issue where Evagrius Ponticus's teachings had indeed been crucial. In so doing 'Jerome fights the controversies of his past in his war against the Pelagians. Moreover, he fights the battle of the Pelagian's *own* past, that is, that of early Pelagianism'[27].

[21] Vessey, 'Jerome's Origen', pp. 135-145.

[22] Jer. *Ep.* 133, 6-9; Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, pp. 173-177. Thus Jerome's harsh views on marriage in his *Against Jovinian* had caused much consternation; cf. Jer. *Epp.* 49, 50; Evans, *Pelagius*, pp. 30-42.

[23] Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, pp. 222-227.

[24] He was forced to flee the Holy Land in 416 as the result of attacks instigated by a mob soon alleged to have been Pelagian monks (cf. Aug. *De gest. Pel.* 66; Innocent's *Epp.* to John of Jerusalem and to Jerome (=*Epp.* 137 and 136 in Jer.'s collection)), a fate shared by Pelagius barely a year later; Jer. *Epp.* 138 and 154; Kelly, *Jerome*, 322.

[25] See esp. E. Clark's recent reconstruction of the continuous development of specific theological topics from Origen through Evagrius to Pelagius (*Origenist Controversy*, pp. 191-227). Cf. e.g. Pel. *Ad Demetriadem* 16 (*PL* 30, 31-32); id., *In Ephesios* 1: 4, 1: 10; T. de Bruyn, *Pelagius' 'Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans'. Translation with Introduction and Notes* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 4-5, 10-24. For an excellent analysis of the polemical use of the label 'Manichaean' see R. Lyman, 'Arians and Manichees on Christ', *JThS* n.s., 40 (1989), pp. 493-503.

[26] See e.g. R.J. O'Connell, *The Origin of the Soul in St. Augustine's Later works* (New York, 1987), esp. chap. 1, pp. 299-310.

[27] Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, p. 227.

Given that both, too, appealed to *patronae* and *amici maiores* in their attempts to spread their ascetic concepts, it appears that Jerome and Pelagius had as much in common as divided them. In the words of Augustine: 'Pelagius never ceases to proclaim that <Jerome> envies him as if he was his rival'[28]. Hence Jerome's need to stress the profound difference between himself and this rival, achieved by charting a genealogy.

This device is part of a long-standing literary convention[29]. Beginning in the second century, the notion of *diadoche*, the Greek historiographical tradition of denoting philosophical schools by the name of their founder, and then tracing their development through a 'succession' from masters to disciples, became a decisive element also of the newly emerging 'heresiology'[30]. In this tradition, both in its Christian and non-Christian usage, the precise scheme of such a succession is 'highly artificial yet as a historiographical device it serves the author's purpose'[31].

Justin, for example, constructs his succession of founders of diverging 'Christian' schools to demonstrate that these 'haireseis' have human origin, in contrast to the true *diadoche* which originates with Christ. Thus by naming founders, Justin excludes them effectively from the denomination 'Christian'. Secondly, by calling certain 'schools' 'Valentinian', 'Marcionite', 'Basilidian', he places them into a stringent succession, thereby creating a systematic tradition of Satanic error independent of human agency[32]. Irenaeus merges these strategies into a coherent system. Building on Justin's notion of philosophical succession, he — counteracting a far stronger threat of Gnostic teachings — equates for example 'heresiarchs' with 'sophists', a category that already carries with it well-established prejudices, such as association with 'loose women', intellectual dishonesty, capricious inventions, and fondness of suspect magical practices. By associating heretical teachers with sophists, Irenaeus thus associates them with paganism at its worst, already identified and criticized as such by 'pagans'

[28] Aug. *Contra Julianum* 2.36, *PL* 44, 699 C - 700 A '... non solet Pelagius iactitare nisi quod tamquam aemulo inviderit'. See P. Brown, 'The Patrons of Pelagius: The Roman Aristocracy between East and West', *JThS* n.s. 21 (1970), pp. 56-72, repr. id., *Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine* (New York, 1972), pp. 208-226.

[29] Cf. I. Opelt, *Hieronymus' Streitschriften* (Bibliothek der klassischen Altertumswissenschaften NF 2. Reihe 44; Heidelberg, 1973), pp. 155-171, and passim.

[30] See especially Diogenes Laertius, *Successions (Lives) of Eminent Philosophers*, ed. by R.D. Hicks (Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass., 1925); Le Boulluec, *La notion* 1, pp. 36-51 and N. Brox, 'Häresie', *RAC* 13 (Stuttgart, 1986), pp. 248-297, here 256-259, with a comprehensive bibliography.

[31] Quote Brent, 'Diogenes', p. 375. The Greek precedents for such *diadochai* had their own tendentious purpose. Thus, according to Brent, 'Diogenes presented not a historical argument, but a historical myth: ... He asserts that philosophy is a wholly Greek cultural phenomenon which reached its natural completion with Chrysippus...'. (ibid., p. 375).

[32] Le Boulluec, *La notion* 1, pp. 60-91 and 110-112. For Hegesippus see Brent, 'Diogenes', pp. 382-386, and Le Boulluec, ibid., pp. 92-109.

themselves[33]. Lists of succession, while ostensibly quite similar to one another, bear 'encoded historiographic messages about the true character of the schools', and correspond only up to a certain point to *de facto* interdependencies[34].

The exact composition of Jerome's genealogies likewise corresponds both to doctrinal dependence and to specific polemical intentions[35]. Thus, he aligns Priscillian in later works, e.g. *the Commentary on Jesaiah*, with the Gnostics Basilides and Marcus, while in his earlier *De viris illustribus* he had distinguished them quite clearly[36].

The same mixture of 'facts and fiction' applies to a second set of rhetorical precedents for Jerome's genealogies: those with which fourth century aristocratic families traced their lineage back to Republican ancestry[37]. Here the aim is positive: as his epitaphs, letters, and his ascetic treatises demonstrate, Jerome used this stylistic device to emphasize that the addressee's Christian virtues were the apex in the long tradition of an *inlustris familia*, truly ennobling the entire *gens* retroactively[38].

To return to my premise: to create genealogical lines of heretical *diadoche* is evidently a rhetorical device intrinsic to anti-heretical polemic. Its purpose is manifold: to create a system of evil; oppose heterodox diversity to Christian unity; and, especially post-Constantine, to maintain the fiction that there is, in truth, no new heresy because all current deviance derives from ancient roots of evil and false believes. Genealogies provide instantaneous means to classify and categorize contemporary opponents and competitors by creating distance and clear distinction, whilst at the same time aiding in the consolidation of the increasingly complex theological diversity of the imperial Church.

Thus, they are not primarily intended to provide an accurate historiography of doctrinal dependencies, and ought not be used as such, as has recently been demonstrated again by H.-Ch. Brennecke's excellent exposé of the modern construction of Lucian of Antioch as 'proto-Arian' based on retroactive

[33] Along with a general devaluation of philosophy *vis-à-vis* Justin, doubtlessly a reflection of Irenaeus' milieu; Le Boulluec, *La notion* 1, pp. 113-253, esp. 136-158.

[34] Brent, 'Diogenes', p. 371.

[35] And does not result from 'erbärmlicher Confusion', as charged by A. v. Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius* I, ed. K. Aland (Leipzig, 1958²), p. 161.

[36] Jer. *Comm. in Is.* 17. 64. 4f. (CCL 73A, 732) 'qui (sc. Gnostici) per Marcum Aegyptium, Galliarum primum circa Rhodanum, deinde Hispaniarum nobiles feminas deceperunt, miscentes fabulis voluptatem et inperitiae suae nomen scientiae vindicantes'. See already *Ep.* 75. 3. 2. to the Spanish lady Theodora, and *Ep.* 120. 10. 2. Jer. *De vir. ill.* 121 'hic (sc. Priscillianus) usque hodie Irenaeus scribit, haereseos accusatur ...; Brox, 'Häresie', pp. 284-287; Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, pp. 216-218.

[37] P. Brown, 'Pelagius and his Supporters: Aims and Environment', *JThS* n.s. 19 (1968), pp. 93-114, repr. in id., *Religion and Society*, pp. 183-207, here 186-187; and id., 'Aspects of the Christianization of the Roman Aristocracy', *JRS* 51 (1961), pp. 1-11, repr. ibid., pp. 161-182.

[38] See especially Jer. *Epitaphium sanctae Paulae = Ep.* 108; Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, pp. 182-188. Conversely, Jerome uses negative Republican *exempla* to defame his opponents, e.g. by casting Pelagius and Caelestius (or Annianus) as Catilina and Lentulus, Jer. *Ep.* 138. 1.

genealogical classification[39]. In continuing to employ labels such as 'Origenist' or 'Pelagian' (but never e.g. 'Cappadocianist' or 'Jeromian'), we rely on the highly charged and precisely calibrated classifications of a particular group considered 'orthodox', which are designed to emphasize certain differences at the expense of potentially more relevant factors. In the absence of other, universally agreed upon systems of values, we may have to continue to use such classifications, but should do so fully aware of the intrinsic problematic that 'the label <also> creates a new reality'[40].

[39] 'Lukian von Antiochien in der Geschichte des arianischen Streites', in *Logos. Festschrift Louise Abramowski*, ed. H.-Ch. Brennecke, E.L. Grasmück, C. Markschies (Berlin, 1993), pp. 170-192, esp. 191-192. The labels 'Arianism' seems to have received the lions-share of critical evaluation, cf. Lyman, 'A Topography', pp. 45-62.

[40] Quote Lyman, 'A Topography', p. 47. The most far reaching alternative value system offered so far is the Marxist one, according to which all 'heresy' is per definition opposition to 'the existing feudal domination'. This view has, of course, been significantly modified in contemporary scholarship; see e.g. C.R. Phillips, 'The Sociology of Religious Knowledge in the Roman Empire', *ANRW* 2. 16. 3., pp. 2677-2773, but its vestiges remain in so far as 'heresy' continues to be seen as 'opposed' to something more established.

Women Biblical Scholars in the Late Fourth Century: The Aventine Circle

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In this brief paper I will press for some change in the way we think about the role of women in early Christianity. Judging by the few times women have received notice in histories of early Christianity, histories of interpretation, patrologies, and encyclopedias, I think it is safe to conclude that women of the early Christian era have not been accorded recognition as scholars, much less as biblical scholars. No history of interpretation mentions Marcella, founder of the Aventine Circle in Rome during the mid-fourth century who is most deserving of the designation. Insofar as I have been able to discover, her image has not risen above the level of 'wealthy Roman matron' despite the clear evidence of her distinction as a biblical scholar in the eighteen letters Jerome wrote to her and in his panegyric on her life. Those who mention her, as a matter of fact, usually credit Jerome for the Aventine Circle's discovery of and interest in the Bible, despite the fact that that Circle had been going more than thirty years when Jerome came to Rome and was virtually dragged in by Marcella to help these women deepen their understanding of scriptures[1]. By the time Jerome appeared on the scene in 382 the Aventine Circle had already assumed its basic pattern, centering around intensive study of scriptures.

To make my case for designating Marcella and others in the Aventine Circle biblical scholars, I should probably spell out what constituted commendable biblical scholarship in this period. The model par excellence was, of course, Origen. Even Jerome in his anti-Origenistic period had to acknowledge Origen as the master: 'He knew the scriptures by heart, and he toiled day and night at studying their explanation. He delivered a thousand and more treatises in church, and edited innumerable commentaries besides. Who of us can read everything he wrote? Who does not admire his burning zeal for the Scriptures'[2]. Early on, it is well known, Jerome drew heavily from Origen's exegesis, virtually reproducing verbatim some of his commentary on scriptures. And it seems

[1] See especially the comment of Hans von Campenhausen, *Men Who Shaped the Western Church*, trans. Manfred Hoffman (New York, 1960), p. 152: 'The new ideas he imparted to this circle were, besides a more intimate knowledge of the strict Eastern exercises, the concentrated and regular pursuit of Bible reading and Biblical Studies. Soon Jerome delivered before a select female audience his own lectures which found enthusiastic acceptance. Some began to learn Greek and even Hebrew themselves'. What had they been doing together all those years?

[2] Jerome, *Ep.* 84.8; PL, 22: 750; CSEL 55: 131.

highly likely, Marcella's later anti-Origenism notwithstanding, that the women of the Aventine Circle looked to Origen as their guide long before they knew of Jerome. According to Palladius[3], Melania the Elder read three million lines of Origen, an index surely of his stature among Christian women of education and culture. If we use Origen as our measure, good biblical scholarship of the day depended on (1) knowledge of Greek and Hebrew[4], (2) thorough acquaintance with the geography of Palestine, (3) intense interest not only in the literal meaning but in the deeper spiritual meaning of texts, every jot and tittle of which would be inspired. A heart aflame with desire to know the sacred Word would have been key to everything. As Origen himself expressed it, 'One who approaches the prophetic words with care and attention will feel from his (or her) very reading a trace of their divine inspiration and will be convinced by his (or her) own feelings that the words which are believed by us to be from God are not the compositions of human beings'[5].

Not all members of the Aventine Circle would merit classification as biblical scholars, but the Circle placed an Origenistic type study of scriptures at its center, and some members, especially Marcella, equalled Origen in love of scriptures and desire to learn everything possible about and from them and probably surpassed him in knowledge of Hebrew. There is little reason to doubt that the focus of the Aventine Circle was intensive study of scriptures. That is why Marcella enlisted Jerome when he came to Rome, preceded by a reputation for biblical interpretation. But Marcella herself was not inept when it came to hermeneutics. Jerome would not likely have admitted her challenges to him had they not happened often[6]. He called her enthusiasm for scriptures 'incredible'[7]. These bright women, moreover, did not undertake the study superficially. Some, probably most, knew Greek as well as Latin, in that respect surpassing Augustine, who came from a middle-class family[8]. They at least wrestled with Hebrew[9], and

[3] Palladius, *Historia Lausiaca* 55.3.

[4] N.R.M. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews* (Cambridge, 1976), judged: 'We shall not be far from the truth if we conclude that Origen could not speak or read Hebrew, but that he was fortunate in having acquaintances who did, and who gave him such help as he demanded'. Eusebius (*H.E.* 6.16.1) and Jerome (*De Viris Illustribus* 54; *Ep.* 39), however, both insisted that Origen made a thorough study of Hebrew, thus indicating its importance in the fourth century.

[5] Origen, *On First Principles*, 4.1.6. For a recent assessment of Origen as interpreter of scriptures see Henri Crouzel, *Origen: The Life and Times of the First Great Theologian*, trans. A.S. Worrall (San Francisco, 1989), pp. 61-84.

[6] Jerome, Pref. to *Comm. on Gal.*; *Ep.* 127.7.

[7] Ibid., 4.

[8] Jerome, *Ep.* 39.1, claimed that Blesilla, Paula's oldest daughter, spoke Greek as a Greek and Latin as a Latin. Augustine, *Conf.* 1.13.20, admitted that he hated Greek as a child and did not learn it. His mistranslation of Romans 5:12, ἐφ ᾧ by *in quo*, confirms the point.

[9] Most of Marcella's inquiries of Jerome had to do with the meaning of Hebrew words (cf. Jerome, *Epp.* 25, 26, 28, 29).

some of those who went to the Holy Land learned Hebrew[10]. The women of the Aventine Circle also pumped Jerome for information about translations[11], interpretations of disputed texts[12], and interpreters. They read extensively themselves[13]. Jerome was probably not prescribing but reporting a formula already devised for the Aventine Circle when he counseled Eustochium to 'Read often. Learn as much as you can. Let sleep steal over you, with the book still in your hands; and let the sacred page catch your falling head'[14]. So, too, his advice to Paula's daughter-in-law Laeta about the education of the infant Paula. She should memorize passages of scriptures in Greek every day and alternate readings and prayer, learning scriptures in a certain sequence and, after them, Cyprian, Athanasius, and Hilary[15].

The migration of wealthy Roman women to the east doubtless had multiple motives[16], but the latter included a desire to become acquainted with the sites of salvation history in order to understand scriptures better. Quite clearly, the women were not just following Jerome, when he had to flee Rome in 385. Melania the Elder led the way, departing Rome in 372. Paula and her daughter Eustochium left Rome at the same time Jerome did and Paula sponsored his monastery as well as a much larger monastery for women in Bethlehem, but the women had their own agenda, to visit the holy sites, especially following in the footsteps of Christ. In a letter to Marcella entreating their 'mistress' and 'teacher' to join them, they rebutted her view that the Holy Land was now accursed because of Christ's crucifixion there and asked whether anyone's Christian education could be complete without coming to the 'Christian Athens'. In an *ad hominem* appeal at the conclusion they pulled back the curtain on their right brain technique:

> Will the day never come when we shall together enter the Savior's cave and weep in the sepulcher of the Lord with his sister and his mother? When will we touch with our lips the wood of the cross and arise in prayer and resolve upon the Mount of Olives with the ascending Lord? When will we see Lazarus come forth bound with grave clothes and look upon the waters of Jordan purified for the washing of the Lord? ...

[10] According to Jerome, *Ep.* 108.27, Paula and Eustochium could chant Psalms in Hebrew and spoke Hebrew without a Latin accent.

[11] Marcella, for instance, asked Jerome to compare Aquila with the Hebrew OT (Jerome, *Ep.* 32). Paula had Origen's *Hexapla* copied for Jerome. See further F. Lagrange, *St. Paula*, adapted by the Benedictines of Talacre (London, 1934), p. 218.

[12] Marcella, for instance, raised five questions about specific texts which Jerome answered in *Ep.* 59 in 395/6.

[13] Melania the Elder's wide reading in Origen was noted earlier. Marcella and Paula constantly dunned Jerome for reading materials.

[14] Jerome, *Ep.* 22.7; CSEL, 54. Cf. *Ep.* 45.1.

[15] Jerome, *Ep.* 107.9, 12.

[16] These included fear of the advancing Goths, idealization of the monastic life, desire to follow Christ more literally, and personal factors such as the deaths of loved ones.

After recounting visits to a panoply of sites, they continued,

> ... then we will sing heartily, weep copiously, pray unceasingly. Wounded with the Savior's spear, we will say together: 'I have found him whom my soul loves; I will hold him and will not let him go!' (Cant. 3:4)[17].

Marcella was evidently not as right-brained as Paula and Eustochium, for she did not yield to their entreaties. Insofar as Paula herself is concerned, however, Jerome confirms her affective style in visiting biblical sites. Selection of Bethlehem as the location of her monastery was perhaps tied to this. As she viewed the manger, Jerome overheard her swear that 'she could behold with the eyes of faith the infant Lord wrapped in swaddling clothes and crying in the manger, the wise men worshipping God, the star shining overhead, the shepherds coming by night...'[18]. In the biblical piety of these women we can see the hand of Origen again, for it was he who laid the foundation of a more affective approach in his *Commentary on the Song of Songs*. Besides, Origen's well known 'spiritualizing' of scriptures aimed, above all, at spiritual formation of his hearers, and that must have been the object of the Aventine Circle as well.

The star among women biblical scholars was Marcella. Jerome leaves ample evidence that he considered her his equal as an interpreter of the scriptures. A couple of years after leaving Rome, he expressed amazement at 'how brightly the fire always burns in her bosom' and 'how she rises superior to her sex and soars so far above human nature itself to cross the Red Sea of this world, sounding the loud timbrel of the divine volumes'. She never met him in Rome without questioning him about the scriptures, and she never took his word for any issue. Instead, 'she examined everything and weighed everything with such a keen mind that I thought I had not so much a disciple as a judge'[19]. When he eulogized her twenty-five years later, he took pains to soften the remark a bit while underscoring the same point. She did not immediately accept his explanations but disputed them, he observed, 'not to be contentious but to learn by seeking solutions to those objections which might, as she saw them, be made to my statement'[20]. The earlier accounts sounds more believable.

Even though we do not have Marcella's letters, Jerome's responses to them attest the keenness of her mind and depth of her study. She wanted to know 'what eye has not seen nor ear heard, etc.' meant and how Paul infers that 'God has revealed it to us through his Spirit' in 1 Corinthians 2:9-10. She questioned interpreting the sheep and goats of Jesus' parable in Matthew 25 as Christians and Gentiles rather than good and bad, a view she thought Jerome espoused. She inquired whether Paul's statement in 1 Thessalonians 4:14-16 that 'some of the living would be seized up into the clouds' so they would not be

[17] Jerome, *Ep.* 46.13; CSEL, 54: 343f.
[18] Jerome, *Ep.* 108.10; CSEL, 55: 316.
[19] Jerome, Pref. to *Comm. in Gal.*; PL, 26: 507-8.
[20] Jerome, *Ep.* 127.7; CSEL, 56: 151.

preceded by the dead should be construed in the corporeal sense, since our Lord died and Enoch and Elijah are said in the Revelation to be about to die. She was concerned to know how to reconcile Jesus' statement to Mary Magdalene in John 20:17: 'Don't touch me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father', with Matthew 28:9 which reported that the women grasped his feet. Finally, she wanted to know whether, before his ascension, Christ was present both in heaven and on earth. If Jerome's observation about her questions regarding Montanism apply here too, she did not ask because she lacked confidence in her own ability to interpret 'but only to learn from me what I think about them'[21].

Jerome's responses to her questions indicate that Marcella was fluent in Greek as well as Latin and had an intense desire to master Hebrew. She had asked *studiosissime* that Jerome point out all the Hebrew names for God with their interpretation[22]. He cited ten, noting translations of the Septuagint and Aquila as well as Latin. She had asked him when they met how to pronounce Hebrew words transliterated — *alleluia, amen, maran atha, ephod*, etc. — and why they were not translated. Professing to be 'compelled by the pressure of the one speaking', Jerome cited Origen's and Aquila's answers[23], indicating once more how prominently Origen figured as the exemplar of biblical scholarship. She was curious about the *Selah* found in the Psalms, and Jerome recounted the varied explanations of their day, siding personally with the one agreed on by Origen and Aquila[24]. When she wrote to ask him about the meaning of the Hebrew words *Ephod bod* (1 Kings 2:18-19) and *Teraphim* (Judges 17:5), Jerome complained that she never wrote to him unless she turned him aside from what he was doing and forced him to read scriptures[25].

In Bethlehem as well as Rome, as some complaints and his many dedications of writings will show[26], Jerome spent a lot of his energies in the employ of Paula

[21] Jerome, *Ep.* 41.4; CSEL, 54: 314.
[22] Jerome, *Ep.* 25.1.
[23] Jerome, *Ep.* 26.
[24] Jerome, *Ep.* 28.
[25] Jerome, *Ep.* 29.1.
[26] In a Preface to his translation of Origen's *Homilies on Luke* Jerome complained: 'See how much your authority and wish count with me. I have interrupted the books on the *Hebraic Questions* to take up the tedious and ungrateful task of translating, for your sake!' Jerome wrote a *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* for Blesilla; in 388 he dedicated it to Paula and Eustochium. In 387-388 he produced a new and more thorough revision of his Psalter, revised just four years before, because Paula and Eustochium needed it in their liturgy. He dedicated numerous translations of the OT in his Vulgate to them: the Books of Samuel and Kings (391), Daniel (392), Twelve Minor Prophets (392), Jeremiah and Ezekiel (ca. 393), Isaiah (ca. 393), Esther (early 404); and to Eustochium after Paula's death Joshua, Judges, and Ruth (later 404). He dedicated to Paula and Eustochium translations from the LXX and Hebrew of Job (ca. 388), Psalms (ca. 387-388), and the Books of Solomon. He dedicated many of his commentaries to them: Galatians (387), Ephesians (387), Philemon (387), Titus (387), Micah (392), Nahum (392), Zephaniah (392), Haggai (392). After Paula's death he dedicated to Eustochium commentaries on Isaiah (404-410) and Ezekiel (410-414). Jerome also penned lives of Malchus, and Paul the Hermit at Paula's behest.

and Eustochium and their community, whose hunger for biblical materials knew no bounds. Considering even their generous sponsorship of his work, I think we have strong reasons for thinking of women like Marcella, Paula, and Eustochium as biblical scholars as well as wealthy women with deep pockets who sponsored the scripture scholar of the century, Jerome. In a picture repainted to fit the data better the highly intelligent, well-educated, and forceful women of the Aventine Circle would take a place alongside Jerome as interpreters of scriptures and advocates of biblical scholarship and thus as major players in the development of Christian spirituality.

La Verginità' nel Mistero di Maria in San Girolamo

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Un vangelo nel Vangelo: così si può definire in Girolamo la dottrina sulla verginità, il valore inestimabile che trova occasione ideale di illustrazioni nel mistero di Maria.

In materia originale e talvolta novatore, grazie allo spessore biblico con cui può sostenere le proprie intuizioni, il grande Dalmata assume la migliore tradizione dei Padri precedenti[1] e solca egli stesso con incisività la Tradizione della Chiesa[2].

Motivo particolare di esprimersi in un campo tanto delicato gli fu offerto dalla disputa con Elvidio. L'opera che il monaco dalmata scrisse contro di lui e le sue tesi oppugnanti la verginità della Madre del Signore può, a ragione, considerarsi un piccolo compendio di mariologia. Siamo, inoltre, dinanzi al primo Padre della Chiesa che sostenga la verginità di Maria nel parto con argomenti biblici ed affermi altrettanto vigorosamente la verginità di san Giuseppe[3].

[1] *De Perpetua Virginitate Beatae Mariae — Adversus Helvidium* (=*Adv Helv*) 17: PL 23,211-212: '... sciolus tibi visus, Tertullianum in testimonium vocat, et Victorini Petabionensis episcopi verba proponit. Et de Tertulliano quidem nihil amplius dico, quam Ecclesiae hominem non fuisse. De Victorino ... assero ... fratres eum dixisse Domini, non filios Mariae. Fratres autem eo sensu, quem superius exposuimus: propinquitate, non natura ... Nunquid non possum tibi totam veterum scriptorum seriem commovere: Ignatium, Polycarpum, Irenaeum, Justinum martyrem, multosque alios apostolicos et eloquentes viros'. — Girolamo, dunque, in campo *dottrinale* accetta come autorevole solo il pensiero di quei Padri appartenenti alla tradizione della Chiesa e non eretici o dubbi. Quanto alla loro lettura, presta attenzione e fede al loro autentico insegnamento, rifiutandone manipolazioni tendenziose o di lettura parziale. — Girolamo, *La perenne Verginità di Maria*, a cura di M.I. Danieli (Roma, 1988), pp. 5-8; G. Oggioni, 'Matrimonio e verginità presso i Padri (fino a s. Agostino)', in *Matrimonio e verginità* (Venegono Inferiore (Varese) 1963), pp. 317-318; T. Spidlik, *La spiritualità dell'Oriente cristiano* (Roma, 1985), pp. 138-139; G. Besutti, 'Saggio di introduzione alla bibliografia mariana dei secoli I-V', in *De Primordiis Cultus Mariani*, V (Romae, 1970), pp. 247-287; Idem, 'Bibliografia mariana (1967-1972)', in *Marianus* (=Mar) 35 (1973), pp. 48-50.

[2] G. Jouassard, 'Marie à travers la Patristique. Maternité divine, virginité, sainteté', in *Maria. Études sur la Saint Vierge*, par D'Hubert du Manoir, I (Paris, 1949), pp. 69-157: per Girolamo cfr in particolare 107-113; H. De Jonghe, 'De Marialeer van den H. Hieronymus', in *Handelingen van het Vlaamsch Maria-Congres te Brussel* (Brussel, 1921), I, pp. 190-207.

[3] *Adv Helv* 19: PL 23,213. — E. Toniolo, 'Padri della Chiesa', in *Nuovo Dizionario di Mariologia* (=NDM), p. 1073; J.J. Gorny, 'Il contributo dei monaci allo sviluppo della cultura letteraria e teologica del IV-V secolo (alla luce degli scritti di Girolamo)', in *Dalla Chiesa antica alla Chiesa moderna* (Roma, 1983), p. 54.

Tuttavia, è soprattutto la metodologia da lui applicata che costituisce un apporto preziosissimo alla teologia cattolica. La sua padronanza dell'intera Sacra Scrittura, di cui è traduttore ed esegeta per antonomasia, gli permette di confrontare senza paura un testo con l'altro, spiegando la Bibbia con la Bibbia. La conoscenza dell'ebraico lo rende esperto maestro nello sciogliere nodi ermeneutici come la questione dei 'fratelli di Gesù', del termine 'primogenito', dell'impiego del verbo 'conoscere' e dell'espressione 'partorire il figlio'.

Il suo contributo fu decisivo nella tradizione della Chiesa per l'interpretazione da attribuire ad alcuni testi sacri e per la loro conseguente portata dogmatica. A tal fine, egli rifiuta categoricamente la letteratura apocrifa[4] e consegna alla fede della Chiesa la regola esegetica fondamentale:

'Come non neghiamo le cose che sono state scritte, così rifiutiamo quelle che non sono state scritte. Crediamo che Dio sia nato da una vergine poiché l'abbiamo letto; non crediamo che Maria abbia contratto nozze dopo il parto, perché non l'abbiamo letto'[5].

La fedeltà alla Scrittura, però, passa attraverso la fedeltà alla Chiesa, che ne è depositaria e garante. Il dato biblico, pertanto, va letto ed interpretato nel cammino e nella pienezza della viva tradizione ecclesiale, la sola che lo insegni e lo tramandi siglandone autorevolmente la verità[6].

Il suo trattatello sulla *Perpetua verginità di Maria* si rivela un capolavoro di questa premessa, nella quale egli distingue nettamente il 'leggere' dal 'conoscere'. Ivi mostra quanto la 'pietas' ecclesiale sia custode del discernimento circa il contenuto dei testi ispirati.

Elvidio si colloca di fronte a lui come un interlocutore preparato, ma l'ottica limitata della sua polemica di parte era conseguentemente destinata ad approdare a conclusioni eretiche. Mancando di una visione globale di quanto viene trattato, egli infatti si ferma sui particolari della 'lettera', in ultimo risultante sempre più avulsa da quel suo contesto donde riceve senso e interpretazione.

Girolamo non si ferma, invece, alla lettura del mistero della verginità neppure solo in Maria di Nazareth, ma colloca sapientemente la sua conoscenza all'interno dell'economia divina. Benché non direttamente richiesti, egli riporta

[4] *Adv Helv* 8 bis. 16.17: PL 23,201.209-210.211: 'Quae sententia et apocryphorum deliramenta convincit ... Imperitissime hominum, ista non legeras, et toto Scripturam pelago derelicto, ad injuriam Virginis tuam rabiem contulisti ... Verum nugas terimus, et fonte veritatis omisso, opinionum rivulos consectamur'.

[5] *Adv Helv* 19: PL 23,213: 'Natum Deum esse de Virgine *credimus, quia legimus*. Maria nupsisse post partum, *non credimus, quia non legimus*'. — *Ibid.*, 6: PL 23,198: 'ejusdem Scripturae auctoritate frangatur'. — *Ibid.*, 9-11.15: PL 23,201-204.208-209.

[6] *Adv Helv* 19: PL 23,194: 'ipsa Scipturarum verba ponenda sunt: ipsis quibus adversum nos usus est testimoniis, revincatur, ut intelligat, se et legere potuises quae scripta sunt, et non potuisse quae pietate roborata sunt, cognoscere'. — Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II, *Costituzione dogmatica*: '*Dei Verbum*' *8-10*, in *Enchiridion Vaticanum* (=EV/1), pp. 497-501: relazione tra sacra Scrittura, tradizione e magistero della Chiesa.

motivi e categorie di tutta la Rivelazione di cui essa costituisce il diamantino apice, percepito unicamente nel Mistero dell'Incarnazione del Verbo[7].

Nel suo insegnamento egli non intende sminuire, bensì esaltare il fatto originale del 'novum' evangelico, cui la verginità cristiana appartiene. Il privilegio di una continenza 'obbligata' in soli uomini, e questi inoltre profeti, sottolinea la dimensione di pedagogica figura in attesa del compimento di una realtà più elevata. Proprio perché profeti, quegli uomini, volenti o nolenti, furono con tale loro stato di vita annunciatori di Cristo.

Per ogni donna, invece, permane il regime di *Gen* 3,16: 'Con dolore partorirai figli', fino all'adempimento della parola data a Davide ed interpretata come il conseguimento di una 'teologica' terra promessa in cui il peccato con le sue conseguenze sarebbe stato annullato. Girolamo mostra così Maria come il compimento dell'A.T. nel N.T., identificandola con la terra promessa a Davide[8].

Due motivi di profonda convinzione geronimiana vengono, tra l'altro, a fondersi, fruttando una significativa analogia. L'uno è che 'anche Maria è della stirpe di Davide'[9], essendolo sottolineato dello sposo Giuseppe, ma quasi a voler additare lei, 'terra promessa', più che lui, il discendente designato per la paternità davidica del Messia. L'altro è che il 'novum' rispetto all'A.T., 'realizzato nella verginità e nel parto di Maria', cioè l'Uomo vergine procreato da una donna vergine, avviene per 'potentia Dei':

'E'il fatto che ci è stato rivelato, mentre il come ci resta nascosto ... attribuisci dunque alla potenza di Dio che uno sia nato da una vergine e che tuttavia quella vergine sia restata vergine anche dopo il parto'[10].

La Vergine di Girolamo ripropone l'immagine biblica e dogmatica della 'Madre di Dio', da lui ardentemente amata e celebrata. Tuttavia, mai in lei viene scalfita, od in qualche modo sminuita, la sua squisita realtà umana di donna al fianco di Dio fatto Uomo, dal parto al Calvario, sia Egli il Bambino o il Crocifisso. E' certamente questa la più alta lezione geronimiana che troverà la sua

[7] *Epistula* (=*Ep*) XXII, 21: CSEL 54,171.172.173: 'Alia fuit in ueteri lege felicitas ... uirgo Helias, Helisaeus uirgo, uirginis multi filii prophetarum. Hieremiae dicitur: "et tu ne accipias uxorem" (*Ger* 16,2) ... in uiris tantum hoc continentiae bonum et in doloribus iugiter Eua pariebat. postquam uero uirgo concepit in utero et peperit nobis puerum, ... deum fortem, patrem futuri saeculi, soluta maledictio est'. — *Ep* XLIX, 21: CSEL 54,386-387; *Adv Helv* 20-21: PL 23,213-216.

[8] *Tractatus in Librum Psalmorum. De Psalmo* (=*De Ps*) XCVI, 1: CCL 78,440: 'Dauid terra sancta Maria est, mater Saluatoris. "Qui factus est ei ex semine Dauid secundum carnem". Quod Dauid repromissum fuit, in Mariae uirginitate partuque completum est, *ubi uirgo de uirgine procreator*'.

[9] *In Matthaeum* (=*In Matt*) I, 1, 16-20: CCL 77,11: 'Ut Maria quoque de Dauid stirpe monstraretur'. — Melchiorre di S.M., 'San Giuseppe sposo vergine della Vergine Madre nella tradizione patristica', in *Rivista di Vita Spirituale* 15 (1961), pp. 325-331.

[10] *Homilia in Iohannem Evangelistam* (=*Hom in Ioh*): CCL 78,521: 'hoc nobis ostendit, quoniam natus quidem sit, sed quomodo natus sit ignoramus ... De *potentia Dei*, quia de uirgine natus sit, et tamen ipsa uirgo fuerit uirgo post partum'.

maturità nella permanenza a Betlemme. Anche l'esaltazione della verginità, allora, vi si completerà come di realtà della redenzione proponibile all'imitazione concreta del nuovo popolo di Dio[11].

Il mistero della verginità di Maria viene sempre associato da Girolamo a quello del Cristo e, per estensione di vita santa, a quello del medesimo Giuseppe. Il primo coinvolto, infatti, ne fu necessariamente il 'giusto' discendente di Davide che, 'conoscendo la purezza di lei e pieno di ammirazione per quanto era accaduto, nasconde nel silenzio il mistero di Colui che egli non conosceva'[12].

Tuttavia, poiché in una donna la verginità è stata tanto sublimemente realizzata e la donna è in primo luogo colei che nella redenzione ne ha maggiormente beneficiato, per il monaco dalmata essa è un mistero più diffuso tra le donne, secondo il tema classico della contrapposizione Eva-Maria[13].

Oltre al tema siro-cristiano del parallelismo Eva-Maria, singolare ed interessante è l'idea geronimiana del riversarsi o 'fluire' dell'alto dono da Maria alle altre donne, come in vasi comunicanti. Questa 'terra nuova' di una umanità vergine prepara la discesa del Figlio di Dio e diviene, quale nuova famiglia analoga a quella degli angeli in cielo, il 'locus theologicus' della sua Incarnazione.

La centralità di Maria nel mistero della verginità pare quasi emarginare la centralità cristologica: come, d'altronde, nell'analisi circa la natura della verginità cristiana secondo Girolamo, le motivazioni più sviluppate risultano essere quelle protologiche, ontologiche ed escatologiche, ma non quelle cristologiche. Più che di verginità 'cristiana', dunque, nel grande asceta sembra dominante una concezione di verginità 'teologica' e 'teologale', di cui la Madre del Signore è l'eccellente prototipo umano.

Il medesimo concetto, infatti, sottende pure alla sua intuizione sulla vocazione parallela di Maria e di Giuseppe, sia al matrimonio che all'interiore consacrazione a Dio, tanto che il Leone dalmata può così rispondere ad Elvidio con felice argomentazione:

'Tu dici che Maria non rimase vergine; quanto a me, sostengo per di più che Giuseppe stesso fu vergine per mezzo di Maria, così che da nozze verginali nacque un Figlio vergine'[14].

[11] *Ep* XLIX, 21: CSEL 54,386: 'Christus uirgo, mater uirginis nostri uirgo perpetua, mater et uirgo'. — *Ep* XXII, 18: CSEL 54,168: 'mihi uirginitas in Maria dedicatur et Christo'. — E. Burke, 'St. Jerome as a Spiritual Director', in *A Monument to St. Jerome*, by F. Murphy (New York, 1952), pp. 159-160.

[12] *In Matt* I, 1, 16-20: CCL 77,11: 'sciens illius castitatem et admirans quod euenerat, celat silentio cuius mysterium nesciebat'.

[13] *Ep* XXII, 21: CSEL 54,173: 'mors per Euam, uita per Mariam. ideoque et ditius uirginitatis donum fluxit in feminas, quia coepit a femina'. — E. Testa, *Il Peccato di Adamo nella Patristica (Gen III)* (Gerusalemme, 1970), pp. 149-150; R. Laurentin, S. Meo, 'Nuova Eva', in NDM, pp. 1017-1029; R. Laurentin, *Breve trattato su la Vergine Maria* (Cinisello Balsamo (MI) 1987), pp. 59-71; cfr anche l'intero studio di L. Cignelli, *Maria Nuova Eva nella Patristica greca* (Assisi, 1966).

[14] *Adv Helv* 19: PL 23,213: 'Tu dicis Mariam virginem non permansisse: ego mihi plus vindico etiam Joseph virginem fuisse per Mariam, ut ex virginali conjugio virgo filius nasceretur'.

1. La Madre di Dio

La divina maternità di Maria viene colta da Girolamo in relazione all'intero piano di Dio nel Cristo. Anticipando il dogma di Efeso e gli sviluppi successivi della mariologia, l'asceta dalmata coglie nel mistero della verginità della Madre la sublimità redentiva della reale generazione del Verbo Incarnato in lei.

Inoltre, nella maternità della Vergine vede una dimensione personale così ampia da escluderne la sola riduzione fisica dissociata dall'integrale opera di Salvezza del Figlio, da Betlemme al Golgota:

'Osservate attentamente come non abbia detto: "Nato attraverso la donna", come pretendono Marcione e gli altri eretici, i quali fingono che la carne di Cristo sia soltanto apparente. Ha detto: "Nato da donna", cosicché si creda che è nato non attraverso lei, ma da lei. Quanto poi al fatto che abbia chiamato la santa e beata Madre del Signore donna e non vergine ... è chiamata donna dal Signore stesso ... Il termine donna indica più il sesso che non la donna che si è unita all'uomo ... come è nato sotto la legge al fine di redimere coloro che erano sotto la legge, così ha voluto nascere da donna per coloro che erano nati dalla donna'[15].

Le umiliazioni della natura umana che Egli volontariamente assunse furono esse stesse causa della vita nuova nella nostra natura medesima. La verginità riferita al mistero della Madre del Salvatore svela primariamente la divinità del Figlio e ne significa l'esistenza nuova da Lui inaugurata con la 'kénosi' redentiva[16]. Agli eretici docetisti, che non credono 'che Dio sia nato attraverso i genitali di una vergine, giacché per loro è più vergognoso che Dio sia stato generato attraverso gli organi di una vergine del fatto che la Vergine si sia unita al suo sposo dopo il parto'[17], come essi appunto ammettono, Girolamo magistralmente ribatte con una descrizione di crudo realismo in cui non nasconde il disagio già di accettare la verità del 'nato da donna' (*Gal.* 4,4)[18].

[15] *Ad Galatas* (=*Ad Gal*) II, 4,4: PL 26,398: 'Diligenter attendita quod non dixerit, "factum per mulierem": quod Marcion et caeterae haereses volunt, quae putativam Christi carnem simulant: sed "ex muliere" et non per illam, sed ex illa natus esse credatur. Quod autem sanctam et beatam Matrem Domini, mulierem, non Virginem nominavit ... ab ipso Domino quasi mulier increpatur ... cum mulier sexum magis significet quam copulam viri ... quomodo sub lege factus est, ut eos qui sub lege erant, redimeret: sic propter illos qui nati erant ex mulier, ex muliere nasci voluit'. — R. Cantalamessa, *Abbiamo visto la Sua Gloria* (Milano, 1982) pp. 15-20; R. Laurentin, *Breve trattato su la Vergine Maria*, pp. 187-226; A. Serra, S. Meo, D. Sartor 'Madre di Dio' in NDM, pp. 806-830; B.R. Degórski, 'Boze Macierzynstwo Maryi a Sobór Efeski i Chalcedonski', in *Dissertationes Paulinorum 2* (1989), pp. 5-16.

[16] Girolamo, *La perenne verginità di Maria*, pp. 16-23; R. Laurentin, *Breve trattato su la Vergine Maria*, pp. 227-234.

[17] *Adv Helv* 18: PL 23,212: 'Deum per genitalia virginis natum. Turpius est enim juxta eos, Deum per virginis pudenda genitum, quam virginem suo viro nupsisse post partum'.

[18] *Adv Helv* 18: PL 23,212: 'Junge si libet et alias naturae contumelias, novem mensibus uterum insolescentem, fastidia, partum, sanguinem, pannos. Ipse tibi describatur infans, tegmine membranorum solito convolutus. Interantur dur praesepia, vagitus parvuli, octavae diei circumcisio, tempus purgationis, ut probetur immundus'. — *Ep* XXII, 39: CSEL 54,206: 'dei filius pro

Anche il linguaggio impiegato dall'austero asceta rivela una particolare incidenza nel sottolineare lo stupefacente contrasto dell'evento: Dio ha voluto essere generato uomo attraverso gli organi di una vergine e nascere attraverso i genitali di lei. Ma la conclusione di una così ardita esposizione ha per il santo monaco la grata esaltazione dell'opera redentrice del Cristo, poiché 'quanto più grandi sono le umiliazioni che egli ha patito per me, tanto più gli dobbiamo' e, 'passandole tutte in rassegna non si troverà nulla di più infamante della croce'[19].

La croce è prefigurata nella 'kénosi' della nascita del Cristo e, se un falso pudore ricusa ciò che viene considerato vergognoso nella natura umana, come ne accetterà l'aberrante morte?

Girolamo può usare con libertà e proprietà la terminologia con la quale osa descrivere la nascita del Redentore, perché sa che Egli stesso ne ha riscattata di fatto la realtà indicata. Il termine 'vergine' pare, infatti, purificare ed attribuire senso nuovo a quanto prima costituiva la 'femminile umiliazione' del generare e partorire figli secondo *Gen* 3,16[20].

Il mistero della donna sembra presentato, per la prima volta nella tradizione, senza remore nella sua verità alla luce della divina maternità della Vergine. Più la pregnanza del linguaggio è negativa, più lo spessore del significato che esso assume appare permeato della 'novitas'. Vecchio e nuovo quasi si innestano contemporaneamente e reciprocamente si scambiano il retaggio delle rispettive proprietà.

La penna brillante di Girolamo non pare consapevole di quanto ha tracciato in questa pagina, se non in quel puro slancio d'amore e di fede con cui la conclude siglandone la portata intera. Non stupisce, dunque, che in tale ottica la verginità nel mistero della Madre del Signore sia perfettamente inserita nel progetto di Dio ed implichi la partecipazione piena, non solo al travaglio dell'Incarnazione, ma anche alla sofferenza in essa inclusa fino alla morte del Cristo[21].

nostra salute hominis factus est filius, decem mensibus in utero, ut nascatur, expectat, fastidia sustinet, cruentus egreditur, inuoluitur pannis, blanditiis deridetur et ille, cuius pugillo mundus includitur, praesepis continetur angustiis'.

[19] *Adv Helv* 18: PL 23,212-213: 'Non erubescimus, non silemus. Quanto sunt humiliora quae pro me passus est, tanto plus illi debeo. Et cum omnia replicaveris, cruce nihil contumeliosius proferes: quam profitemur, et credimus, et in qua de hostibus triumphamus'.

[20] *Ep* XXII, 18: CSEL 54,167: 'nolo illi subiacere sententiae, quae in hominem est lata damnatum: in "doloribus et anxietatibus paries, mulier" — lex ista non mea est —, "et ad uirum conuersio tua" ... et ad extremum "morte morieris" (*Gen* 3,16)'. — *Adversus Jovinianum* (=*Adv Jovin*) I, 12: PL 23,239: 'Non hic scorta, non hic lupanaria condemnantur, de quorum damnatione nulla dubitatio est: sed uteri tumescentes, et infantum vagitus, et fructus atque opera nuptiarum'. — E. Testa, *La legge del progresso organico e l'evoluzione* (Jerusalem, 1987) pp. 206-207: l'idea è che nascendo da una vergine, Gesù distrusse 'le opere della carne'.

[21] *Adv Helv* 13: PL 23, 205-206.

Il dramma pasquale della Madre del Redentore è tratteggiato con delicatezza da Girolamo soprattutto nella meditazione sul Natale, dove ella 'vedeva giacere il bambino; vedeva nel presepio il bambino che vagiva, il Figlio di Dio che giaceva, il figlio suo, l'unico figlio'[22]. Questa contemplazione della Vergine, simile all'immagine plastica della Pietà, appare come un preludio della sua presenza e contemplazione ai piedi della croce, sulla quale vede giacere il Figlio di Dio e figlio suo.

Il richiamo più forte a quel dramma è la sottolineatura che si tratti dell'*unico* figlio, la cui portata dolorosa ha senso non nel contesto dell'inizio dell'Incarnazione, ma in quello del compimento di essa con la morte di Lui.

La chiave pasquale dei commenti geronimiani ai testi dell'infanzia del Signore sembra, comunque, dipingere la Madre sempre con lo sguardo rivolto al Golgota, come nelle splendide icone bizantine della 'Theotókos' di genere 'Odighitria' ed 'Eleusa'.

Con altrettanta profondità teologica e spirituale, Girolamo applica alla Madre di Dio pure quei passi veterotestamentari rimasti vivi nella Tradizione della Chiesa in riferimento all'evento della sua verginità soprannaturalmente feconda. Il versetto di *Is* 11,1 viene così spiegato nella lettera ad Eustochio:

'Questo virgulto è la Madre di Dio, semplice, pura, senza macchia ... Il fiore di tale virgulto è Cristo che dice: "Io sono il fiore dei campi e il giglio delle valli" (*Ct* 2,1) ... Egli vergine doveva nascere da una vergine'[23].

Qui Girolamo pare attribuire finalmente una causalità cristologica alla verginità di Maria, benché è più facile dedurre che in lui sia presente per motivi di prove bibliche piuttosto che per argomentazioni teologiche. Infatti, nel *Commento al profeta Isaia*, dà un'interpretazione pregnante di testi scritturistici sull'annuncio della Madre del Salvatore. Ella *doveva* essere vergine quale segno del 'novum' di Colui che da lei nasceva, perché 'se fosse una fanciulla o una giovinetta, come dicono i Giudei, a partorire e non una vergine, come si potrebbe chiamare questo un segno, dal momento che il termine indicherebbe l'età e non l'integrità?'[24].

[22] *Homilia de Nativitate Domini* (=*Hom Nativ Dom*): CCL 78,527: 'Videbat iacentem puerum, uidebat in praesepe puerum uagientem, iacentem Dei filium, suum filium, unum filium'.

[23] *Ep* XXII, 19: CSEL 54,169: 'uirga mater est domini, simplex, pura, sinceris nullo extrinsecus germine cohaerente ... uirgae flos Christus est dicens: 'ego flos campi et lilium conuallium' (*Ct* 2,1) ... nasciturum esse de uirgine'. — D. Dumm, *The Theological Basis of Virginity according to St. Jerome* (St. Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, Pa., 1961), pp. 33-34.98-102.

[24] *In Esaiam* (=*In Esm*) III, 7, 14: CCL 73,102-104: 'Ipse descendet in uterum uirginalem et ingredietur et egredietur orientalem portam quae semper clausa est (*cfr Ez* 44,1-2) ... Et in Prouerbiis: "Sapientia aedificauit sibi domum" (*Prov* 9,1). Quando autem dicitur: "Dabit Dominus ipse uobis signum" (*Is* 7,14), *nouum debet esse atque mirabile*. Sin autem iuuencula uel puella, ut Iudaei uolunt, et non uirgo pariat, quale signum poterit appellari, cum hoc nomen aetatis sit, non integritatis?'.

Questa 'vergine' è dal santo Dottore identificata e prefigurata anche nella 'alma' di *Is* 7,14, dunque, in contrasto con le disquisizioni dei Giudei[25].

Un motivo cristologico forte lo si trova, invece, nel suo *Commento all'Ecclesiaste*, in cui il concetto di verginità-integrità indica la santità perfettamente libera dal peccato, considerato realtà estranea e schiavizzante la creatura. Colui che è il santo Re della terra della Chiesa *doveva* venire da una stirpe santa, cioè libera in quanto non preda del peccato. Questa è la stirpe di Abramo, di Isacco, di Giacobbe, dei profeti, ma culmine eccellente ne è Maria[26]. Compare qui l'ipotesi della 'piena di grazia' mai neppure sfiorata dall'ombra della schiavitù del male che domina il mondo dal peccato di Adamo.

La singolarità della Madre di Dio rispetto alla santità dei 'giusti' che l'hanno preceduta è spiegata da Girolamo nell'opera polemica contro i Pelagiani, che ci offre quest'interessante articolo della sua mariologia. A commento di *Lc* 1,48-51, ivi egli afferma che' in questo passaggio ella dice di essere beata non a causa dei suoi meriti e delle sue virtù, ma grazie alla misericordia del Dio che abita in lei'[27].

La santità e la maternità verginale di Maria appartengono, dunque, in primo luogo alla potenza della misericordia di Dio, cui ben ha corrisposto, in secondo luogo, la virtù della creatura. Rientriamo così in una concezione della virginità perfettamente cristiana, dalla quale il monaco di Betlemme trarrà un insegnamento ascetico ponderoso[28].

Nell'epistola indirizzata a Teodora di Spagna per la morte di Lucino, asserendo che il Signore vince la morte della natura e citando *Os* 13,14-15, lo Stridonense offre una delle più originali immagini bibliche della verginale maternità di Maria: quella del deserto[29].

Si avverte già l'eco del mistero del Betlemme nelle parole sempre cariche di stupore del santo monaco, che contempla quel 'bambino che era Dio' donatoci da una creatura che si era votata alla sterilità. Cara al grande asceta è spesso

[25] *Adv Helv* 4: PL 23,197: *In Esm* III, 7, 14: CCL 73,102-105; *Hebraicae Quaestiones in Libro Geneseos* (=*Heb Q in Gen*) 24, 43: CCL 72,29 ss.

[26] *In Ecclesiasten* (=*In Eccl*) X, 17: CCL 72,341: 'Ex quibus nata est uirgo liberior sancta Maria, nullum habens fruticem, nullum germen ex latere, totus fructus eius erupit in florem, loquentem in Cantico canticorum: "Ego flos campi et lilium conuallium" (*Ct* 2,1)'.

[27] *Adversus Pelagianos* (=*Adv Pelag*) I, 16: PL 23,533: 'In quo animadverte, quod beatam se esse dicat non proprio merito atque virtute, sed Dei in se habitantis clementia'.

[28] *Adv Pelag* II, 4: PL 23,562-563: 'Vel statim ut nati sunt, subjacuere peccato in similitudinem praevaricationis Adae, qui est forma futuri … de quo scriptum est: "omnis qui aperit vulvam sanctus Domino vocabitur" (*Es* 13,12); omnes haeretici erraverunt, non intelligentes mysterium nativitatis ejus. Magisque ad pecialem nativitatem Salvatoris, quam ad omnium hominum referri potest … Solus enim Christus clausas portas vulvae virginitatis aperuit, quae tamen clausae jugiter permanserunt'.

[29] *Ep* LXXV, 1: CSEL 55,30: 'quod autem de deserto dicitur adducendus, uirginalis uterus demonstratur, qui absque coitu et semine uiri deum nobis fudit infantem, qui calore spiritus sancti exsiccaret fontes libidinum et caneret in psalmo: "in terra deserta et inuia et sine aqua, sic in sancto apparui tibi" (*Ps* 62,3)'.

pure l'immagine del deserto, che egli ben conobbe nella terra calcidica, brulla e riarsa: il seno della Vergine, umanamente precluso alla fecondità, è paragonato al deserto che fiorisce.

Interessante è il riferimento al calore dello Spirito, quale potenza vitale creatrice. Quel 'calore' indica la presenza del Dio Vivente che entra nel suo Santuario e lo abita, proprio perché era 'deserto' per il Regno di Dio.

Altrove, l'immagine si carica dell'efficacia simbolica dell'acqua, apportatrice per eccellenza della vita là dove la terra è arida. Tale, d'altronde, da Adamo a Cristo è l'umanità priva della grazia divina. Maria diviene allora come il fiume della terra promessa, il Giordano, 'che scorre a piene onde ed è rigonfio delle grazie dello Spirito Santo'[30].

Ad Elvidio, che ardisce ipotizzare altre vite generate da quel grembo verginale, Girolamo con veemenza controbatte:

'Tu hai dato fuoco al Tempio del Corpo del Signore, tu hai contaminato il Santuario dello Spirito Santo, dal quale vuoi che siano usciti quattro fratelli ed una schiera di sorelle'[31].

Ricche della risonanza veterotestamentaria del timor di Dio e della sua santità presente nell'Arca dell'Alleanza e nel Santo dei Santi, le parole geronimiane sottolineano non solo l'erroneità delle idee dell'interlocutore, quanto anche il loro spessore sacrilego. Il santo Dottore contempla la 'dimora del sacro ventre'[32], definendo Maria 'tempio di Dio' al quale il giusto Giuseppe non si sarebbe certo accostato, sia per fede all'annuncio ricevuto dall'angelo in sogno, sia per la conferma delle meraviglie date dopo la nascita del Salvatore[33].

Bella l'intensità crescente con cui l'asceta dalmata descrive l'avvicinarsi, invece, del mistero della divina maternità di Maria a Giuseppe, secondo la sequenza che i Vangeli stessi presentano: cioè, che egli si apre ad accoglierlo ricevendone comprensione. Anzi, sembra quasi, leggendo questi passi, di percorrere il cammino di fede di Giuseppe, di cui Girolamo è il primo convinto predicatore.

La distanza di colei che 'è tempio di Dio', che il discendente di Davide voleva rimandare in segreto non potendola perciò prendere in sposa, si raccorcia quando gli si svela 'dimora dello Spirito', la cui potenza opera nel suo

[30] *Ep* LXXVIII, 2: CSEL 55,52: 'dominus atque saluator a primo patriarcha peruenit ad uirginem, quasi ad Iordanen, quae pleno gurgite fluens spiritus sancti gratiis redundabat'. — *De Ps* LXXVII, 14: CCL 78,72: 'Ecce Dominus uenit in Aegyptum saeculi istius super nubem leuem, Virginem'.

[31] *Adv Helv* 16: PL 23,210: 'Tu vero templum Dominici corporis succendisti, tu contaminasti sanctuarium Spiritus sancti, ex quo vis quadrigam fratrum, et sororum processisse congeriem'.

[32] *Adv Helv* 2: PL 23,194: 'sacri ventris hospitium'.

[33] *Adv Helv* 8: PL 23,200: 'Et audebat, inquit, vir justus, Dei in utero audiens filium, de uxoris coitu cogitare? … qui, inquam, miracula tanta cognoverat, Dei templum, Spiritus sancti, Domini sui Matrem audebat attingere?'.

grembo verginale quella maternità della quale dovrà essere proprio lui custode e tutore prendendo con sé Maria.

Infine, la sposa che gli è accanto gli si rivela come 'Madre del suo Signore'. Da quel momento egli entra pienamente nel progetto di Dio che, non negandola, ha invece trasformato la vocazione sua e di Maria al matrimonio assumendola a servizio dell'evento dell'Incarnazione, resa frutto di nozze verginali. Di lui, infatti, dice Girolamo: 'Altro non resta che rimanesse vergine con Maria colui che meritò di essere chiamato padre del Signore'[34].

Alla maternità fisica ma soprannaturale della Vergine corrisponde la paternità verginale e spirituale di Giuseppe, in virtù della sua santità. Felicemente Girolamo supera i limiti di considerazioni legate alla fisicità del mistero divino entrato nella vita della Famiglia di Nazareth, intuendo una grazia diffusiva di se stessa la cui fonte è la carne medesima dell'Uomo-Dio. Attorno a Gesù tutto dà spazio al divino che si allarga nel dono della vita nuova, della quale la verginità è l'emblema.

Il santo Dottore sottolinea nel medesimo paragrafo dell'opera contro Elvidio che non intende affermare tutto questo 'per condannare le nozze ... ma perché non è giusto che noi facciamo dei giudizi temerari a proposito di persone sante'[35].

Ci lascia così anche un'altissima lezione morale di umiltà dinanzi al Mistero di Dio che opera nelle creature, secondo i suoi imperscrutabili disegni e del quale la divina maternità di Maria si fa esempio eloquente. Al contrario, si offenderebbe sacrilegamente il divino Autore di quella grazia la quale è stata sparsa in poco tempo, riempiendo l'universo, da Colui che ha preso l'umanità da Maria. Di essa anche la Vergine è beneficiaria, la prima e la più eccelsa, in quanto, dice Girolamo, 'Maria santissima viene salutata piena di grazia per avere concepito colui nel quale "abita corporalmente la pienezza della divinità" (*Col.* 2,9)'[36].

2. La perpetua verginità di Maria

Nella disputa sulla perpetua verginità della Madre di Dio, Girolamo si erge anzitutto ad interprete e difensore della santità cristiana, che il movimento antimonastico intendeva in tal modo colpire. Negare, infatti, la perpetua verginità di Maria significava demolire l'esempio sublime della virtù che era divenuta il perno dell'ascetismo, soprattutto femminile, screditando il nascente

[34] *Adv Helv* 19: PL 23,213: 'relinquitur, virginem eum mansisse cum Maria, qui pater Domini meruit appellari'.

[35] *Ibid.*: 'Nec hoc ideo dicimus, quo nuptias condemnemus (ipsa quippe virginitas fructus est nuptiarum): sed quod nobis de sanctis viris temere aestimare nihil liceat'.

[36] *Ep* LXV, 9: CSEL 54,626: 'sancta Maria, quia conceperat eum, in quo "omnis plenitudo diuinitas habitat corporaliter" (*Col* 2, 9), plena gratia salutatur'.

monachesimo nelle sue regole e nelle sue proposte[37]. La violenta diatriba avvenne durante il soggiorno romano dello Stridonense che, poco tempo dopo, con la redazione dell'*Epistola* XXII *ad Eustochio*, volle offrire alla giovane discepola una traccia ascetica sicura atta a salvaguardarla dagli errori degli eretici[38].

Girolamo viene sollecitato a controbattere le tesi di un certo Elvidio, ritenute pericolosissime dal punto di vista dottrinale e da quello ascetico-morale, ed a perorare la causa del monachesimo che si vedeva minato nelle sue basi e nella sua stessa ragion d'essere.

Elvidio viene definito dal santo Dottore uomo 'rozzo' e 'turbolento' e 'mente pazza', quando non addirittura insultato con epiteti dei quali Girolamo, prendendo esempi dal mondo animale, era largo verso i suoi malcapitati nemici ideologici[39]. Tuttavia, Elvidio non pare così sprovveduto culturalmente, sia per i timori e le perplessità che riuscì a suscitare negli ambienti ascetici romani, sia per le argomentazioni bibliche che riportò, pur con un'errata interpretazione, a sostegno delle proprie idee.

Chi era? Girolamo lo dice enigmaticamente 'a sé laico e sacerdote'[40], ma sta di fatto che proprio alla penna vivace, all'intelligenza arguta ed alla competenza biblica del Leone dalmata ricorrono coloro che sono preoccupati delle sue affermazioni antimonastiche. Nasce così, in stile incisivo e mordace, documentato unicamente sulle Sacre Scritture, quel piccolo trattato mariano *Sulla perpetua verginità della beata Maria contro Elvidio*, che costituisce un gioiello di teologia cattolica per metodo e per contenuto biblico[41].

[37] A. Penna, *San Gerolamo* (Torino-Roma, 1947), 93-96; Girolamo, *Opere scelte*, a cura di E. Camisani (Torino, 1971), 43-44; F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme. Sa vie et son œuvre*, I (Louvain, 1922), pp. 94-99; E. Testa, *Maria terra vergine*, I (Jerusalem, 1985), pp. 383-390.

[38] *Ep* XXII, 22: CSEL 54,174: 'Quantas molestias habeant nuptiae ... in eo libro, quem aduersus Heluidium de beatae Mariae perpetua uirginitate edidimus, puto breuiter expressum'.

[39] *Adv Helv* 1: PL 23,193: 'Nuper rogatus a fratribus, ut adversus libellum cujusdam Helvidii responderem, facere distuli: non quod difficile fuerit, hominem rusticanum, et vix primis quoque imbutum litteris, super veri assertione convincere: sed ne respondendo dignus fieret, qui vinceretur. Huc accedebat quod homo turbolentus'. — *Ibid.*, 13: PL 23,205: 'o furor caecus, et in proprium exitium mens vesana!'. — *Ibid.*, 14: PL 23,107: 'te quasi lubricus anguis evolvas'. — *Ibid.*, 16: PL 23,209: 'Imperitissime hominum'. — *Ibid.*, 18: PL 23,212: 'Risimus in te proverbium, "Camelum videmus saltitantem"'. — *Ibid.*, 20: PL 23,213: 'Quid oblatas?'. — *Ibid.*, 22: PL 23,216: 'caninam facundiam'.

[40] *Adv Helv* 1: PL 23,193: 'et solus in universo mundo sibi et laicus et sacerdos'. — G. Jouassard, 'La personalité d'Helvidius', in *Mélanges J. Saunier* (Lyon, 1944), pp. 139-154; G.D. Gordini, 'L'opposizione al monachesimo a Roma nel IV secolo' in *Dalla Chiesa antica alla Chiesa moderna*, p. 29.

[41] *Adv Helv* 6.7: PL 23,199-200: 'Poteram super hoc innumerabilia exempla congerere, et omnem lacessentis procacitatem, testimoniorum nube celare; verum adhuc pauca subjiciam, ut his similia ipse sibi lector inveniat ... Quin potius animadvertat Scripturae sanctae idiomo, et nobiscum, in quo haesitabat, intelligat ea, de quibus posset ambigi, si non fuissent scripta, signari, caetera vero nostrae intelligentiae derelinqui'.

Le quattro tesi di Elvidio confutate da Girolamo concernevano: il fidanzamento di Maria e di Giuseppe seguito da un vero matrimonio, sulla base di *Mt* 1,18-20.24-25[42]; l'affermazione dell'inizio del coniugio tra Maria e Giuseppe dopo la nascita di Gesù, secondo l'interpretazione letterale di *Mt* 1,24-25[43]; il fatto che in *Lc* 2,7 Gesù sia definito il 'primogenito' di Maria[44]; la questione dei 'fratelli' e delle 'sorelle' del Signore in vari passi evangelici (*Lc* 8,20; *Gv* 2,12.7,3-5; *Mt* 13,54-56; *Mc* 6,1-3)[45].

La risposta del santo Dottore arriva puntuale e sferzante su ogni problema esegetico ed ermeneutico suscitato, demolendo ad una ad una tutte le insinuazioni elvidiane ed offrendo con ciò un patrimonio di teologia biblica divenuta comune in Oriente ed in Occidente[46]. Basti pensare, infatti, all'acquisizione nella tradizione della Grande Chiesa del significato ebraico dei termini 'donna', 'sposa', 'fino a che', 'conoscere', 'primogenito', 'prima che', 'fratelli'.

Tuttavia, oltre che con l'intelligenza e la competenza dei suoi studi, l'asceta dalmata risponde anche con il cuore e la preghiera, come più volte si avverte nell'afflato spirituale che permea dall'inizio il suo lavoro e che consolida la verità del suo pensiero teologico:

'Devo dunque invocare lo Spirito Santo, perché difenda la verginità della beata Maria con il suo pensiero, mediante la mia bocca; devo invocare il Signore Gesù ... e supplicare Dio Padre stesso perché mostri che la madre del suo Figlio fu vergine dopo il parto, lei che fu madre prima di essere sposata'[47].

Dopo questa invocazione trinitaria, Girolamo inizia ad esporre la propria confutazione alle affermazioni di Elvidio, partendo dalla sua prima questione: 'Che cosa significa la preposizione *prima*? Perché Maria vergine, *fidanzata*, ha concepito?'[48].

Il problema che si pone qui è terminologico e linguistico, come egli dimostra con tono faceto ed esempi pesantemente satirici contro il suo diretto interlocutore. Non nega apertamente che Giuseppe avesse, in un primo momento, progettato di prendere in moglie Maria, tanto da commentare il pensiero dell'evangelista nella sua intenzione narrativa così:

[42] *Adv Helv* 3: PL 23,194-195.
[43] *Adv Helv* 5.7: PL 23,197-198.199-200.
[44] *Adv Helv* 9: PL 23,201-202.
[45] *Adv Helv* 11: PL 23,203-204.
[46] *Adv Helv* 8: PL 23,200-201: 'Licet tu mira impudentia haec in Graecis codicibus falsata contendas, quae non solum omnes pene Graeciae tractatores in suis voluminibus relinquerunt; sed nonnulli quoque e Latinis, ita ut in Graecis habetur, assumpserit. Nec necesse est nunc de exemplariorum varietate tractare, cum omne et Veteris et Novae Scripturae instrumentum in Latinum sermonem exinde translatum sit'.
[47] *Adv Helv* 2: PL 23,194: 'Igitur sanctus mihi invocandus est Spiritus, ut beatae Mariae virginitatem suo sensu, ore meo defendat. Invocandus est Dominus Iesus ... Ipse quoque Deus Pater est imprecandus, ut matrem Filii sui, virginem ostendat fuisse partum, quae fuit mater antequam nupta'.
[48] *Adv Helv* 4: PL 23,195: 'Praepositio "ante" quid ostendit. Maria quare virgo "sponsata" conceperit'.

'Pertanto, quando l'evangelista dice: 'Prima che andassero a vivere insieme' (*Mt* 1,18), vuol dire che era prossimo il tempo delle nozze, e che le cose erano a tal punto che colei che prima era stata fidanzata, avrebbe incominciato ad essere moglie. Quasi a dire ... prima che consumassero il matrimonio, ella fu trovata incinta. Fu trovata da nessun altro se non da Giuseppe che si accorse del seno tumido della fidanzata con lo sguardo attento di chi aveva ormai quasi la libertà di un marito'[49].

La delicatezza dell'immagine non ne sminuisce lo splendido verismo con cui è presentata e da cui soprattutto la figura di Giuseppe esce carica di quella reale umanità, sulla quale si innesta il suo gigantesco cammino di fede e di santità.

Subito dopo, il monaco dalmata aggiunge che in Giuseppe il desiderio stesso delle nozze con Maria era venuto meno a seguito del concepimento in lei, sottolineando così l'intervento di quel 'qualcosa d'altro' venuto ad impedire che si verificasse quanto era stato pensato[50]. Infatti, tale è il significato da attribuire alla preposizione 'prima', la quale 'anche se indica spesso una successione, a volte tuttavia sta a significare soltanto quello che si era pensato in precedenza. Ragion per cui non è necessario che si verifichi quello che si era pensato'[51].

Girolamo ci dona in tal modo, per un problema esegetico, una profonda lezione di spiritualità, mettendo in luce la libertà dell'uomo e la libertà di Dio nel loro punto di incontro e di reciproca assunzione per un progetto nuovo, che non nega per l'intervento divino quello umano precedente, ma lo sublima.

Di qui, col sogno di Giuseppe, che appunto viene sollecitato a prendere con sé la sua sposa (*Mt* 1,20-24), segue la trattazione dove il grande Dottore spiega perché nessuno debba turbarsi per la parola detta in sogno a Giuseppe, in quanto 'è consuetudine della Scrittura divina chiamare *spose* le *fidanzate*'[52].

E' sciolto, dunque, il secondo nodo della questione. Poi, benché non appaia direttamente in causa nel testo riportato di Elvidio, egli fornisce un'altra spiegazione da ritenersi come premessa anche per le confutazioni delle altre successive tesi dell'eretico antimonastico. Il dubbio da chiarire concerne il motivo per il quale 'la Vergine abbia concepito da fidanzata e non piuttosto senza un fidanzato o un marito'[53].

[49] *Adv Helv* 4: PL 23,196: 'Igitur cum Evangelista dicat: "Priusquam convenirent" (*Mt* 1,18), proximum nuptiarum tempus ostendit, et in eo jam rem fuisse ut, quae prius sponsa fuerat, esse uxor inciperet. Quasi dixerit: ... antequam rem agerent nuptiarum, inventa est habens in utero. Inventa est autem a nullo alio, nisi a Joseph, qui sponsae uterum tumentem pene jam licentia maritali'.
[50] *Adv Helv* 4: PL 23,196: 'Non tamen sequitur, ut prioribus docimus exemplis, eum cum Maria convenisse post partum, cujus conveniendi desiderium, uteri conceptione sublatum est'.
[51] *Adv Helv* 4: PL 23,195-196: 'Ac non potius sit intelligendum, quod "ante" praepositio, licet saepe consequentiam indicet, tamen nonnumquam ea tantum quae prius cogitabantur, ostendat. Unde nec necesse sit ut cogitata fiant, cum aliud ideo intervenerit, ne ea quae cogitata sunt, fierent'.
[52] *Adv Helv* 4: PL 23,196: 'Quod autem in sommis dicitur ad Joseph ... nullum movere debet ... cum hanc esse Scripturae divinae consuetudinem noverimus, ut "sponsas" appellet "uxores"'.
[53] *Ibid.*: 'Si cui autem scrupulus commovetur quare desponsata, et non potius sine sponso, sive (ut Scriptura appellat) marito, virgo conceperit'.

Le ragioni che Girolamo riporta sono essenzialmente tre: 'perché fosse chiara l'origine di Maria; perché non venisse lapidata dal popolo come adultera, secondo la Legge di Mosè; perché nella fuga in Egitto potesse avere il sostegno di un custode piuttosto che di un marito'[54].

La prima causa è interpretata alla luce di *Nm* 36,6-8, dove la Legge mosaica prescrive che i matrimoni si contraggono tra membri della medesima tribù. Dalle informazioni su Giuseppe, il suo casato e la sua genealogia, possiamo risalire pertanto a quello della Madre del Signore.

Si può ritenere che il biblista dalmata avesse in mente l'immagine classica del 'germoglio che spunterà dal tronco di Jesse' (*Is* 11,1) in risonanza con il testo di *Mt* 1,1-16.20, essendo la sua esposizione sempre motivata dal comprovare la Bibbia con la Bibbia in materia di fede. Appare altrimenti affatto singolare questa sua preoccupazione di porre in rilievo 'l'origine di Maria', per la quale scava nel testo scritturistico fino a questa conclusione né gratuita né a se stante.

Per quanto riguarda le altre due cause, il motivo è palese, come egli stesso spiega: 'Chi, infatti, in quel momento avrebbe prestato fede alla Vergine, che ella avesse concepito dallo Spirito Santo?'[55]. La domanda formulata sembra ancora sospesa per lo stupore che suscita nella fede del credente e per la sfida che il suo contenuto dogmatico lancia all'umana ragione: 'quel momento' continua a riptersi nei secoli e l'animo di Girolamo se ne sente affascinato e pervaso. E' in tale domanda che la verginità di Maria implica — e la fede nel suo mistero include — l'essenza stessa del Cristianesimo.

La risposta esemplare pare incarnata nel timor di Dio e nell'umiltà della missione di Giuseppe, la cui elevatura spirituale spicca chiara in quanto il monaco dalmata aggiunge:

'Tutti ritenevano Gesù figlio di Giuseppe ... Maria lo confessa padre: non perché ... Giuseppe fosse veramente padre del Salvatore, ma perché, per custodire l'onore di Maria, veniva considerato padre di tutti, lui che, prima dell'avvertimento dell'Angelo ... pensava di rimandarla in segreto. A tal punto egli era convinto che colui che era stato concepito non era suo'[56].

[54] *Ibid.*: 'ut ... origo quoque Mariae monstraretur ... ne juxta legem Moysi ut adultera lapidaretur a populo ... ut ad Aegyptum fugiens haberet solatium, custodis potius quam mariti'. — *Hom Nativ Dom*: CCL 78,526: 'Si uere uxor erat, utique iniuriae erat dicere, "Inuenerunt uxorem, inuenerunt maritum": nunc uero primum feminam ponunt, postea uirum. Et quid dicitur? "Inuenerunt Mariam et Ioseph": inuenerunt Mariam matrem, inuenerunt Ioseph nutricium. "Et infantem positum in praesepio" (*Lc* 2,16)'.

[55] *Adv Helv* 4: PL 23,196: 'Quis enim in tempore illo credidisset Virgini de sancto eam Spiritu concepisse'.

[56] *Adv Helv* 4: PL 23,197: 'omnes Jesum filium aestimat Joseph ... patrem Maria confitatur. Non quod ... vere pater Joseph fuerit Salvatoris; sed quod ad famam Mariae conservandam, pater sit ab omnibus aestimatus, qui antequam moneretur ab angelo ... cogitabat occulte dimittere eam. Intantum suum non esse, qui conceptus fuerat, confidebat'.

Alle illazioni dell'umano pensiero Dio risponde con il segreto ed il silenzio dei piccoli e degli ultimi, nei quali la Sua opera compie il proprio cammino custodita da una fede vergine, pronta cioè a non trattenere per sé — o a non farsene motivo di vanto — quelle meraviglie dei doni divini delle quali si ritiene indegna. Essa ne vive, luminosamente, all'ombra.

Infine vi è un quarto motivo nella tradizione patristica che giustifica il fidanzamento di Maria con Giuseppe e la nascita di Gesù da una donna apparentemente 'coniugata': ingannare il principe di questo mondo, celandogli il mistero della maternità verginale in quella Donna prescelta[57].

La seconda questione contro Elvidio concerne altri due problemi ermeneutici. All'uno Girolamo risponde subito in breve ribattendo all'avversario l'essere risaputo da tutti che 'conoscere', nella terminologia biblica, indica il rapporto coniugale tra gli sposi[58]. All'altro dedica più ampio spazio di esempi scritturistici. L'avverbio 'finché' o 'fino a che' indica tempo determinato dopo il quale si verifica quanto prescritto oppure un tempo indeterminato?[59]

Elvidio, basandosi sulla prima interpretazione, affermava che se *Mt* 1,25 ha scritto che Giuseppe non conobbe Maria 'finché partorì un figlio', intendeva dire che quanto spetta alle nozze sarebbe avvenuto dopo il parto. Girolamo si appella 'all'autorità della medesima Scrittura', dove l'avverbio 'finché' 'spesso indica un tempo indefinito'[60].

La tesi geronimiana, che segue appunto le diverse citazioni bibliche in cui l'avverbio 'fino a che' viene palesemente impiegato nel senso temporale indefinito, qui pare avere una svolta singolare nella sua applicazione. La sequenza logica del pensiero dimostrativo del santo Dottore sembra indurre ad attribuire un significato di 'segno' all'evento del parto della Vergine nei confronti della fede di Giuseppe. Infatti, quanto prima egli accolse e rispettò per pura fede al contenuto del sogno, di cui poteva dubitare, sembra essergli dato nell'evidenza dei fatti al momento della nascita del Bambino, poiché Girolamo sostiene che allora 'a maggior ragione' si astenne da rapporti con la sposa.

[57] *In Matt* I, 1, 18: CCL 77,10: 'Martyr Ignatius etiam quartam addidit causam cur a sponsa conceptus sit: ut partus, inquiens, eius celaretur diabolo, dum eum putat non de uirgine sed de uxore generatum'. — Melchiorre di S.M., *San Giuseppe sposo vergine della Vergine Madre nella tradizione patristica*, 313-314.324-325.

[58] *Adv Helv* 5: PL 23,198: 'In quo primum adversarius superfluo labore desudat, cognoscendi verbum ad coitum magis, quam ad scientiam referendum: quasi hoc quisquam negaverit'. — *Ibid.*, 6: PL 23,198: 'Et de eo quidem quod scriptum est, "cognoscebat", ad coitum esse referendum, ipse disseruit: nullo dubitante, quin ad scientiam saepe referatur'.

[59] *Adv Helv* 5.6: PL 23,197-199.

[60] *Adv Helv* 6: PL 23,198: 'sic etiam in "donec", ejusdem Scripturae auctoritate frangatur, quae saepe certum tempus ... in ejus assumptione significat, saepe infinitum'. — *Ibid.* 7: PL 23, 200: 'Juxta quod et illud intelligitur de Joseph, Evangelistam id indicasse, de quo scandalum poterat moveri, non eam cognitam esse a viro suo usque ad partum, ut multo magis intelligeremus cognitam non fuisse post partum, a qua tunc se abstinuit, cum adhuc de visione poterat fluctuare'.

Cosa intende il Dalmata con questo? A che cosa si riferisce? Perché afferma che 'soprattutto' dopo il parto di Maria, Giuseppe non si unì alla legittima sposa? Ebbe egli in quella circostanza 'prova' della di lei verginità?

Umanamente parlando, proprio questo sarebbe incomprensibile: a meno che la nascita del Bambino non sia avvenuta in modo soprannaturale, divenendo in tal modo 'segno' tangibile del concepimento verginale di Maria e, al tempo stesso, della divinità del Neonato. Certamente lo Stridonense ha intuito la straordinarietà dell'evento del parto della Madre di Dio, tanto da sostenere categoricamente che non fu come il parto di ogni donna e portando argomenti che confutano 'le stravaganze degli Apocrifi'[61].

Il testo di *Lc* 2,7 presenta la Madre come soggetto attivo della situazione e non accenna minimamente a tutti quei 'segni' ed a quelle 'situazioni' che caratterizzano un parto comune. Già il versetto lucano 2,12 pare riferirsi a questa assenza di parto proprio come a 'il segno' indicato ai pastori dall'Angelo per la nascita del Salvatore. Girolamo non lo cita direttamente, ma si può supporre che a questo contenuto abbia pensato in riferimento al 'segno' innanzi tutto per Giuseppe.

Nel contesto medesimo, infatti, egli aveva controbattuto Elvidio con una sequenza di norme dell'Antica Alleanza ritenute abrogate appunto nell'evento che inaugura la Nuova[62]. La Legge mosaica di *Lv* 12,2-4 non si addice più a Colui che la porta a compimento, benché la osservi per 'giustizia' come riferito in *Mt* 3,15, *Lc* 2,21-24 e *Gal* 4,4, in quanto Egli ne annulla le cause che la motivano. Ciò avviene appunto in Maria ed anche in Giuseppe, 'uomo giusto', nel quale è impensabile la concupiscenza di cui parla, per esempio, *Ger* 5,8.

In questo paragrafo dell'opera *Adversus Helvidium*, Girolamo sembra aver già intuito — ed in qualche modo indicato — quella prova biblica della verginità di Maria 'in partu' che solo recentissimi studi biblici hanno messo in luce sul testo di *Gv* 1,13[63].

Quanto al 'come' questo accadde, Girolamo è il primo Padre della Chiesa che si addentri nel grande mistero con la sicurezza che gli è propria in campo scritturistico, benché maturi questa più profonda riflessione dieci anni dopo la diatriba con Elvidio, quando si troverà a sostenerne un'altra altrettanto violenta

[61] *Adv Helv* 8: PL 23,201: 'Nulla ibi obstetrix: nulla muliercularum sedulitas intercessit. Ipsa pannis involvit infantem, ipsa et mater et obstetrix fuit'. — R. Laurentin, *Breve trattato su la Vergine Maria*, pp. 272-275.

[62] *Adv Helv* 8: PL 23,201: 'Polluatur cruore puerpera: obstetrices suscipiant parvulum vagientem: maritus lassam teneat uxorem. Sic incipiant nuptiae, ne Evangelista mentitus sit. Sed absit, ut hoc de matre Salvatoris et viro justo sit aestimandum'.

[63] S. De Fiores, A. Serra, 'Vergine', in NDM, pp. 1445-1449; R. Laurentin, *Breve trattato su la Vergine Maria*, pp. 284-301; I. de la Potterie, 'La Mère de Jésus et la conception virginale du Fils de Dieu', in Mar 40 (1978), pp. 41-90; Idem, 'Maternità di Maria e maternità della Chiesa secondo la tradizione giovannea', in *Il Salvatore e la Vergine Madre* (Roma-Bologna, 1981), pp. 273-302; Idem, 'Il parto verginale del Verbo Incarnato: 'Non ex sanguinibus ... sed ex Deo natus est (Gv 1,13)', in Mar 45 (1983), pp. 127-174.

contro Gioviniano. A conclusione dell'epistola apologetica indirizzata all'amico Pammachio, egli allora con brillante destrezza di testi biblici scriverà:

'Vergine è Cristo; *vergine senza interruzione* la Madre del nostro vergine Cristo: madre e vergine. Mi spiego: Gesù è entrato a porte chiuse; nel suo sepolcro, tagliato nuovo su durissima roccia, nessuno mai v'è stato riposto, né prima, né poi; "giardino chiuso e fonte sigillata" (*Ct* 4,12); da questa sorgente sgorga quel fiume di cui parla Amos (cfr *Gl* 4,18) ... Questa è la porta orientale — in Ezechiele (*Ez* 44,1-3) — sempre chiusa e splendente, porta che nasconde in sé, o lascia uscire da sé, il Santo dei santi; attraverso di essa entra ed esce il Sole di giustizia (*Ml* 3,20), nostro pontefice al modo di Melchisedek (*Ps* 109,4; *Eb* 5,6.10; 6,20). Mi sappiano rispondere come ha fatto Gesù ad entrare a porte chiuse (*Gv* 20,26) quando, affinché non si credesse un fantasma il suo corpo reale, fece palpare le sue mani, osservare il fianco, si mostrò loro, insomma, in carne ed ossa. Allora dirò anch'io, a mia volta, come Maria santissima può essere madre e vergine; vergine dopo il parto, madre prima che sposa'[64].

Alla Vergine vengono applicate tipologicamente le più suggestive immagini della letteratura profetica: la Rivelazione si illumina nella Rivelazione; l'Antico ha il compimento nel Nuovo; la profezia diviene memoria; il senso dell'analogia trova il suo significato nella realtà e il mistero si svela nella luce della sapienza della fede.

Quest'ultima è l'unica atta all'intelligenza delle 'cose nuove', alle quali non è più possibile accostarsi con la pretesa razionale delle leggi di quelle passate, sottoposte al peccato, perché vi mancano i presupposti per applicarla.

Girolamo, che non fu filosofo, imposta qui un'autorevole lezione di metodologia per la scienza biblica, ma più in generale si può ritenere che suggerisca le basi stesse dell'intera scienza teologica in quanto tale. Anziché alla logica, infatti, egli restituisce il primato allo Spirito, trattandosi di verità da lui ispirate.

All'ampio dato della Tradizione, inoltre, anche orale, egli sempre dà un riscontro scritturistico, nel quale scava con rigorosità esegetica ed ermeneutica,

[64] *Ep* XLIX, 21: CSEL 54,386: 'Christus uirgo, *mater* uirginis nostri *uirgo perpetua, mater et uirgo*. Iesus enim clausis ingressus est ostiis; in sepulcro eius, quod nouum et in petra durissima fuerat excisum, nec ante quis nec postea positus est: "hortus conclusus, fons signatus" (*Ct* 4,12), de quo fonte manat fluius ille iuxta Amos (*cfr Gl* 4,18) ... haec est porta orientalis in Hiezechiel, semper clausa et lucida et operiens in se uel ex se proferens sancta sanctorum, per quam sol iustitiae et pontifex noster secundum ordinem Melchisedec ingreditur et egreditur. respondeant mihi, quomodo Iesus clausis ingressus est ostiis, cum palpandas manus et latus considerandum et ossa carnemque monstrauerit, ne ueritas corporis fantasma putaretur, et ego respondebo, quomodo sancta Maria sit et mater et uirgo: uirgo post partum, mater ante, quam nupta'. — *In Matt* IV, 27, 60: CCL 77,278: 'In nouo ponitur monumento ne post resurrectionem ceteris corporibus remanentibus surrexisse alius fingeretur. Potest autem et nouum sepulchrum Mariae uirginale uterum demonstrare; saxumque ostio adpositum et saxum magnum ostendere non absque auxilio plurimorum sepulcrum potuisse reserari'. — *Hom in Ioh*: CCL 78,522: 'Deus in sepulcro teneri non potest'. — *Ibid.*: CCL 78,521: maternita verginale di Maria e Resurrezione. — *In Hiezechielem* (=*In Hiez*) XIII, 44, 2-3: CCL 75,646: la 'porta chiusa' è la Vergine Maria quando è nato Gesù.

ed al quale quindi àncora il deposito della fede come a salda roccia, poiché 'è da ritenersi che l'acqua della fonte scorra molto più pura che quella del rivo'[65].

Sciolto il nodo biblico e teologico concernente la verginità di Maria 'in partu', anche la problematica della sua integrità 'ante partum' viene più facilmente liberata dai dubbi e dalle riserve. C'è motivo di credere, pertanto, che a questo il Dalmata si riferisse quando, anni dopo, scrisse che nel sepolcro nuovo dato al Signore 'nessuno mai vi era stato riposto, né prima, né poi': è palese l'analogia col grembo della Vergine, 'hortus conclusus'.

Comunque, se sulla prima Girolamo ha già risposto, sulla seconda lo fa più dettagliatamente confutando la terza e la quarta tesi di Elvidio. Inoltre, trattando della verginità della Madre di Dio 'in partu' ed affermando che 'a maggior ragione' dopo l'evento Giuseppe non la conobbe, egli aveva già gettato le premesse della verginità 'post partum'. La terza questione verte, infatti, sull'attributo di 'primogenito' dato dal testo di *Lc* 2,7 al Figlio partorito da Maria. Secondo Elvidio ciò starebbe a significare che ella ebbe altri figli, altrimenti sarebbe stato definito 'unigenito'[66]. Risponde puntuale Girolamo che 'ogni unigenito è primogenito; non ogni primogenito è unigenito; primogenito è non soltanto colui dopo il quale vengono altri, ma prima del quale non è nessuno ... La parola di Dio ha dato la definizione di primogenito: "Tutto ciò che apre l'utero materno" (*Nm* 18,15)'[67].

Tra gli esempi biblici che il monaco dalmata poi riporta come riferimento al termine 'primogenito' e come messaggio contenutovi, ivi inteso dall'evangelista (*Nm* 18,15-17; *Es* 34,19-20; *Lc* 2,22-24), il più singolare e chiarificatore risulta in ultimo argomento quello di *Es* 12,29, dove è applicato in ben altro contesto[68].

La polemica di Elvidio era scivolata nel ridicolo, essendosi aggrappata a cavilli strumentalizzati a sostegno di tesi ormai estrapolate dal loro contesto reale. Girolamo non perdona al proprio interlocutore una così banale caduta nell'intelligenza della Scrittura: da chi scende in campo su questo terreno egli esigerà sempre una competenza rispondente all'importanza di quanto tratta e

[65] *Adv Helv* 8: PL 23,201: 'multo purior manare credenda sit fontis unda, quam rivi'.

[66] *Adv Helv* 9: PL 23,201-202: 'Verum quia jam satis abundeque respondimus ad id quod proposuerat ... ad tertiam veniendo est quaestionem, ut juxta disputationis ejus ordinem, etiam nostrae responsionis ordo procedat. Vult enim alios quoque filios Mariam procreasse; et ex eo quod scriptum est: ... "et peperit filium suum primogenitum" (*Lc* 2,7): nititur approbare "primogenitum" non posse esse dici, nisi sum qui habeat et fratres: sicut unigenitus ille vocatur, qui parentibus solus sit filius'.

[67] *Adv Helv* 10: PL 23,202: 'Nos autem ita definimus: Omnis unigenitus est primogenitus: non omnis primogenitus est unigenitus. Primogenitus est, non tantum post quem et alii: sed ante quem nullus ... Definitit sermo Dei, quid sit primogenitum, "Omne, inquit, quod aperit vulvam" (*Nm* 18,15)'.

[68] *Adv Helv* 10: PL 23,203: 'Responde mihi, Qui tunc ab exterminatore fuerant interempti, primogeniti fuerunt an et unigeniti? ... Aut unigenitos liberabis a poena, et ridiculus eris: aut si confiteberis interfectos, ingrati obtinebimus, et unigenitos primogenitos appellari'.

non risparmierà alcuno che avrà osato scontrarsi con lui usando tendenzialmente, riduttivamente o soltanto letteralmente del testo biblico a difesa delle proprie opinioni, errate o meno che fossero.

Talvolta sembra quasi che Girolamo si senta egli stesso umiliato quando l'avversario non è pari a lui per intelligenza e per cultura, come appunto si legge anche nell'esordio di quest'opera contro Elvidio[69]. E' quindi con un tono sempre più aggressivo e passionale che il Leone dalmata giunge a rispondere all'ultimo argomento di Elvidio circa la menzione che i Vangeli fanno dei fratelli del Signore[70].

Qui egli dà sfogo alla sua conoscenza della lingua ebraica e della Bibbia, investendo con un fiume di esempi ed applicazioni dell'impiego del termine in questione il destinatario dello scritto. Il fine è semplicemente 'di spiegare come si chiamino fratelli del Signore i figli della sua zia materna'[71], dunque, i cugini di Gesù. Nella lingua ebraica, d'altronde, egli stesso attesta che 'si parla di fratelli in quattro sensi: per natura, stirpe, parentela, affetto'[72].

Dopo aver dimostrato l'inconsistenza delle varie applicazioni al contesto evangelico riguardante il Signore, Girolamo conclude la propria ampia esposizione, ma non senza aver prima rimarcato che esclude l'ipotesi di fratelli carnali di Gesù, il punto cioè culminante del problema sulla verginità di Maria 'post partum': 'la Scrittura, infatti, non li chiama né figli di Maria, né di Giuseppe'[73]. E' interessante come lo Stridonense sia acuto nel sottolineare che non si tratta non solo di figli di Maria (e quindi di Giuseppe insieme), ma neppure di Giuseppe in sé, intendendo con questo rispondere a quanti, secondo la tradizione apocrifa a difesa della verginità della Madre del Signore, ritenevano che Giuseppe fosse stato un vedovo risposatosi con Maria: egli avrebbe allora portato dei figli adottivi a lei e dei fratelli a Gesù[74].

[69] *Adv Helv* 1: PL 23,193; *ibid.*, 14: PL 23,207-208: 'Sed ne in aliquo cavilleris, et te quasi lubricus anguis evolvas, testimoniorum stringendus es vinculis, ne querulus sibiles, et dicas, te magis argumentationibus tortuosis, quam Scripturarum veritate superatum'.

[70] *Adv Helv* 11-12: PL 23,203-206; *In Matt* II, 12, 46-50: CCL 77,100-101.

[71] *Adv Helv* 14: PL 23,206: 'Nunc illud est quod conamur ostendere, quemadmodum fratres Domini appellentur filii materterae ejus'.

[72] *Ibid.*: 'quatuor modis in Scripturis divinis fratres dici, natura, gente, cognatione, affectu'.

[73] *Adv Helv* 15: PL 23,209: 'Interrogo nunc, juxta quem modum fratres Domini in Evangelio intelligas appellari. Juxta natura! Sed Scriptura non dicit, nec Mariae eos vocans filios, nec Joseph'. — *Ibid.*, 14.15: PL 23,206-208: 'Natura, Esau, Jacob, duodecim patriarchae, Andreas et Petrus, Jacobus et Joannes. Gente, qua omnes Judaei inter se fratres vocantur; ... Pono cognatione fratres vocantur, qui sunt de una familia ... et affectu fratres dici, qui in duo scinditur, in spiritale et in commune'. — *In Hiez* XIII, 44, 2-3: CCL 75,646-647: 'Pulchre quidam portam clausam ... Mariam ... intellegunt ... et quando natus est, uirgo permansit aeterna, ad confundendos eos qui arbitrantur eam post natiuitatem Saluatoris habuisse de Ioseph filios, ex occasione 'fratrum' eius qui uocantur in euangelio'.

[74] *Apocrifi del Nuovo Testamento*, a cura di L. Moraldi (Trento, 1988): *Dell'Infanzia del Salvatore* (Codice Arundel 404): 27-30, 126-128; *Dell'Infanzia del Salvatore* (Codice Hereford 0.3.9), 26-30, 161-164; *Vangelo dello Pseudo Matteo*, 8, 209-212: Maria va sposa a Giuseppe; *Storia di Giuseppe falegname* (recensione arabo latina), 2-4,320-321; *Storia di Giuseppe falegname* (recensione copto-bohairica), 2-4, 337-338.

E' una scappatoia biblico-teologica che il santo Dottore rifiuta assolutamente: sia sul piano scritturistico, come dimostra, sia su quello teologico, affermando la verginità non solo di Maria, quanto anche di Giuseppe. Alba dei tempi nuovi, infatti, e frutto della Redenzione stessa, in virtù della quale non è più lecito 'fare considerazioni fuor di proposito riguardo a uomini santi'[75], la verginità è l'esemplarità visibile di quanto accade invisibilmente in coloro che hanno accolto la Vita nuova.

Infine, dopo aver perorato con tanta illuminata pietà la perpetua verginità della Madre del Signore, Girolamo si stringe a lei in attesa che ora le calunnie si volgano a lui, consolato dell'onore di essere servo che soffre per così elevata causa e con sì nobile compagna[76].

[75] *Adv Helv* 19: PL 23,213: 'nobis de sanctis viris temere aestimare nihil liceat'. — *Ibid.*, 19: PL 23,213: 'Nec hoc ideo dicimus, quo nuptias condemnemus, ipsa quippe virginitas fructus est nuptiarum ... Possumus enim hac aestimatione possibilitatis contendere, plures quoque uxores habuisse Joseph, quia plures habuerit Abraham, plures habuerit Jacob; et de his esse uxoribus fratres Domini, quod plerique non tam pia quam audaci temeritate confingunt ... Si enim in virum sanctum fornicatio non cadit, et aliam eum uxorem habuisse non scribitur: Mariae autem quam putatus est habuisse, custos potius fuit, quam maritus: relinquitur, virginem eum mansisse cum Maria, qui pater Domini meruit appellari'. — *Ep* XLIX, 21: CSEL 54,386.

[76] *Adv Helv* 22: PL 23,216: 'Rhetoricati sumus, et in morem declamatorum, paululum lusimus. Tu nos, Helvidi, coegisti ... Et quia arbitror te veritate superatum, ad detractionem vitae meae ... illo dico praeveniens, gloria mihi fore tua convicia, cum eodem quo Mariae detraxisti, ore me laceres, et caninam facundiam servus Domini pariter et mater'. — Di Giuseppe, invece, nell'*Omelia sulla Natività del Signore*, il monaco di Betlemme ci lascerà una stupenda inmagine che lo dipinge nella più alta verità dell'uomo umilmente timorato di Dio e profondamente illuminato dalla sapienza della contemplazione. Nel presepio, dinanzi al Figlio divino di Maria, 'Giuseppe *non osava neanche toccarlo*, sapendo che non era stato generato da lui. Lo osservava *stupito, era pieno di gioia* nel vederlo nato e, tuttavia, non osava toccarlo': cfr *Hom Nativ Dom*: CCL 78,524: 'Ioseph autem non *audebat adtingere*, quem sciebat de se non esse generatum: *mirabatur, gaudebat* natum, et natum non audebat adtingere'.

Hieronymus, Prologe zu den Kommentaren zum Zwölfprophetenbuch: Exegese und Rhetorik

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Die Kommentare zum Zwölfprophetenbuch

Im Laufe seines langen Lebens hat Hieronymus zahlreiche Bücher des Alten und Neuen Testamentes nicht nur ins Lateinische übersetzt, sondern auch kommentiert. Besonderes Interesse hatte er offensichtlich an den Propheten: Neben allen sogenannten großen Propheten kommentierte er alle 12 kleinen Propheten, so daß man eine Art geschlossenes Corpus vor sich hat. Das heißt nicht, daß Hieronymus diese Kommentare so konzipiert hatte. Wie seine anderen exegetischen Arbeiten entstanden die Kommentare zum Zwölfprophetenbuch parallel zu seiner Übersetzungsarbeit in den Jahren im Osten des römischen Reiches und sind zum Teil als Frucht seiner Übersetzungstätigkeit zu verstehen.

Man kann drei Perioden einteilen:

1. 389-392: Zwischen der endgültigen Niederlassung im Orient 385 und dem Beginn der origenetischen Kontroverse (393) entstehen die Kommentare zu Nahum, Micha, Zefanja, Haggai und Habakuk[1].
2. In den letzten Monaten des Jahres 396 schreibt Hieronymus die Kommentare zu Jonas (gewidmet dem Chromatius) und Obadja (gewidmet dem Pammachius).
3. Nach einer Pause von 10 Jahren nimmt Hieronymus 406 die Erklärung der Propheten wieder auf. Es entstehen im Herbst 406 die Kommentare zu Sacharja für Exuperus von Toulouse, zu Maleachi für die Mönche von Toulouse Minervus und Alexander und die Kommentare zu Hosea und Joel für Pammachius. Durch Krankheit unterbrochen schließt sich der Kommentar zu Amos als letzter an, der ebenfalls dem Pammachius gewidmet ist.

Hieronymus hat alle seine Kommentare, auch seine Bibelübersetzungen, mit Vorworten versehen. Diese Vorworte geben sehr interessante Aufschlüsse über den Anlaß für die Arbeit und Hieronymus' persönliche Situation, sie erzählen von Freunden, Auftraggebern, aber auch von Feinden und Gegnern, sie berichten über den Prozeß der Entstehung und die wissenschaftlichen Voraussetzungen des jeweiligen Werkes, sie beleuchten einen großen Teil der christlichen

[1] Zur Datierung vgl. F. Cavallera, *S. Jérôme, sa vie et son œuvre* (Louvain-Paris, 1922).

exegetischen Literatur, die dem Hieronymus zur Verfügung stand, und die wir zum Teil nur aus den Vorworten kennen, und schließlich legt Hieronymus in ihnen Rechenschaft über seine Methode ab, nennt die Leitlinien seiner Bibelauslegung und rechtfertigt sie. Die Vorworte decken ein so breites Spektrum an Themen ab, daß es hier zu weit führte, sie in ihrer Gesamtheit zu würdigen. Daher steht ein Beispiel im Mittelpunkt meiner Untersuchung, das typische Merkmale aufweist und so einen Einblick in die exegetische Arbeit des Hieronymus erlaubt: der Prolog zum Kommentar über Obadja.

Der Prolog zum Obadja-Kommentar

Hieronymus beginnt den Kommentar zu Obadja mit einem Pauluszitat (1 Kor 13,11): 'Als ich klein war, redete ich wie ein Kind, ich war so einsichtig wie ein Kind, ich dachte wie ein Kind; nachdem ich ein Mann geworden war, legte ich das ab, was kindlich war'[2]. Dieser Beginn steht offensichtlich in keinem erkennbaren Zusammenhang mit dem Propheten. Da er aber in der ersten Person abgefaßt ist, wird der Leser auf den Bezug zum Autor, zu Hieronymus, gestoßen, der zunächst nicht selbst auftritt, sondern sich hinter der Autorität des Paulus 'versteckt'. Indem sich Hieronymus dieses biblischen Zitates bedient, benutzt er zugleich seine Kenntnisse aus der klassischen Rhetorik: Die Aufgabe eines Prooemiums ist es, den Zuhörer 'benevolum, docilem, attentum'[3] zu machen. Daß Hieronymus tatsächlich 'a persona'[4] beginnt, zeigt er, indem er im folgenden Satz den Leser um Verzeihung für eine Jugendsünde bittet[5]: In jugendlichem Glaubenseifer hatte er schon einmal eine Auslegung des Propheten Obadja verfaßt, sie aber inzwischen für verschollen gehalten. Zur damaligen Zeit ist Hieronymus ca. 30 Jahre alt gewesen[6] und hatte seine Studien in Rom abgeschlossen[7]. Seine Verfassung beschreibt er so: 'Ich brannte in mystischer Erkenntnis, und weil ich gelesen hatte, daß für die Glaubenden

[2] 'Dum essem parvulus, ut parvulus loquebar, ut parvulus cogitabam; postquam factus sum vir, quae parvuli erant, deposui' (*Opera Exegetica* I,6: *Commentarii in Prophetas Minores*). Post Dominicum Vallarsi Textum Edendum curavit M. Adriaen. CCL 76. Im folgenden abgekürzt: *In Abd. prol.* 1-3).

[3] Cicero, *inv.* 1,15,20: 'exordium est oratio animum auditoris idonee comparans ad reliquam dictionem, quod eveniet si eum benivolum, attentum, docilem confecerit'. (vgl. auch *Quint.* 4,1,5).

[4] 'Es gibt vier Suchformeln ... des "benevolum parare" ... *Her* 1,4,8: "benivolos auditores facere quattuor modis possumus: ab nostra, ab adversariorum nostrorum, ab auditorum persona, et ab rebus ipsis"'. (H. Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik* (München, 1960), § 274, 156/57).

[5] 'quanto magis ego ... mereri debeo veniam' (*In Abd. prol.* 6-7).

[6] Entstehung des Obadja-Kommentares: 396; Hieronymus ist ca. 50 Jahre alt; 'nec diffiteor per hosce triginta annos in eius opere me ac labore sudasse' (*In Abd. prol.* 37-38).

[7] 'litteras saeculi noveram' (*In Abd. prol.* 12).

alles möglich sei, nahm ich nicht zur Kenntnis, daß es verschiedene Charismata gibt'[8].

Doch nicht das Schreiben eines Kommentares in früher Jugend, sondern vielmehr die Art des Kommentares ist der Grund für die Scham des Hieronymus[9]: Es handelt sich um eine allegorische Auslegung ohne Berücksichtigung der 'historia'[10]. Er bezeichnet sich als 'stultus'[11], weil er geglaubt habe, unmittelbar von der weltlichen Literatur zum 'librum signatum'[12] übergehen zu können. Es wird also offenbar als dumm angesehen, die 'historia' außer acht gelassen zu haben, außerdem bezeichnet Hieronymus die scharfe Trennung zwischen der weltlichen Literatur und dem 'librum signatum' als Zeichen von Unwissenheit. Diese besondere Unwissenheit, die verbunden ist mit 'cognitio mystica'[13] erläutert Hieronymus mit mehreren Belegen aus dem Alten und Neuen Testament. Alle diese Stellen lassen sich unter dem Gesichtspunkt zusammenfassen: Die Gewißheit des Hieronymus, mit reinem Glaubenseifer und nur dadurch einen biblischen Text richtig auslegen zu können, ist falsch gewesen.

Der Kommentar zu Obadja, der aus dieser falschen Haltung entstanden ist, ist nun plötzlich wieder aufgetaucht; er wird dem Hieronymus von einem jungen Mann aus Italien gebracht, der ebenso begeistert ist, wie Hieronymus es damals beim Schreiben war. Dieser Umstand läßt bei Hieronymus den Wunsch entstehen, mit der in 30 Lebensjahren erworbenen Routine und Kenntnis einen zweiten Versuch zu wagen. Er schämt sich zwar seines Jugendwerkes, betont aber zugleich dessen Wert als ersten Schritt auf seinem Weg: 'Damals gaben wir, was wir hatten, und jetzt, wenn wir trotzdem einige Fortschritte gemacht haben, haben wir dem Herrn das Seine zurückgegeben'[14]. Mit der Formulierung 'suum', 'das Seine', bringt Hieronymus bei aller nach den Regeln der Rhetorik erforderlichen Bescheidenheit zum Ausdruck, daß er den folgenden Kommentar als 'richtig', als der Sache angemessen und gerecht beurteilt. Worin liegt nun der Unterschied zum ersten Versuch? Hieronymus schildert mit Emphase den Einschnitt — sein Adressat Pammachius wird direkt angesprochen —, er vergleicht seine Entwicklung mit der Heimkehr des verlorenen Sohnes zum Vater: Erst seine Reise in den Osten des römischen Reiches hat die Vervollkommnung seiner Exegese bewirkt: 'Das ist jene Zeit, mein Pammachius,

[8] 'ardebat animus cognitione mystica, et quia legeram omnia possiblia credentibus, ignorabam diversa esse charismata' (*In Abd. prol.* 10-12).

[9] 'et ego erubescebam, ... ego demisso capite confiteri meum pudorem prohibebar' (*In Abd. prol.* 29-31).

[10] 'allegorice interpretatus sum Abdiam prophetam, cuius historiam nesciebam' (*In Abd. prol.* 9-10).

[11] *In Abd. prol.* 13.

[12] *In Abd. prol.* 13.

[13] *In Abd. prol.* 10.

[14] 'Et tunc dedidimus quod habuimus, et nunc, si tamen aliquid profecimus, Domino suum reddimus' (*In Abd. prol.* 35-37).

der du mir lieber bist als dieses Licht, zu der wir die Schule der Rhetoren verlassen hatten und uns verschiedene Studien beschäftigten, als ich und mein liebster Heliodor in gleicher Weise die Einsamkeit der syrischen Chalkis bewohnen wollten'[15].

Offenbar ist dem Hieronymus hier im Osten eine wesentliche Grundlage für seine exegetische Arbeit vermittelt worden. Die bisher fehlende Verbindung zwischen dem 'librum signatum' und der 'schola rhetorum', den 'litterae saeculi', konnte von ihm hergestellt werden. Er nennt ja das Manko seines ersten Kommentares selbst: Die 'historia' kannte er nicht und hat sie nun, wohl in Antiochia, kennengelernt. 'Die Antiochener fordern für die Psalmen (und die übrigen Bücher des Alten Testamentes) eine historische Interpretation'[16]. Das heißt eine Interpretation, die den sogenannten Literalsinn eines biblischen Textes würdigt, bevor sie sich dem theologischen Sinn zuwendet. 'Es ist die Aufgabe des Interpreten, so darf man Theodors [sc. v. Mopsuestia] Bekenntnis weiterführen, mittels seines grammatischen und rhetorischen Rüstzeugs durch diesen "Schmuck" zur Erkenntnis der reinen Aussage, des "Sinns" vorzustoßen'[17]. Es steht außer Zweifel, daß Hieronymus mit dieser Methode in Kontakt gekommen war — er hielt sich von 374-379 mit den genannten Wüstenzeitunterbrechungen in Antiochia auf, lernte dort Griechisch und war wahrscheinlich Schüler des Apollinaris von Laodicea. Man kann also den Satz 'allegorice interpretatus sum Abdiam prophetam, cuius historiam nesciebam'[18] so deuten, daß Hieronymus zwar mit 30 Jahren die pagane Bildung eines vornehmen Römers besaß und dazu den brennenden Glaubenseifer und das glühende Interesse an der Bibel, daß es ihm aber damals nicht deutlich war, daß sich diese beiden geistigen Ströme miteinander fruchtbar verbinden ließen. Diese Erkenntnis verdankt er erst der Begegnung mit der antiochenischen Exegese. So zeigt der Prolog zum Obadjakommentar, daß sich Hieronymus darüber klar geworden war, daß er seine pagane Bildung durchaus in den Dienst seines christlichen Berufes stellen konnte[19]. In einer fast übertriebenen, leicht polemischen

[15] 'Hoc est illud tempus, mi Pammachi, hac luce dulcior, quo egressi scholam rhetorum, diverso studio ferebamur, quando ego et Helidorus carissimus pariter habitare solitudinem Syriae Chalcidis volebamus' (*In Abd. prol.* 43-47).

[16] Ch. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen zu Methode und Herkunft der antiochenischen Exegese* (Theoph. 23; Köln/Bonn, 1974), S. 84.

[17] Ch. Schäublin, S. 41.

[18] *In Abd. prol.* 9/10.

[19] Vgl. dazu, was A.S. Pease ('The Attitude of Jerome Towards Pagan Literature'. In: *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 50 (1919), S. 150-167.) über die Haltung des Hieronymus schreibt: 'It was that of a man classically trained, seeing the strong points but also the weakness of the secular literature; in his youthful enthusiasm led first to admiration and then to strong, though temporary, aversion to the classics; and, finally with the sanity of maturer life and the influence of the culture of the Greek East, able to walk with surer step, realizing that complete acceptance of the new faith did not necessarily involve total rejection of what was of value in the old literature' (S. 167).

Weise bringt er die Erkenntnis genau in der Mitte des Prologs mit dem Bild von der Heimkehr des Verlorenen Sohnes zum Ausdruck: 'Mild ist der Vater; er nimmt den zurückgekehrten Sohn sofort auf, und er wartet nicht, bis ihm jemand die Tür öffnet, er selbst geht ihm entgegen, er bereitet einen Ring und einen Mantel, mag auch der Bruder neidisch sein und ihn einen Hurensohn und Verschwender nennen, von seinem Heil ertönt die Musik der englischen Freude und aller Tugenden im Himmel'[20]. Hieronymus bezieht eindeutig dieses Gleichnis auf sich: Er ist der verlorene Sohn, der mit seinem ersten Obadjakommentar in die Irre gegangen ist, und der nun zum Vater und auf den Weg der 'richtigen' Auslegung zurückgekehrt ist, auch wenn er dabei von Neidern behelligt wird.

Selbst wenn man berücksichtigt, daß Hieronymus in der Formulierung seiner Prologe Rücksicht auf den Empfänger genommen hat, hier ist es sein römischer Freund und Gönner Pammachius[21], ist es erstaunlich, in welche Gesellschaft er sich und seine Arbeit nun einreiht. Erneut charakterisiert er den wiederaufgetauchten Kommentar als Werk eines halben Kindes, mit unsicherer Hand zu Papier gebracht[22]. Gewiß gehört das einerseits zum rhetorischen Topos der Bescheidenheit[23] — Hieronymus macht sich schlechter als er sich in Wirklichkeit sieht, wie auch seine Scham gegenüber dem römischen Jüngling, der den Kommentar fand, übertrieben wirkt —, andererseits reiht er sich nun in eine Gruppe ein, die die Spitze der antiken Philosophen und Schriftsteller darstellt. Zunächst stellt er sich, immer noch in vermeintlicher Bescheidenheit,

[20] 'Clemens est pater; cito revertentem filium suscipit, nec exspectat donec aperiat ostium, ipse egreditur obviam, annulum et stolam parat, licet germanus invideat, et scortatorem ac nepotem vocet, de salute illius symphonia angelicae laetitiae cunctarumque virtutum in caelestibus personat'. (*In Abd. prol.* 38-43).

[21] 'Addressing Pammachius he uses many classical allusions and compares Pammachius to Aeneas (ep. 66,11,1) .... Yet he was, in general, greatly influenced by the character, and still more by the culture, of those to whom he wrote, and to the sophisticated he allowed himself a freedom from which he abstained when adressing the more easily scandalized simplicity of the monks at Bethelehem'. (A.S. Pease, S. 161). Vgl. auch E.R. Curtius (*Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Bern, ⁶1967), S. 444) über Hieronymus: 'Man sieht, die antiken Klassiker bilden seinen vertrauten Umgang; er weist sie manchmal in ihre Grenzen zurück, aber nützt sie auch für seine Zwecke; gegenwärtig sind sie stets'. Ähnlich A. Staub (*Die exegetische Methode des Hieronymus im Kommentar zum Zwölfprophetenbuch. Eruditio saeculi und scientia scriptuarum* (Diss. ad lauream S. Anselmo. Roma, 1977), S. 94): 'Interessanterweise sind ... vor allem die Pammachius gewidmeten Kommentare zu Abdias, Oseas, Amos, Joel und (in kleinerem Ausmaß) zu Jonas reich an profanen Zitaten und Gedanken'.

[22] 'curvos apices litterarum' (*In Abd. prol.* 49) 'Infans eram, necdum scribere noveram, titubabat manus, tremebant articuli'. (*In Abd. prol.* 49/50).

[23] 'Mit tausend anderen topoi und Konventionen der antiken Rhetorik ist auch die affektierte Bescheidenheit in die Literatur des christlichen Mittelalters übergegangen. Ein Hauptvermittler dürfte dabei Hieronymus gewesen sein. ... Diese Äußerungen des Hieronymus sind typisch — aber nicht für christliche Gesinnung, sondern für den affektierten Manierismus der spätrömischen Literatur, der Heiden und Christen gemeinsam ist' (Curtius, S. 413).

neben Sokrates. Wie dieser muß er erkennen: 'Ich weiß, daß ich nichts weiß'[24]. Mit Cicero hat er die literarischen Jugendsünden gemeinsam; hier wird deutlich Pammachius' kulturelles Umfeld einbezogen: 'dicit et Tullius tuus'[25]. Auch im Vergleich mit Cicero übt sich Hieronymus in Bescheidenheit; er hält schon dessen Frühwerk für vollkommen[26]. Für sich und den nun vorliegenden Kommentar nimmt er aber die 'Reife des Alters'[27] in Anspruch. Auffällig ist hier, wie völlig unbefangen Hieronymus seine Kenntnis der griechischen Philosophie und der römischen Rhetorik positiv wertet und als Beispiel für sich und seine exegetische Arbeit verwendet. Nichtsdestoweniger verweist er daneben auf zwei christliche Autoren, denen Gleiches widerfuhr, auf Tertullian, Contra Marcionem, und Origenes, In Canticum Canticorum, stellt aber an den Schluß seiner Vergleichsliste einen, den klassischen Rhetor: Quintilian. Aus den aufgezählten Werken ist zu sehen, 'daß jedes Alter für sich genommen vollkommen ist, und daß nach der Zahl der Jahre geurteilt werden muß'[28]. Im Zuge der Vergleiche ist offenbar die Scham über das Frühwerk einem gewissen Stolz, mit in einer solchen Reihe zu stehen, gewichen. Deutlich und wohl nicht nur im Blick auf den Adressaten Pammachius zu erklären ist die positive Wertschätzung der heidnischen Rhetorik: Sie kann er nun in reiferem Alter als Instrument für die biblische Exegese würdigen und benutzen; sie stellt seine Auslegung auf eine solide Basis, die ihm bei der von Begeisterung getragenen rein allegorischen Auslegung in seiner Jugend fehlte. Die Kombinierbarkeit von gläubigem Verständnis der Bibel und überkommenen philologischen Methoden haben ihn die Antiochener gelehrt[29]. Daß er die Regeln der Rhetorik genau kennt und sicher beherrscht, demonstriert er dem Leser mit dem letzten Satz seines Prologs, der die Überleitung zum eigentlichen Kommentar ist: 'Aber schon ist es Zeit, den Beginn des Obadja vorzunehmen, und mit Hilfe deiner

[24] 'nunc, ut nihil aliud profecerim, saltem Socraticum illud habeo: Scio, quod nesciam', (*In Abd. prol.* 50-52).

[25] *In Abd. prol.* 52.

[26] 'quos ego vel perfectissimos puto' (*In Abd. prol.* 54).

[27] 'quanto magis ego libere profitebor, et illud fuisse puerilis ingenii, et hoc maturae senectutis' (*In Abd. prol.* 55-57).

[28] 'unamquamque aetatem in suo esse perfectam, et ex annorum debere numero iudicari' (*In Abd. prol.* 60-62).

[29] Vgl. Ch. Schäublin über die Bibelkommentare des Theodor von Mopsuestia: 'Denn diese sind — zumal der Psalmenkommentar — am konsequentesten nach dem Vorbild und im Geist der paganen Dichterkommentare gestaltet; von der griechischen Philologie aber, wie sie der Grammatiker an Homer und anderen Klassikern lehrte, scheinen die Antiochener ihre wesentlichsten Anregungen empfangen zu haben: Schon die Prologe geben ein gängiges Schema zu erkennen: Theodor stellt seinen Kommentaren in Übereinstimmung mit der heidnischen Grammatik Hypotheseis voran und scheut sich nicht, zur Klärung historischer Zusammenhänge auch außerbiblische Autoren zu befragen' (S. 171). Er fährt fort: 'Neben der griechischen Philologie hat die allgemein während der Kaiserzeit übermächtige Rhetorik bestimmend auf die Antiochenischen Bibelerklärer eingewirkt (dabei gilt es freilich zu bedenken, daß auch die pagane Grammatik der späten Jahrhunderte ihrem Einfluß zum Teil erlegen ist)' (S. 172).

Gebete, für den dieses Buch geschrieben wird, das bewegte Meer und die Strudel der Welt zu durchfahren'[30]. Beide Topoi, die Hieronymus hier verwendet, haben die Funktion, die Bescheidenheit des Autors hervorzuheben. Zum einen ist es die Bitte um das Gebet des Pammachius / des Lesers, das das Gelingen des Werkes unterstützen soll. Vergleichbare Passagen finden sich auch bei Origenes und Didymus und sind Parallelen zu der Anrufung der Musen bei heidnischen Dichtern[31].

Zum anderen ist es die Schiff-Metaphorik: Der Autor drückt seine Angst und Unsicherheit angesichts der vor ihm liegenden Aufgabe mit dem Bild eines Schiffes aus, das sich auf hohe See wagt. Auch dieses Bild ist aus der heidnischen Dichtung geläufig[32]. Beide Topoi verdeutlichen nochmals die Vertrautheit des Hieronymus mit den Regeln der klassischen Rhetorik; die captatio benevolentiae sichert das Wohlwollen des Lesers, relativiert die Selbstsicherheit, mit der Hieronymus sich neben die größten heidnischen und christlichen Autoren gestellt hat, unterstreicht aber zugleich genau diesen Anspruch: Anders als in seiner Jugend beherrscht Hieronymus nun souverän alle Mittel der Literatur und setzt sie auch bewußt ein: Er kombiniert Exegese und Rhetorik[33].

[30] 'Sed iam tempus est proponore exordium Abdiae, et orationum tuarum auxilio, cui volumen hoc scribitur, confragosum mare, et saeculi recurvos gurgites transfretare' (*In Abd. prol.* 62-65).

[31] Vgl. Y.-M. Duval (Jérôme, *Commentaire sur Jonas*. Introduction, Texte Critique, Traduction et Commentaire. SC 323; Paris, 1985): 'Jérôme a beau varier les formules, multiplier les allusions scriptuaires, le jeu ne semble pas gratuit de sa part. Il n'est cependant pas le premier à formuler pareilles demandes. Le commentateur chrétien rejoint ici le poète païen qui invoque la Muse'. (S. 41 u. Anm. 66).

[32] Z. B. Horaz, od. IV,15,1.

[33] Dagegen A. Staub: 'Aufs Ganze gesehen ist bei Hieronymus eine gewisse Inkonsequenz festzustellen. Theoretisch sieht er die Gefahren der profanen Literatur und nimmt eine eher ablehnende Haltung ein. Andererseits läßt seine Praxis eine recht positive Wertschätzung erkennen' (S. 98) Es handelt sich nicht um 'Inkonsequenz', sondern um bewußten Einsatz literarischer Methoden und Mittel, die Hieronymus zur Verfügung standen, und die er zielgerichtet verwendete.

Prefaces for Profit — without Prophets

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In the closing lines of his book, *Vir Trilinguis*[1], Dennis Brown singles out three reasons why Jerome's writings are of enduring value: one, they offer a splendid example of the state of biblical exegesis in the West during the fourth century; two, they provide an interesting insight into relations between Jews and Christians in the decades after Christianity became the state religion; three, they paint in vivid colors a picture of the 'irascible monk' who devoted the best years of his life to the study of sacred scripture. It is to the third of these reasons that I shall direct my remarks in order to highlight the rhetorical efficacy of Jerome's Prophetic Prefaces and to suggest that, at his hands, the preface is transformed into a new and independent genre.

The Commentaries on the Prophetic Books of the Bible come from the final and most productive decades of Jerome's long life. They vary considerably in size and substance, from the relatively brief and simple expositions on the Minor Prophets, written between A.D. 392-406, to the lengthy and complex discussions of the Major Prophets, begun in 407 and broken off by the Saint's death in A.D. 420. Prefaces are placed in front of these Commentaries, but one must not be misled by the putative semantics of the term *preface* since they were often written, or revised, long after the Commentaries which they introduce. These introductory passages provide explanatory details of an historical, geographical, and exegetical nature, in addition to a whole host of semantic phenomena. Indeed, they do much more. With remarkable candor, the Prefaces yield an intriguing and authentic snapshot of Jerome at work in his cell at Bethlehem where he is extraordinarily open and forthcoming, though ever conscious of his status and position as a writer. It is the autobiographical statements of the Prefaces to the Prophetic Commentaries which will form the basis of my portrait of the venerable Jerome[2].

[1] Dennis Brown, *Vir Trilinguis: A Study in the Biblical Exegesis of St. Jerome* (Kampen, The Netherlands, 1992), p. 201.

[2] Among Jerome's biographers who make special reference to this topic are: G. Grützmacher, *Hieronymus*, 3 Vols. (Leipzig, 1901-1908); F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme, sa vie et ses œuvres*, 2 Vols. (Paris, 1922); F.X. Murphy, *A Monument to St. Jerome* (New York, 1952); Charles Favez, *Saint Jérôme peint par lui-même* (Collection Latomus 33; Brussels, 1958); H. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics* (Göteborg, 1958); Jean Steinmann, *Saint Jerome*, Eng. trans. (Notre Dame, 1960); Y. Chauffin, *Saint Jérôme* (Paris, 1966); P. Antin, *Recueil sur saint Jérôme* (Brussels, 1968); J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, His Writings and Controversies* (London, 1975).

Jerome never achieves a sense of editorial detachment from his writings. He wanders freely through these prefatorial passages, where writer and reader confront each other directly[3]. The formal stance of the exegete is leavened with personal details: his moods and aspirations, interior struggles and visceral responses. The Prefaces speak of the circumstances and career of the author, his interior battles, and his involvement in the history of the world around him. Increasingly they reveal his natural contentiousness, aggravated from without by critics and heretics, and from within by his own unresolved hopes, fears, regrets and dreams, all of which are exacerbated by progressive blindness and the debilitating infirmities of his advancing years. There are candid remarks about the author's moods and milieu as well as insights into his quotidian writing procedures, his personality, and his state of mind at the time he wrote the Commentaries. In short, the Prefaces function in a wide variety of ways: they are a roadmap for the reader, a podium for Jerome, a record of current events for contemporary and subsequent generations, and an intellectual history of this passionate and enigmatic scholar.

Preface as Roadmap

In a prosaic sense the Prefaces were a type of guide, charting the route for the manuscript reader of the fourth and fifth centuries. The inherent difficulties of any ancient book, coupled with unwieldly texts, rendered some measure of accurate signposting imperative[4]. Jerome was always careful to be as orderly as possible in committing his Commentaries to writing, but the sizes of the scrolls and the varying lengths of the prophecies called for continual adjustments. Furthermore, multiple sections in a given book made it necessary to label each section as clearly as possible for the reader's convenience. The Prefaces come to serve as organizational headings, not just for an entire biblical volume but also for any given section of a Commentary within an individual prophet, particularly in the larger expositions[5]. Even with reference to some of the Minor Prophets[6], where the Saint uses a more diffuse approach and indulges in lengthy digressions, the Preface is occasionally used for purposes of concatenation.

[3] However, like Cicero, Jerome is ever attentive to the evaluation of his work by later generations. See, for instance, the end of the Preface to *Hosea* II.

[4] For a good treatment of this topic, see E.P. Arns, *La technique du livre d'après S. Jérôme* (Paris, 1953).

[5] See, for instance, *Isaiah*. III, IV, VI, VII; and *Ezekiel*. V, VII, X.

[6] Examples include: *Nahum, Micah, Hosea, Joel*.

Preface as Podium

Sometimes the Prefaces are pulpits from which Jerome attacks his critics, proclaims his innocence, refutes a budding heresy, and issues some of his most scathing remarks. In *Micah* II, for example, he is another Terence, defending his literary procedures. In the longer Prophets, the various Prefaces to a particular Commentary constitute a conglomerate essay, picking up and varying, altering and refining a recurrent theme again and again. Such ongoing redactions occur often, though not always, in adjacent Prefaces. Notable examples include his treatment of the theme of inspiration, or the Fall of Rome in *Ezekiel*; the daily grind of scriptorum minutiae in *Isaiah*; or the 'silent' — and later overt — refutation of Pelagius in *Jeremiah*.

While maintaining their exegetical function, Jerome's Prefaces — whether by dint of redaction or through a relatively later date of composition — eventually do come to have a greater independence, structurally and semantically, from the Commentaries. More and more they are seen as freestanding opportunities for public declarations[7]. Prefaces afford opportunities for essays, whether or not they relate to the Prophetic Commentaries they normally introduce and identify. By the time Jerome reaches *Jeremiah*, his final Commentary, the Preface has become a genre on its own, often only tenuously attached to its base. One Preface quotes another: the defense of *Daniel* in *Isaiah* X and XI, and the 'Amabilis' Preface[8] now set in a new location, *Isaiah* V. In short, the Preface rather than a letter is the place to defend something other than the work immediately at hand[9].

Preface as Record of Current Events

Prefaces reflect the impact of external factors on the life and writings of Jerome. The first and third Preface to *Ezekiel* record the utter dismay with which the Saint received news of the Fall of Rome under Alaric in 410[10] and of the deaths of Marcella and Pammachius, two of his closest, long-time friends. These events, coupled with the arrival in the Holy Land — and in Bethlehem in particular — of refugees fleeing the horrors of Rome, had serious repercussions in Jerome's life and dramatically changed the daily routine of his monastery. The growth of the Pelagian heresy, and especially the arrival of

[7] See the defense of his approach to dogma in *Isaiah* XVIII.

[8] This was originally written in A.D. 397 for Amabilis, Bishop of Pannonia.

[9] In spite of the well-established tradition of conducting eristics in epistolary form from at least the time of Republican Rome, Jerome now does this in his Prefaces. Indeed, since fourth century Athens, letter-writing was both a fine art and a place to set forth major political views.

[10] The Prefaces to *Ezekiel* make Jerome one of our primary sources for the horrors of that catastrophe.

Pelagius himself among the refugees, disturbed the quiet of Jerome's final days and made its way into the pages of his Prefaces (*Jeremiah*). In addition to these events, there were others of a more personal nature: in 404, the death of Paula, the noble and saintly Roman matron who was Jerome's staunch supporter over the decades; the Saint's own serious illness (*Is.* XIII), and sudden recovery (*Is.* XIV). Jerome composes his Prefaces to reflect what he sees as quotidian concerns and in the process affords his readers a poignant glimpse into his personality.

Preface as Intellectual History — A. Jerome Himself

At times the Prefaces record Jerome's tenderest expressions of affection. They are the arena where private, personal hardships and intimate relationships enter the public domain, each new detail providing insight into nuances of the Saint's inner life. In earlier versions of Prefaces there are clear restrictions on intimate personal statements. Private matters are shared, but only those which concern the composition itself — such as details about the workshop. Subsequent revisions relax restrictions to include a defense of the author's living arrangements. A Prologue In Defense of Women (*Zephaniah*) is addressed to Paula and Eustochium, whose convent, situated close to Jerome's monastery, afforded his enemies ground for rumor. In the Defense of the Prostitute (*Hosea* I) Jerome delves into more personal detail as he contrasts himself with his literary predecessors and expatiates on his own difficulties in writing about the Prophets. Age, a *topos* of more moment as Jerome grows older, yields two notable essays (*Amos* II and *Isaiah* XIV).

The Saint's attitude toward work changes with the passage of time. Although his initial approach was to see it as imposed slavery, following his illness and cure (*Is.* XIII and XIV) he came to regard it with a new and reformed attitude, gradually realizing and owning his position as instrument in the hands of God. The Fall of Rome, with its attendant crisis of faith, entails a new dilemma: *words* versus *deeds*. In *Ezekiel* the great Translator translates Scripture into action, mindful of the Lord's admonition, *Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who does ...* (*Mt.* 7.21) The distraction of involvement in relief work for the refugees provides a respite from the anguish of the Fall of the Rome, helps the Saint come to terms with the catastrophe and relate the collapse of the capital to his own imminent demise. This internalization deepens and, whether by accident or design, the conglomerate Preface becomes an autobiographical statement, as in the sequence of Prefaces from mid-*Isaiah* to the end, documenting the angry man's achievement, if not of inner peace, at least of some sort of reasoned acceptance of his role — his new attitude toward work which is now his attitude toward life. By dint of accumulation, repetition, and change, Jerome

accepts responsibility for writing, takes joy in it, gives up his uneasiness about style, and accepts his role as God's vehicle. In *Ezekiel* VIII, he derives peace and nourishment from his work. But he is too much 'God's grouch'[11] for that to last. Consider, in *Jeremiah* — the final Commentary interrupted by his death in 420 — he returns to his former polemics with renewed vigor. He is his old self again; but no; not quite; not fundamentally.

Preface as Intellectual History — B. Jerome and Others

Although Jerome does not score very high marks in the sphere of personal relations, there are exceptions even here. His relationship with Eustochium, to whom he dedicates so many of his Commentaries, is a special case in point. He speaks of her in *Isaiah* I as compelling him to proceed immediately to a new set of prophetic Commentaries upon completing the *Twelve Minor Prophets* and *Daniel*. 'Will you not let an old man rest?', he seems to say. A like complaint is found again in *Isaiah* V, when Jerome addresses Eustochium as 'workaholic' (φιλοπονωτάτη), instead of the more usual designation of 'Virgin' or 'Spouse of Christ'. Occasionally there is no epithet at all, as in *Isaiah* VII, XII, and XV, and *Ezekiel* IV and V, which leads us to wonder whether there might not have been a cooling off in their relationship[12]. More and more in *Ezekiel* (VI, VII, IX, XII, XIII), and already in *Isaiah* (XVI and XVIII), Eustochium is simply 'daughter'. By the use, avoidance, or change of epithets, the Prefaces suggest much about the vicissitudes of Jerome's life and relationships. On one occasion (*Isaiah* XIII), Eustochium is effusively styled: *in toto orbe terrarum unicum nobilitatis et virginis exemplum*, outshining even Marcella, that noble and learned matron who is designated in *Daniel* as: *unicum Romae sanctitatis exemplar*. Whatever the appelation, it is clear that this intellectually gifted daughter of Paula exercised a certain influence over Jerome and commanded compliance on his part.

Ths Bishops, Chromatius and Exsuperius, receive the respectful designation of 'Venerable'. Pammachius is greeted affectionately as 'Dear' or 'Dearest'; in *Daniel*, he is 'most erudite' (φιλομαθέστατε). Minervius and Alexander are addressed as 'Dear', while Eusebius is never anything but 'Brother'. The monks of Jerome's monastery are mentioned but rarely throughout the thirty or so years of composition. Despite their assisting the Saint with his research when his eyesight fails; despite their urging him to reply to Pelagius when he is reluctant to deflect his waning energies from the final Commentary; despite

[11] This is Merton's expression when speaking frankly to the novices of his monastery about Jerome's acerbic personality. The address was recorded live at Gethsemani and is published by Credence Cassettes: Thomas Merton, *St. Jerome, God's Grouch* (Kansas City, MO 1988).

[12] Although I discern no pattern in the sobriquets used for Eustochium, this point could bear some exploration.

their helping in the relief efforts for the refugees undertaken by the monastery — for all this, he pays them no literary due; they remain anonymous. There is little here to suggest the brotherly love and pleasantness of community life as celebrated by the psalmist (*Ps* 133).

In the Minor Prophets, Jerome is both defender and defendant: *he* protects Paula and Eustochium against outside slander, while Pammachius, Chromatius, and Exsuperius all rally to *his* aid. In the Major Prophets, only Pammachius and Eustochium are left. With the Fall of Rome, all are deprived of power and influence. Pammachius dies at this time, Eustochium some eight years later, and Jerome is abandoned, confined, isolated in his monastery. But no; not quite; not fundamentally; there is still Pelagius to attack at the end.

I suggest that a humanized Jerome lives as vibrantly in the pages of his Prefaces as he does in any of his Letters. Indeed, it is that mixture of self and work which imbues these prefatory remarks with a value and significance quite independent of the writings they originally introduced. In short, Jerome takes what was a parasitical subgenre and transforms it to the point where it becomes a genre in its own right, only ostensibly linked to its base, and well on its way to becoming a freestanding, independent personal essay. *En passant*, he provides posterity a vivid and compelling autobiography of himself as an aging scholar, endowing later generations with Prefaces which are 'profitable', quite independent from *The Prophets*.

Asceticism, Orthodoxy and Patronage: Jerome in Constantinople[1]

Stefan Rebenich, Mannheim

In 1890, the Prussian court chaplain Bernhard Rogge published an 'art and history book for the Protestant household', prettily entitled 'a picture-gallery of the Christian World'[2]. His edifying history of Christianity from its beginnings to the end of the 19th century includes a chapter on the Church Fathers. There Rogge praises Jerome as the most learned of the western *doctores ecclesiae*. He then gives a *curriculum vitae* which may be summarized as follows:

Born around the year 340 at Stridon, a frontier town between Dalmatia and Pannonia, Jerome was first educated in his father's house and then sent to Rome, where he studied rhetoric, literature, and Greek philosophy with great success. In Rome he was baptized by bishop Liberius around the year 360. Thereafter he travelled in Gaul, Dalmatia, and Italy, in order — Rogge suggests — to escape the sensual pleasures and extravagances of Rome. Later he was to be found in Antioch where, during a serious illness, he is said to have dreamt that he appeared before the divine judgement-seat and was condemned for being a Ciceronian rather than a Christian. After his recovery he retreated to the Syrian desert, which was then populated by many hermits. Since his weak body could not bear the harsh penitence and punishment which he imposed on himself, Jerome returned in due course to Antioch where he was ordained priest, although he had no wish for orders. He then spent several years in Constantinople where he studied zealously under Gregory of Nazianzus. In 382 he was sent to Rome to deal with ecclesiastical affairs then agitating the Antiochene church. Once in Rome, he was employed by the Roman bishop Damasus who relied on his erudition and literary skill. During his stay in the western capital he became the spiritual guide of a group of devout Christian women, most of whom were of exalted rank. Although he gave them much help in their study of Scripture, he exerted a harmful influence on their eccentric piety and their secluded life. When Jerome was blamed for the death of one of these women who, while under his guidance had excessively mortified her flesh, and when Damasus, his most influential patron, expired, it became impossible for him to remain in Rome. He therefore went on a pilgrimage to the Promised Land, first visiting the holy places, and then withdrawing to a cell near Bethlehem where he established a convent primarily for the women who had followed him into exile and who now took care of him. There he spent the last decades of his life, praying and studying, until he was called to his Maker on September 30th, 420[3].

[1] The following works are referred to in abbreviated form: Cavallera i-ii = F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme. Sa vie et son œuvre* (2 vols, Louvain/Paris, 1922); Grützmacher i-iii = G. Grützmacher, *Hieronymus. Eine biographische Studie zur alten Kirchengeschichte* (3 vols, Leipzig, 1901-08); Kelly = J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome. His Life, Writings and Controversies* (London, 1975); Rebenich, *Hieronymus* = S. Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis. Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Historia-Einzelschriften 72; Stuttgart, 1992); Schöne = A. Schöne, *Die Weltchronik des Eusebius in ihrer Bearbeitung durch Hieronymus* (Berlin, 1900).

Though I have usually referred to publications of Jerome's works in standard series, a few remarks may be useful. Jerome's letters and commentaries are, if available, cited from the major editions in the Vienne corpus (*CSEL*) and in *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina* (*CCL*). The standard edition of his Chronicle is by R. Helm (GCS Eus. 7, ²1956, ³1984). His *De viris illustribus* is now available in a new edition by A. Ceresa-Gastaldo (Florence, 1988). The English versions of quotations are, with minor additions, cited from the translation in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. iii and vi.

I am indebted to Professor Mark Vessey who kindly undertook the tedious task of proof-reading the English version of this paper.

[2] B. Rogge, *Bildersaal der Christlichen Welt: Ein Kunst- und Geschichtswerk für das evangelische Haus* (Stuttgart, Berlin, Leipzig, 1890). I should like to thank Dres. Ralf and Ute Schüürmann who unselfishly called my attention to Rogge and let me keep their precious copy for some time.

[3] Rogge, op. cit. pp. 33-36: 'Als vierter unter den großen Kirchenvätern ist Hieronymus zu nennen, der mit Recht als der gelehrteste unter den Kirchenvätern des Abendlandes bezeichnet wird. Er ist um das Jahr 340 zu Stridon, einer zwischen Dalmatien und Pannonien (Ungarn) gelegenen Grenzstadt, geboren. In dem Hause seines Vaters, Eusebius, genoß er den ersten Unterricht, wurde aber bald nach Rom geschickt, wo er eine gelehrte Erziehung erhielt und von einem berühmten Redner in die römische Literatur eingeführt wurde. Zugleich studierte er die griechische Philosophie. Hier ist er ums Jahr 360 durch den Bischof Liberius getauft worden. Vielleicht um sich aus den in Rom üblichen Ausschweifungen zu retten, unternahm er verschiedene Reisen, auf denen er mehrere Städte Galliens, namentlich Trier, sowie die Ufer des Rheines aufsuchte. Später finden wir ihn in Antiochien. Hier soll ihm während einer schweren Krankheit Christus in einem Traumgesicht erschienen sein … Von seiner Krankheit genesen, zog er sich eine Zeitlang in die damals von zahlreichen Einsiedlern bevölkerte Syrische Wüste zurück, in der er sich die härtesten Entbehrungen und Büßungen auferlegte. Da sein schwacher Körper dies auf die Dauer nicht ertragen konnte, begab er sich abermals nach Antiochien, wo er trotz seines Widerstrebens zum Priester geweiht wurde. Nach einem mehrjährigen Aufenthalt in Konstantinopel, wo er lernbegierig zu den Füßen des berühmten Gregor von Nazianz gesessen hatte, wurde er in Angelegenheit eines Streites, der die Kirche Antiochiens bewegte, im Jahre 382 nach Rom gesandt. Hier zog ihn der dortige Bischof Damasus in seine Nähe und nutzte seine Gelehrsamkeit und schriftstellerische Gewandtheit aus. In Rom sammelte sich um den frommen, schriftkundigen Mann ein Kreis christlicher, meist vornehmen Familien entstammender Frauen, denen er die Heilige Schrift auslegte, auf die er aber auch im Sinne einer überspannten Frömmigkeit und klösterlichen Lebensrichtung einen nicht unbedenklichen Einfluß ausübte. Als eine jener Frauen, wie man meinte, infolge der von Hieronymus ihr angeratenen Selbstpeinigungen gestorben war und er mit dem Tode des Damasus seinen mächtigsten Beschützer verloren hatte, war seines Bleibens in Rom nicht länger und er unternahm eine Wallfahrt nach dem Gelobten Lande, um die heiligen Stätten zu besuchen. Hier hat er sich in der Nähe von Bethlehem in einer Zelle zurückgezogen und um sich einen klösterlichen Verein gesammelt, dem meist Frauen angehörten, die ihm in die Einsamkeit gefolgt waren und die ihn mit dem Notwendigsten versorgten. Hier hat er unter frommen Übungen und gelehrten Beschäftigungen die letzten Jahrzehnte seines Lebens verbracht bis an seinen nach der Überlieferung am 30. September 420 erfolgten Tod'.

This description is admittedly not very profound and is full of slips and inaccuracies. I have referred to Rogge's text neither to make the audience familiar with the most important periods of Jerome's life nor with a view to discussing Protestant perceptions of the saint at the end of the last century, although it should be noted that Luther's harsh condemnation of Jerome as a *schwetzer*, a babbler, who had been all his life in need of a wife[4], was obviously still predominant in those days. Rogge's 'picture-gallery of the Christian world', written for more or less educated, devout church-goers and read in the parlours of the Protestant middleclasses, reproduces key elements of a traditional and highly popular portrait of the saint which even today determine the representation of Jerome across various denominational and ideological borderlines. Thus, on the one hand, the saint is venerated as trilingual translator and commentator and praised as an ascetic virtuoso, while, on the other, he has frequently been attacked as a person of weak character and extremely nasty temper and as the spiritual seducer of aristocratic women, one whose own mind and body were throbbing with the carnal desires he aimed to subdue in his disciples.

Of course no-one would deny that modern scholarship on Jerome has made great strides in various fields. We are now able to reconstruct his translations of the New and Old Testament and to assess his linguistic competence, our understanding of his philological and exegetical methods has improved, his literary theory and practice has been more clearly defined, his dependence as an amazingly productive exegete on both Greek and Latin predecessors has become apparent, new light has been shed on many chronological questions and certain of his writings have been studied in great detail[5]. Most scholarly contributions, however, still focus on the individual and his characteristics, both positive and negative. Jerome's position in the Christian society of the fourth century A.D., his social and economic setting, his exemplary career as an educated provincial parvenu, his social contacts with patrons willing to support ambitious Christian writers, in a word: his historical relativity has been often neglected. Thus hardly anybody has asked how Jerome, the traditionally educated and artistically talented Christian intellectual, was able to succeed as a literary exponent both of the ascetic movement and of Nicene orthodoxy, as a translator and a commentator of the Bible, and as a mediator between eastern and western theology. One could, of course, answer this question by referring to his outstanding literary gifts and to the fact that he wrote *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*. That would be the end of any attempt at critical historiography. On the following pages I propose, instead, to elucidate some of the determining factors in Jerome's literary success, concentrating on his stay in Constantinople and challenging the traditional accounts of this period.

[4] Cf. Martin Luther, Weimarer Ausgabe (=W.A.) *Tischreden* iv, no. 5009 (p. 611): 'Hieronimus ist ein schwetzer wie Erasmus et voluit granditoque dicere et non successit. Pollicetur aliquid lectori, nihil autem praestat. Et miror tamen, quod eo tempore, vix 300 annis post Christum, in tanta cognitione linguarum tanta caecitas fuit in ecclesia. Augustinus est disputator; der wil wissen und nicht wehnen, und besicht einen auch. Hic est summus theologus, qui post apostolos scripserunt…' (cf. W.A. *Briefwechsel*, no. 35, i, p. 90); W.A. *Tischreden* i, no. 445 (p. 194): 'Fide Christi utcumque puto servatum Hieronymum, sed den schaden, den er per suam doctrinam thun hat, den vergeb yhm Got. Ich weys wol, das er mir seer geschadet hat. Ipse vituperat mulieres et loquitur de mulieribus absentibus. Darumb wolt ich yhm gonnen, das er ein weyb het gehabt; so vil ding anders geschriben haben. Est miraculum, das in soviel buchern kein vers de Christo steht, et tamen reprehendit idem in Sexto. Ergo nullum doctorem scio, quem aeque oderim, cum tamen ardentissime eum amaverim et legerim. In Aesopo certe plus est eruditionis quam in toto Hieronymo…' This statement is the often quoted version according to Veit Dietrich's copy; cf. also *Tischreden* i, no. 824 (p. 399); iii, no. 3011 (p. 140) and Aurifaber's translation (*Tischreden* i, no. 445 (p.194f.)) with minor differences. On Luther's image of Jerome see St. Rebenich, 'Jerome: The "vir trilinguis" and the "hebraica veritas"', in *VChr* 47 (1993), pp. 50-77, 50; M. Vessey, 'Erasmus' Jerome: The Publishing of a Christian Author', in *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 14 (1994), pp. 62-99, 74ff. and esp. H. Junghans, *Der junge Luther und die Humanisten* (Göttingen, 1985) *pass.* and R. Mau, 'Die Kirchenväter in Luthers früher Exegese des Galaterbriefes', in *Auctoritas Patrum* (Mainz, 1993), pp. 117-127 with further reading.

[5] This is no place for a detailed evaluation of recent scholarship. I refer to my *Hieronymus und sein Kreis* and 'Jerome, the "vir trilinguis" and the "Hebraica veritas"', in *VChr* 47 (1993), pp. 50-77 for discussion and bibliographical references. Some remarks on the most recent studies, however, may be useful. For a substantial reassessment of Jerome as a biblical translator and commentator, emphasizing Jerome's new methodological approach, see A. Kamesar, *Jerome, the Hebrew Bible, and Greek Scholarship. A Study of the* Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim (Oxford, 1993). D. Brown, *Vir trilinguis. A Study in the Biblical Exegesis of Saint Jerome* (Kampen, 1992) also tries to examine Jerome's principles and practice as an exegete and a translator, but is written without any apprehension of recent scholarship. R. Hennings, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustin und Hieronymus und ihr Streit um den Kanon des Alten Testaments und die Auslegung von Gal. 2,11-14* (Leiden, 1994), has studied an important chapter of the relations between Augustine and Jerome. P. Lardet, editor of the *editio maior* (CCL 79) and *editio minor* (SCh 303) of Jerome's 'Apology against Rufinus', has published a copious and most learned commentary: *L'Apologie de Jérôme contre Rufin. Un commentaire* (Leiden, 1993). J.H.D. Scourfield, *Consoling Heliodorus. A Commentary on Jerome Letter 60* (Oxford, 1993) has analyzed Jerome's letter to Heliodorus. Neil Adkin has in a wealth of articles and notes freshly assessed Jerome's approach to the works of preceding and contemporary authors and his eclectic attitude to them. Among various studies on Jerome and the aristocratic ladies of Rome should be noted K. Cooper, 'Insinuations of Womanly Influence: An Aspect of the Christianization of the Roman Aristocracy', in *JRS* 82 (1992), pp. 150-164; B. Feichtinger, *Apostolae apostolorum. Frauenaskese als Befreiung und Zwang bei Hieronymus* (Frankfurt a.M., 1995); Chr. Krumeich, *Hieronymus und die christlichen feminae clarissimae* (Bonn, 1993); G. Petersen-Szemeredy, *Zwischen Weltstadt und Wüste: Römische Asketinnen in der Spätantike. Eine Studie zu Motivation und Gestaltung der Askese christlicher Frauen Roms auf dem Hintergrund ihrer Zeit* (Göttingen, 1993); M.R. Salzman, 'How the West Was Won: The Christianization of the Roman Aristocracy in the West in the Years after Constantine', in C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History* vi (Brussels, 1992), pp. 451-479. For a convincing analysis of the Origenist controversy and Jerome's rôle in it see E. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, 1992).

[6] Cf. also M. Vessey, 'Jerome's Origen: The Making of a Christian Literary *Persona*' in *Studia Patristica* 28 (1993), pp. 135-145.

(i)

But before I do this, we must first notice how certain clichés and stereotypes, which originate in Jerome's own showmanship and in later hagiography, obstruct our perception of obvious facts[6]. This is not least true for his early life

and his time in the Eastern Empire before his return to Rome. We would not be well advised to fragment the latter period and to look separately to his stays in Antioch, the desert of Chalcis and Constantinople, since these various stages form a unity. I will therefore begin in the early 370s, when Jerome, together with some friends, left northern Italy and set out for the east. After his conversion to the ascetic life some years before in the imperial residence of Trier, where he had been employed in the sort of bureaucratic job for which he had been trained during his student years in Rome[7], he embarked on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in search of ascetic self-fulfilment. The would-be *monachus perfectus*, however, got only as far as Antioch on the Orontes, where, exhausted and fever-stricken, he was kindly received by a wealthy and influential friend named Evagrius, whom he had met earlier in Aquileia and who now gave him hospitality. In Evagrius's comfortable household the planned pilgrimage to Jerusalem was postponed indefinitely. Instead, Jerome recovered his health and good temper, improved his knowledge of Greek, studied philosophical and theological treatises from Evagrius's well-equipped library, learnt more about the sophisticated controversies on the doctrine of the Trinity then agitating the Eastern churches, and — after some rather pleasant months — secluded himself in the *solitudo Syriae Chalcidis*, in the desert of Chalcis, there to practise asceticism.

The following two or three years in the desert are supposed to have transformed the ascetic neophyte into an ascetic champion. Ecclesiastical art, devotional literature and modern scholarship have created the image of a penitent hermit living a lonely and ascetic life in a desert cave, an image which entirely contradicts the historical evidence. It has been argued by the most recent English biographer that Jerome lived the life of a hermit and found his home in 'a natural cave in the rocks'[8]. His own letters written in this period, however, portray a different reality. Jerome did not betake himself to the most inaccessible wilderness, but to a place from which he could both maintain relations with his friends and his patron Evagrius and at the same time establish new contacts. For example, Jerome maintained a correspondence with his friends at Aquileia, exchanged *epistulae* with Florentinus, a wealthy western monk residing in Jerusalem (with whom he had corresponded from Antioch)[9], and even wrote two excited letters to Damasus asking for theological and spiritual guidance[10]. And he must have had ample space for his growing library and for the *alumni*, young assistants or protégés, who were copying manuscripts for him. In addition, certain *fratres* shared his solitude[11]. Apart from reading and

[7] Cf. Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, p. 32ff.
[8] Kelly, p. 47.
[9] Cf. Hier. *ep.* 4 (from Antioch) and 5.
[10] Hier. *ep.* 15f.
[11] Cf. Hier. *ep.* 17,3,2.

copying, biblical studies and book production, Jerome was busily employed learning or improving his knowledge of languages. First, he made himself familiar with Syriac, the native tongue of the great majority of monks and others in his neighbourhood[12]. He then improved his understanding of spoken and written Greek and began to learn Hebrew[13]. Finally, he got involved in acrimonious disputes about the Trinity — disputes which convulsed and divided his monastic and ascetic neighbours, and which reflected the schism fragmenting the Christian communities at Antioch. I have shown elsewhere that Jerome's residence was situated on the road which led from Antioch to Chalcis and that it is very likely that he stayed on an estate belonging to Evagrius, called Maronia, some thirty miles from Antioch[14]. The rich Antiochene *curialis* who supported the ascetic movement probably allowed Jerome, together with his friends and *alumni*, to realize their ascetic ideals in Maronia. The traditional accounts of his *secessus* are thus misleading since they unhistorically try to harmonize his desert sojourn with the conception of a total isolation practised by eastern hermits and presented, for example, in Athanasius's *Life of Antony* and Theodoret's *Historia religiosa*. This self-denying eastern asceticism was also described, and praised, by Jerome himself, in entertaining novels on various desert heroes, and in amazingly popular ascetic manuals. More than that: from the time of his second stay in Rome Jerome carefully integrated his limited personal experience of the desert into a radical ascetic programme which he then preached to aristocratic Roman women. We should not be misled by these later accounts. As a matter of fact, in the 370s Jerome bartered his urban *vita activa* in Antioch for a *vita contemplativa* in the hinterland. Among the various competitive forms of ascetic life however, Jerome then decided against the radical seclusion and renunciation of eastern asceticism which he later propagated through his writings. He determined to live in a coenobitic community of the kind he already knew from northern Italy. Thus his sojourn in Maronia anticipated his later life in Bethlehem where the monasteries founded by Paula and himself followed more moderate, 'western' forms of asceticism which were, for example, also practised in the communities of Paulinus in Nola, of Melania in Jerusalem, and, above all, of Augustine in Cassisiacum and of Martin in

[12] Hier. *ep.* 7,2,1: '*hic enim aut barbarus semisermo discendus est aut tacendum est*: For hereabout you must either learn the barbarous gibberish or else keep your mouth shut'. The reading 'barbarus semisermo' seems preferable to 'barbarus seni sermo', which I. Hilberg adopted (*CSEL* 54, p. 27,6); cf. Kelly, p. 49.
[13] Hier. *ep.* 125,12,1f. Though the letter is written in a time (*c.* 410) when Jerome obtrusively celebrated his knowledge of Hebrew and carefully depicted himself as *vir trilinguis* to defend his authority as a translator and commentator of Scripture, I cannot see any reason to mistrust his assertion that an anonymous Jewish convert taught him the elements of Hebrew in the desert of Chalcis; cf. also Kamesar (n. 5), p. 48f.
[14] Cf. Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, p. 85ff.

Ligugé[15]. And just the Roman *patronae* Paula and Eustochium were to support Jerome financially in Bethlehem, in Maronia he was maintained by the rich Antiochene *curialis* Evagrius.

(ii)

Already Jerome's relations with Evagrius illustrate the vital importance of ideological and financial support granted by *viri nobiles ac diserti*. It was this support that enabled a Christian *avant-garde* of ambitious young intellectuals to spread certain theological concepts and new forms of Christian living. Jerome's stay in Constantinople and, beyond that, in the eastern part of the Roman Empire at the end of the 370s exemplifies the function of traditional patronage structures in the theological and ascetic discourse of the fourth century, which scholars have long neglected. Our investigation of this period of Jerome's life is likely to seem even more adventurous, since its importance for his later success as a Christian writer has often been seriously underestimated.

The dogmatic disputes over the Trinity finally spoilt Jerome's pleasure in solitude. After the disillusionment of the desert, it was once again the cities that attracted him. First he made the journey back to Antioch where he was ordained priest and made his début as a Christian author. Constantinople, the eastern capital, was the next stage on Jerome's march. Ecclesiastical affairs and ambitions led him to the Golden Horn; contrary to what has often been supposed, he had no intention of carrying on the literary and theological studies begun in Antioch[16]. We would not be well advised to infer from Jerome's later allusions to his *praeceptor, magister* and καθηγητής[17] Gregory of Nazianzus that his sojourn to Constantinople was an educational leave. In his later writings, Jerome, depicting himself as Gregory's pupil, made much of the *auctoritas* of the learned and, we may add, orthodox Cappadocian Father in the hope of reducing the critics of his scholarship and orthodoxy to silence. The contemporary ecclesiastical and political implications of their first meeting were thus thrust into the background; not surprisingly perhaps, since they did not at all fit the image Jerome later promoted of himself, which was that of a secluded scholar.

[15] J. Fontaine, 'Nouvelles perspectives sur saint Jérôme et sur les origines du monachisme occidental', in *Revue Mabillon* N.S. 4 (65) (1993), pp. 291-300, 298.

[16] Cf. e.g. Grützmacher i, p. 177 and Cavallera i, p. 58; the latter thinks 'il quitta Antioche, pour demander à Constantinople un complément d'érudition'.

[17] Cf. Hier. *epp.* 50,1,3; *vir. ill.* 117; *adv. Iovin.* 1,13 (PL 23, c. 230); *Apol.* 1,13 (CCL 79, p. 12); *comm. in Is.* 3,6,1 (CCL 73, p. 84); *comm. in Eph.* 5,32 (PL 26, c. 535) and N. Adkin, 'Gregory of Nazianzus and Jerome: Some Remarks' in *Georgica. Greek Studies in Honour of George Cawkwell* (1991), pp. 13-24; P. Lardet, *L'Apologie de Jérôme contre Rufin. Un commentaire* (Leiden, 1993), 71f. *ad Apol.* 1,13.

On February 27th, 380 the emperor Theodosius issued an edict which made the Nicene teaching of the bishops Damasus of Rome and Peter of Alexandria compulsory for all his subjects. Henceforth the only form of Christianity to be tolerated was the one that acknowledged the full, undivided divinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit[18]. In the same year, while prostrated by a serious illness in Thessalonica, Theodosius decided to be baptized. On November 24th, 380 he entered Constantinople and, immediately after his arrival, took measures against the Arian bishop Demophilus. When the latter refused to subscribe an orthodox, i.e. Nicene creed, Theodosius did not hesitate to depose him and to entrust the churches of the eastern metropolis to Gregory of Nazianzus. Some weeks later, on January 10th, 381, Theodosius addressed a rescript to the Praetorian Prefect Eutropius depriving the *haeretici* — the Photinians, the Arians, and the Eunomians are mentioned *expressis verbis* — of their consecrated places of assembly and handing them over to the representatives of the *Nicaena fides*[19]. Then, in May, he convoked a council of all eastern churches in Constantinople which was meant to approve his ecclesiastical politics[20].

This contemporary background allows us to understand Jerome's journey to, and residence in Constantinople at the beginning of the 380s[21]. Paul Antin has already convincingly suggested that Jerome's decision to go to Constantinople was also influenced by his effort to back Paulinus, the bishop of the Eustathian minority in Antioch. Still in Antioch, Jerome had committed himself to Paulinus, by whom he was ordained priest and whose influential partisan Evagrius was also Jerome's *patronus*[22]. Although leading western bishops like Damasus of Rome and Ambrose of Milan had long since dropped his opponent Meletius, the leader of the principal Nicene community in Antioch, and openly supported Paulinus[23], the latter's position in Antioch and in the eastern part of the empire was rather weak. Thus Paulinus was in desperate need of well-disposed friends to boost the prestige of the tiny Antiochene congregation and its controversial bishop. What better place was there to urge Paulinus's claims than the imperial

[18] CTh 16,1,2: 'cunctos populos, quos clementiae nostrae regit temperamentum, in tali volumus religione versari, quam divinum Petrum apostolum tradidisse Romanis religio usque ad nunc ab ipso insinuata declarat quamque pontificem Damasum sequi claret et Petrum Alexandriae episcopum, virum apostolicae sanctitatis…'. Cf. moreover Sozom. *Hist. eccl.* 7,4,5f. und *CTh* 16,2,25 (which may have been part of the same law).

[19] Cf. *CTh* 16,5,6 and W. Ensslin, *Die Religionspolitik des Kaisers Theodosius des Großen* (München, 1953), p. 28f.

[20] Cf. Socr. *Hist. eccl.* 5,8 and A.M. Ritter, *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel und sein Symbol* (Göttingen, 1965).

[21] I have shown elsewhere that it is very likely that Jerome entered Constantinople shortly after November 24th, 380, cf. Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, p. 118f.

[22] After his return from a diplomatic mission in the West (in 373 or 374), Evagrius had withdrawn from communion with the Meletians, cf. Bas. *ep.* 156,3 and Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, p. 72.

[23] Cf. Ch. Pietri, *Roma Christiana. Recherches sur l'église de Rome, son organisation, sa politique, son idéologie, de Miltiade à Sixte III (311-440)* (Rome, 1976), p. 791ff. and N.B. McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan. Church and Court in a Christian Capital* (Berkeley, 1994), p. 139ff.

capital in the East, especially when it was loudly rumoured that a great council to solve the theological disputes of the East was shortly to be held there[24]? Jerome did not hesitate to plead Paulinus's cause in words and writings, even though the emperor recognised Meletius of Antioch as compromise candidate of the majority of eastern theological factions and appointed him president of the council. A masterpiece of Jerome's propaganda for Paulinus was his translation and continuation of Eusebius's *Chronicle* which was probably composed during his stay in Constantinople[25]. Jerome accused Meletius of apostasy from the *recta fides*, and styled Paulinus the only catholic bishop of Antioch. Two Arian bishops, he wrote, introduced Meletius to Antioch, but Paulinus was ordained bishop by the orthodox Lucifer of Cagliari who himself met the approval of two other *confessores*. Trickily Jerome disguised the fact that Lucifer acted precipitately and without authorization. At the same time, he alleged that Meletius officially supported the position of the Arianizing Macedonians and thus opposed the teaching of the western churches and of Alexandria. The message of Jerome's *Chronicle* is obvious: the bishop of the Antiochene *pars catholica* could be none other than Paulinus[26].

(iii)

Shortly before and during the assembly which was later to be recognised as the Second Ecumenical Council Jerome had an opportunity to meet various important theologians and church politicians. He took it with both hands. First he became acquainted with Gregory of Nazianzus, who was appointed bishop of Constantinople and replaced Meletius as president of the concil after the latter's sudden death. Gregory in turn acted as a mediator in establishing new contacts for Jerome. Thus he met Gregory of Nyssa[27] and Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium

[24] About those rumours cf. Ritter, *Konzil* (n. 20), p. 33.

[25] Cf. Cavallera ii, p. 20ff.; Grützmacher i, p. 55ff.; Kelly, p. 72ff.; Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, p. 117 and n. 571; Schöne 250ff. The Chronicle itself lacks precise evidence about the date and place of its composition; it can only be dated in the joint reign of the *Augusti* Gratian and Theodosius, i.e. between 379 and 383, cf. Hier. *Chron.* prol. (GCS Eus. 7, p. 7): 'quo fine contentus reliquum temporis *Gratiani et Theodosii* latioris historiae stil reservavi'.

[26] Cf. Hier. *Chron.* s.a. 360 (GCS Eus 7, p. 241f.): 'Meletius Sebastiae Armeniorum episcopus ab Acacio et Georgio episcopis Arrianis Antiochiam transfertur et post non grande temporis intervallum (...) exilii iustissimam causam subita fidei mutatione delusit'; ibid. s.a. 364 (p. 243,21ff.): 'Synodus Antiochiae a Melitio et suis facta, in qua homousio anomoeoque reiecto medium inter haec homoeousion Macedonianum dogma vindicaverunt'; ibid. s.a. 362 (p. 242, 19ff.): 'Eusebius et Lucifer de exilio regrediuntur. E quibus Lucifer adscitis duobus aliis confessoribus Paulinum, Eustathii episcopi presbyterum, qui se numquam haerticorum communione polluerat, in parte catholica Antiochiae episcopum facit'.

[27] Cf. Hier. *vir. ill.* 128: 'Gregorius, Nyssenus episcopus, frater Basilii Caesariensis, ante paucos annos mihi et Gregorio Nazianzeno legit libros'.

in Cappadocia and cousin of Gregory of Nazianzus[28]. In short: in Constantinople, the ambitious westerner made contacts with important representatives of the Nicene theology (and orthodoxy) in the east.

At the same time, and with Gregory's assistance, Jerome was able to come to know members of the imperial court. In 400, when he had been living in Bethlehem for more than a decade, he wrote a consolatory letter to Salvina[29], daughter of Gildo, a governor of Africa who had revolted against the Western government in 397 and been killed in the following year. Salvina's recently deceased husband, Nebridius[30], was nephew of Flaccilla, first wife of Theodosius the Great and mother of the reigning emperors Arcadius and Honorius. His father, also called Nebridius[31], held office as *comes rei privatae* in 382-4 and became prefect of Constantinople in 386. While city prefect he married Olympias, who came from a leading senatorial family of the eastern capital and was a grand-daughter of Ablabius, the Christian *praefectus Praetorio Orientis* from 329 to 337. Nebridius died soon after his marriage. Jerome emphasizes in his letter to Salvina that Nebridius's father was a close friend of his: *pater defuncti intima mihi necessitudine copulatus fuit* ('the father of the deceased was bound to me by the closest ties')[32]. He must have become acquainted with the elder Nebridius during his stay in Constantinople between 380 and 382 and secured the confidence of an official who was about to reach most influential offices in the imperial administration. Although we have no evidence that their relations were as close as Jerome later pretended, the case of Nebridius and his family nevertheless proves that Jerome, from the time of his stay in Constantinople, had access to the Christian elite of the eastern part of the empire.

We may note, too, that members of the senatorial aristocracy were already devoting themselves to the ideals of asceticism then being propagated in the empire. Nebridius's second wife Olympias has been mentioned[33]. After her husband's death Theodosius I intended to marry her to a Spaniard from his family circle, but she refused. Olympias instead sold her landed estates in the provinces and founded the first monastic community for women at Constantinople in one

[28] Cf. Hier. *vir. ill.* 133: 'Amphilochius, Iconii episcopus, nuper mihi librum legit "de spiritu sancto", quod deus, et quod adorandus, quodque omnipotens sit'.

[29] Hier. *ep.* 79.

[30] Cf. *PLRE* i, p. 620 (3) and W. Ensslin, s.v. 'Nebridius', in *RE Suppl.* 7 (1940), p. 551.

[31] Cf. *PLRE* i, p. 620 (2); A. Chastagnol, 'Les Espagnols dans l'aristocratie gouvernementale de Théodose', in *Les empereurs romains d'Espagne* (Paris, 1965), p. 269ff., esp. 289; G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale: Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451* (Paris 1974; [2]1984), p. 253f.; J.F. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court A.D. 364 - 425* (Oxford, 1975; [2]1990), p. 109f.; K.F. Strohecker, 'Spanische Senatoren der spätrömischen und westgotischen Zeit', in *MDAI(M)* 4 (1963), pp. 107-132 (= id., *Germanentum und Spätantike* (Zürich/Stuttgart, 1965), 54-87), 114f. (64f.).

[32] Hier. *ep.* 79,1,4.

[33] For Olympias see *PLRE* i, p. 642f. and Matthews, *Aristocracies* (n. 31), p. 132.

of her houses, although members of her class were strongly opposed to her new conduct. Educated by Theodosia, sister of Amphilochius of Iconium, Olympias supported John Chrysostom and was ordained deaconess by Nectarius, the former *praetor urbanus* and bishop of Constantinople, who succeeded Gregory of Nazianzus in the imperial see. Jerome, for his part, met Amphilochius in Constantinople. Already this example illustrates the multiple interrelations between Christian aristocrats, intellectuals and clergymen who had adopted the *Nicaena fides* and ascetic ideals. It is also worth mentioning that Nebridius's son by his first marriage is praised for his outstanding ascetic virtues, i.e. his chastity, his contempt of wealth and his bounty to the poor. His widow, Salvina, is advised by Jerome to honour his memory by refusing a second marriage and practising strict aceticism[34]. It may be concluded from the evidence adduced that Nebridius, later *comes rei privatae* and city prefect, granted his favour and benevolence to Jerome in Constantinople, regarding him as an ambitious man who was capable of spreading ascetic ideas and Nicene dogma in fine-sounding language.

Nebridius was not an isolated case. Other distinguished members of the Theodosian court took a fancy to the ascetic movement and lavished favours upon its intellectual representatives[35]. There are good grounds for believing that Jerome, during his stay in Constantinople, succeeded in establishing new contacts to *amici maiores* and subsequently to Spanish associates of the emperor Theodosius, like the Praetorian Prefect of Italy in 395, Nummius Aemilianus Dexter, who received the dedication of his *De viris illustribus*[36]. In later years, these relations were of crucial importance for Jerome's ambitious literary projects, his ascetic community in Bethlehem and his survival in the bitter quarrels with Rufinus during the Origenist controversy.

But Jerome proceeded with caution and also inserted in his *Chronicle* a note on the pagan Clearchus, city prefect of Constantinople in 372-3 and 382-4 and *consul ordinarius* in 384: Jerome mentioned that Clearchus had introduced 'a much needed, long and devoutly awaited water-supply'[37]. One never knew.

[34] Cf. Hier. *epp.* 79,2 and 79,7ff.

[35] At least Flavius Rufinus should also be mentioned here, *Praefectus Praetorio Orientis* 392-395 and consul of 392 who became Jerome's powerful opponent in the middle of the 390s, cf. Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, p. 122ff.

[36] Cf. Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, p. 125f. and, p. 214f.; for a general evaluation of the westerners at the court of Theodosius in Constantinople see Matthews, *Aristocracies* (n. 31), p. 101ff.

[37] *Chron.* s.a. 373 (p. 247, 3sqq.): 'Clearchus praefectus urbi Constantinopoli agnoscitur. A quo necessaria et diu expectata votis aqua civitati inducitur'; cf. Socrat. *HE* 4,8,8; Cass. *Chron.* s.a. 373 (= *Chron. min.* II 153 Mommsen). On Clearchus cf. *PLRE* i, p. 211f.; Dagron, *Naissance* (n. 31), pp. 247-249 and 252; O. Seeck, *Die Briefe des Libanius zeitlich geordnet* (Leipzig, 1906), p. 108f.; id., *RE* 11.1 (1921), p. 579f., s.v. 'Klearchos'.

(iv)

Jerome's arrival at Constantinople around the year 380 was almost perfectly timed. Theodosius had just begun to enforce his religious policy against paganism and Christian heresies and to strengthen links with exponents of the Nicene orthodoxy. At the same time, members of the court society of Constantinople supported the ascetic movement financially and ideologically and posed as influential patrons of the intellectual *avant-garde* of asceticism. But how did Jerome succeed in calling the attention of the Christian court society of Theodosian Constantinople to his person? Certainly Jerome could promote himself as the protégé of the Antiochene *curialis* Evagrius and of the 'old-Nicene' bishop Paulinus. And once again in his life he was at the right moment in the right place. But these observations cannot fully explain his impressive ecclesiastical career in the aftermath of the council of Constantinople. During the time in the east, Jerome laid the foundation of his success as a Christian writer. It is therefore worth our while to analyze the major works which Jerome composed in Maronia, Antioch and Constantinople, to define their target groups and to comprehend the reasons of their immense popularity.

We should start with the 'Life of Paul the First Hermit', which is to be assigned either to his desert period or to his second stay in Antioch[38]. There Jerome described the exemplary ascetic virtues and achievement of his protagonist and invited the reader to imitate the saintly hermit. As the title proclaims, the object of the booklet is to prove that the famous Antony, who was believed to have been the first hermit, had in fact had a predecessor in Paul of Thebes (in Upper Egypt). A literary masterpiece, skilfully composed and extremely entertaining, the *vita* obviously enjoyed great popularity immediately upon its publication[39]. Deliberately revising the ideals of Athanasius's *Life of Antony*, which had been freely translated into Latin by Evagrius, Jerome insisted that Paul, unlike Antony, had received an excellent traditional education. It is obvious that the 'Life of Paul the First Hermit' was addressed to a public of educated Christians who were themselves interested in the ascetic movement. Jerome, in a brilliant antithesis, characterized the expected audience at the end of his work:

[38] For different dating cf. e.g. Grützmacher i, p. 54sq.; Cavallera i, p. 15sq.; Kelly, p. 60. For a detailed interpretation of the *Vita Pauli primae eremitae* cf. Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, pp. 127ff. with further reading. Special mention should also be made of M. Fuhrmann, 'Die Mönchsgeschichten des Hieronymus. Formexperimente in erzählender Literatur', in *Christianisme et formes littéraires de l'Antiquité tardive en Occident* (Entretiens sur l'Antiquité classique 23; Vandoeuvres/Geneva, 1977), pp. 41-99; H. Kech, *Hagiographie als christliche Unterhaltungsliteratur. Studien zum Phänomen des Erbaulichen anhand der Mönchsviten des hl. Hieronymus* (Goeppingen, 1977) and W. Berschin, *Biographie und Epochenstil im lateinischen Mittelalter i: Von der* passio perpetuae *zu den* dialogi *Gregors des Großen* (Stuttgart, 1986), p. 133ff.

[39] The *Life* was soon translated into Greek, Syriac, Coptic and Ethiopic, cf. W.A. Oldfather, *Studies in the Text Tradition of St. Jerome's 'Vitae Patrum'* (Urbana, 1943), p. 143ff.

'I may be permitted at the end of this little treatise to ask those who do not know the extent of their possessions, who adorn their homes with marble, who string house to house and field to field, what did this old man in his nakedness ever lack? Your drinking vessels are of precious stones; he satisfied thirst with the hollow of his hand. Your tunics are trimmed with gold; he had not the clothing of the meanest of your slaves. But on the other hand, poor though he was, Paradise is open to him; you with all your gold will be received into Gehenna. He though naked yet kept the robe of Christ; you, clad in your silks, have lost the vesture of Christ. Paul lies covered with worthless dust, but will rise again to glory; over you are raised costly tombs, but both you and your wealth are doomed to burning. Have a care, I pray you, at least have a care for the riches you love. Why are even the grave-clothes of your dead made of gold? Why does not your vaunting cease even amid mourning and tears? Cannot the carcases of rich men decay except in silk?'[40]

As Adolf von Harnack already observed, Jerome's 'Lives' are *Zeugnisse der Mönchsbelletristik*, evidence for a monastic practice of *belles-lettres*[41], which combined religious edification and ascetic instruction with pleasant entertainment (*'anspruchsvolle Unterhaltung'*). After Jerome had made his public début as an author with the exciting story of the miraculous rescue of the Christian woman of Vercelli[42] he turned to the *lecture à la mode*[43] of the Christian educated classes, imitating the literary example and success of the *Vita Antonii* and its Latin translations. By virtue of its literary qualities and the fact that Jerome pretended to have written the life of the first hermit, the *Vita Pauli* was able to replace the earlier Latin versions of the Athanasian biography which had so far been the only accessible writings on this topic in the western part of the empire. Jerome's fame as a writer of the ascetic movement was founded upon his first 'Life' and later increased through the other two 'Lives', the *Vita Hilarionis* and the *Vita Malchi*, and many relevant treatises and letters. It should be noted that the contemporary genesis of an occidental monasticism explains Jerome's first literary success. For he was the first Christian writer to respond to the lack of an authentic Latin monk's biography. It may be conjectured

[40] Hier. *Vita Pauli* 17 (PL 23, c. 28ff.): 'libet in fine opusculi eos interrogare, qui sua patrimonia ignorant, qui domos marmoribus vestiunt, qui uno filo villarum insuunt praedia: huic seni nudo quid umquam defuit? vos gemma bibitis, ille naturae concavis manibus satisfecit. vos in tunicis aurum texitis, ille ne vilissimi quidem indumentum habuit mancipii vestri. sed e contrario illi pauperculo paradisus patet, vos auratos gehenna suscipiet. ille vestem Christi, nudus licet, tamen servavit; vos vestiti sericis, indumentum Christi perdidistis. Paulus vilissimo pulvere coopertus iacet resurrecturus in gloriam; vos opera saxis sepulcra premunt cum vestris opibus arsuros. parcite, quaeso, vos, parcite saltem divitiis quas amatis. cur et mortuos vestros auratis obvolvitis vestibus? cur ambitio inter luctus lacrymasque non cessat? an cadavera divitum nisi in serico putrescere nesciunt?'

[41] A. Harnack, *Das Mönchtum. Seine Ideale und seine Geschichte* (Gießen, [4]1895), p. 29.

[42] Hier. *ep.* 1.

[43] J. Fontaine, 'L'ascétisme chrétien dans la littérature gallo-romaine d'Hilaire à Cassien', in *Atti del Colloquio sulla Gallia Romana* (Rom, 1973), p. 100.

that his Antiochene *patronus* Evagrius, translator of the *Vita Antonii*, encouraged him in writing a genuine Latin *vita*.

(v)

Although the book was sent to his aged friend Paulus of Concordia in northern Italy and although Jerome pretended to have adopted a simple style[44], we may assume that this *opus* delighted the western associates of the Theodosian court at Constantinople who took an interest in ascetic literature. Jerome tried to reach the same group of potential *patroni* with another *genus*, his Latin translations of Greek theological writings. His immense success in this field had four reasons. First, the Latin west was then by no means able to match the abundant Greek Christian literature. Secondly, the theological discourse of the fourth century intensified intellectual interest in Greek scholarship, and it became necessary for westerners to tackle the complex philosophical and theological systems of the Greek Fathers. Thirdly, more and more Latin-speaking Christians turned to ascetic ideals originating in the east. Finally, the number of intellectuals in the Western Empire who were bilingual, i.e. who had command of Latin and Greek, was steadily declining[45]. Jerome thus continued the practice of some earlier western bishops, like Eusebius of Vercelli and Hilary of Poitiers, who were exiled in the east during the Arian controversy and had succeeded in conveying Greek theological concepts to the west through their translations. Since Jerome possessed a mastery of Greek and had familiarized himself with Greek Christian literature, he was able to put Latin-speaking Christians greatly in his debt as an *interpres Christianus*.

Jerome commenced this career by translating into Latin Origen's 37 homilies on Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. In a dedicatory letter to his friend Vincentius, who first received his version of the homilies on Ezekiel, Jerome drew an outline for a translation of Origen's exegetical work, to 'make available to Roman ears the man who, in the judgement of Didymus, blind but so clearsighted, is

[44] Hier. *ep.* 10,3.3: 'misimus interim tibi, id est Paulo seni, Paulum seniorem, in quo propter simpliciores quosque multum in deiciendo sermone laboravimus. sed nescio quomodo, etiam si aqua plena sit, tamen eundem odorem lagoena servat, quo, dum rudis esset, inbuta est (cf. Hor. *epist.* 1,2,69f.). si hoc munusculum placuerit, habemus etiam alia condita, quae cum plurimis orientalibus mercibus ad te, si spiritus sanctus adflaverit, navigabunt'.

[45] Cf. P. Courcelle, *Les lettres grecques en Occident de Macrobe à Cassiodore* (Paris, 1948); M.P.P. McGuire, 'The Decline of the Knowledge of Greek in the West from c. 150 to the Death of Cassiodorus: A Reexamination of the Phenomenon from the Viewpoint of Cultural Assimilation', in *Classica Folia* 13 (1959), p. 3ff.; D. Nellen, *Viri litterati. Gebildetes Beamtentum und spätrömisches Reich im Westen zwischen 284 und 395 nach Christus* (Bochum, [2]1981), p. 123ff.; P. Riche, *Education et culture dans l'Occident barbare* (Paris, [3]1972), p. 563ff.

second only to the Apostles as teacher of the churches'[46]. Unfortunately, he continues, a serious affliction of his eyes, caused by continuous reading, prevented him from executing the job, which was also made more difficult by the *notariorum penuria, quia tenuitas hoc quoque subsidium abstulit* ('the lack of stenographers, since shortage of cash has removed this aid too')[47]. This ambitious programme, which was never carried through because Jerome became occupied with other projects, needed Vincentius's financial support. Paying the bill for *notarii* was an important task of wealthy *amici* and *patroni*, who were also responsible for copying and disseminating the sponsored writings. At the end of the fourth century, the rich Spaniard Lucinus sent six *notarii* to Bethlehem who were instructed to copy Jerome's writings. His widow Theodora was later reminded by Jerome that there was a *latini sermonis scriptorum penuria* in Palestine[48]. Vincentius, however, was presbyter in Constantinople[49] and came, like Jerome, from the Western Empire, as may be deduced from his request for a translation of Origen's work into Latin. Thus he was associated with the Latin-speaking orthodox Christians of Constantinople and able to propagate Jerome's versions among the westerners of the Theodosian court. Vicentius might have also paid the stenographers whom Jerome needed in order to translate the fourteen homilies on the prophet Jeremiah, completed some time previously, and Eusebius's *Chronicle*. The latter work is also dedicated to Vincentius and to a certain Gallienus who is otherwise unknown[50].

(vi)

Jerome not only translated into Latin the *Chronicle* of Eusebius of Caesarea, i.e. its second part, the synchronistic tables of relevant pagan and Christian dates, but continued the work from 325 to 378, ending with the death of the

[46] Hier. *Hom. Orig. in Ezech.* (GCS 33, p. 318): 'magnum est quidem, amice (sc. Vincente; cf. Rufin., *Apol. c. Hier.* 2,16 (CCL 20, p. 96)), quod postulas, ut Origenem faciam Latinum et hominem iuxta Didymi videntis sententiam alterum post apostolum ecclesiarum magistrum etiam Romanis auribus donem'. On the translation cf. Grützmacher i 181ff.; Cavallera i 68ff.; ii 78ff.; Kelly 75ff. and P. Nautin, 'La lettre 'Magnum est' de Jérôme à Vincent et la traduction des homélies d'Origène sur les prophètes', in *Jérôme entre l'Occident et l'Orient*, ed. Y.-M. Duval (Paris, 1988), pp. 27-39.

[47] Hier. *Hom. Orig. in Ezech.* (GCS 33, p. 318).

[48] Cf. Hier. *epp.* 71,5,2; 75,4,2 and Rebenich, *Hieronymus* 293ff. The relevant material for the use of stenographers is already conscientiously collected by A. Wikenhauser, 'Der hl. Hieronymus und die Kurzschrift', in *ThQ* 29 (1910), pp. 50-87. Cf. moreover E. Arns, *La technique du livre d'après saint Jérôme* (Paris, 1953), p. 37ff.; D. Gorce, 'Comment travaillait saint Jérôme?', in *RevAscMyst* 25 (1949), pp. 117-139; H. Hagendahl, 'Die Bedeutung der Kurzschrift für die spätlateinische christliche Literatur, in *JbAC* 14 (1971), pp. 24-38, esp. 29ff. For a broader discussion of the subject see H.C. Teitler, *Notarii and exceptores* (Amsterdam, 1985).

[49] Cf. Hier. *c. Ioh.* 47 (PL 23, 410).

[50] Hier. *Chron.* prol. (GCS Eus. 7, p. 1).

emperor Valens. He also enlarged the Eusebian work, inserting events and names which were of interest to western readers[51]. Modern scholarship has largely had to reconstruct Jerome's sources for these supplements, since he himself referred only to Suetonius's *De viris inlustribus* and *ceteri inlustres historici*[52]. The results have given rise to much controversy[53], and I am not inclined to concentrate on this topic here. Instead, I would emphasize that Jerome, with the translation and continuation of Eusebius's *Chronicle*, for the first time made a chronologically structured compendium of world history from Abraham down to the year 378 A.D. available to Latin Christianity. Up to this date, the western Church possessed no work which could be compared to the outstanding chronographical achievement of the bishop of Caesarea. The immediate and immense success of Jerome's *Chronicle* among Latin-speaking Christians should therefore cause no surprise. As in the case of the *Vita Pauli* Jerome responded to the lack of a certain *genus* in the Christian literature of the Latin west and undertook to supply the want by imitating a Greek model. But he was not content to present a world history to the Latin readers which, in accordance with Eusebius's work, postulated the superiority of the Jewish-Christian tradition. His *Chronicle*, especially his supplements, had to meet the expectations of a well-defined audience. Jerome therefore inserted the names of Latin authors, Roman emperors, and Christian bishops, and made mention of religious, political and military events of the Western Empire. He did not leave it at that. In addition to new entries of general interest he included numerous other details which, at first sight, seem to be irrelevant, biased, subjective and gossipy. Jerome has been often criticized on this score. According to Georg Gruetzmacher his continuation of Eusebius is '*ein oberflächliches und mattes Werk*'[54] which 'shows up his weaknesses as an historian'[55]. This criticism, however, ignores the fact that the additional entries were deliberately fitted into the Latin chronicle in order to attract certain kinds of reader; they are, in other words, the precondition of its literary success.

[51] Cf. Hier. *Chron.* prol. (GCS Eus. 7, p. 6): 'nonnulla, quae mihi intermissa videbantur, adieci, in Romana maxime historia, quam Eusebius huius conditor libri non tam ignorasse ut eruditus, sed ut Graece scribens parum suis necessariam perstrinxisse mihi videtur'.

[52] Ibid.: 'A Troia usque ad vicesimum Constantini annum nunc addita, nunc admixta sunt plurima, quae a Tranquillo et ceteris inlustribus historicis curiosissime excerpsi'.

[53] For the *Quellenforschung* on Jerome's Chronicle see Grützmacher i 191ff.; Cavallera i 63ff.; Kelly 72ff., and esp. R.W. Burgess, 'Jerome and the "Kaisergeschichte"', in *Historia* 44 (1995), pp. 349-369; R. Helm, *Hieronymus' Zusätze in Eusebius' Chronik und ihr Wert für die Literaturgeschichte* (*Philologus Suppl.* xxi,2; 1929); id., 'Hieronymus und Eutrop', in *RhM* 76 (1927), pp. 138-170; 254-360; id., 'Die neuesten Hypothesen zu Eusebius' (Hieronymus') Chronik', in *Sitzungsber. der Preuss. Akad. d. Wiss., Phil.-hist. Kl.* 1929, pp. 371-408; Th. Mommsen, 'Über die Quellen der Chronik des Hieronymus, in *Abh. d. Kgl. Sächs. Ges. d. Wiss. II, Phil.-hist. Kl.*, 1850, pp. 671-693 (= id., *Ges. Schr.* 7 (Berlin, 1909), 606ff.) and Schöne *pass.*

[54] Grützmacher i 193.

[55] Kelly 75; cf. Grützmacher i 193: 'Was die Fortsetzung des Werkes des Eusebius betrifft, so zeigt sich, dass Hieronymus keine große Befähigung zum Historiker hatte'. It is obvious that Grützmacher has influenced Kelly's judgement.

By stigmatizing certain eastern bishops, like Meletius, as Arian heretics, Jerome adopted the position hold by the majority of the Latin church politicians and theologians[56]. The *Chronicle* thus intends to depict the heroic struggle of orthodox bishops and clergymen, who did not submit to threats and banishments of heretical emperors, against Arianism. Moreover, Jerome notes various events connected with the history of asceticism and monasticism[57] and responds to the interest in these new forms of living which became increasingly popular among educated Christians in the Western Empire during the later fourth century. The references to miscellaneous and miraculous phenomena, such as hailstorms and curious rain showers[58], are simply meant to entertain the reader. Besides the inclusion of celebrated Latin authors and poets, the naming of illustrious contemporary *oratores*, *rhetores*, and *grammatici*[59], who quite often come from Gaul, reflect the literary and intellectual preferences of an educated audience at the end of the fourth century. Finally, there is a considerable number of entries which highlight important *patroni* and personal friends, like Pompeianus, an ancestor of his *carissimus* Evagrius[60], or Jerome's Roman *praeceptor*, the grammarian Donatus[61], or the circle of friends living together in a monastic community in Aquileia *quasi chorus beatorum*[62], or Florentinus, Bonosus, Rufinus, who *insignes monachi habentur*[63], or Rufinus's rich *patrona* Melania the Elder[64].

[56] The example of Meletius has already been mentioned, see above p. 365f. and Rebenich, *Hieronymus* 73; 117f. and 141f. Cf. also the notes on Ambrose (GCS Eus. 7, p. 247,16ff.); Athanasius (p. 242,16ff.); Eusebius of Vercelli (p. 239f.; 242,19); Hilarius (p. 240,11ff.; 241,17ff.; 242,5f.); Liberius of Rome (p. 237,17ff.), Lucifer (p. 239f.; 242,19ff.; 246,1ff.), on the synods of Ariminum and Seleucia (p. 241,10ff. 21ff.) and on the churches of Antioch (p. 232), Constantinople (p. 235) and Jerusalem (p. 237).

[57] Cf. Hier. *Chron.* s.a. 356 (p. 240,6ff.) on Antony and Paul; ibid. s.aa. 356 and 357 (p. 240,17; 240,24f.) on Antony's disciples Sarmata, Amatas, and Marcarius; s.a. 375 (p. 248, 1f.) on the killing of many munks in the Nitrian desert.

[58] Cf. Hier. *Chron.* s.a. 367 (p. 245,8ff.).

[59] Cf. e.g. Alcimius und Delphidius, *Chron.* s.a. 355 (p. 239,18f.); Chrestus and Euanthius, ibid. s.a. 358 (p. 241,7ff.); Donatus and Victorinus, ibid. 354 (p. 239,12ff.); Gennadius und Minervius, ibid. s.a. 353 (p. 239,3ff.); Libanius, ibid. s.a. 368 (p. 245,16f.); Nazarius, ibid. s.aa. 324 and 336 (p. 231,5 and 233,22); Pater, ibid. s.a. 336 (p. 233,21); Tiberianus, *vir disertus* and *Praefectus Praetorio Galliarum*, ibid. s.a. 336 (p. 233,23f.) and Titianus, *vir eloquens* and *Praefectus Praetorio Galliarum*, ibid. s.a. 345 (p. 236,10f.).

[60] *Chron.* s.a. 273 (p. 222,15ff.).

[61] *Chron.* s.a. 354 (p. 239,12ff.).

[62] *Chron.* s.a. 374 (p. 247,19f.). On Jerome's links with the monastic community in Aquileia cf. Rebenich, *Hieronymus* 44ff.

[63] *Chron.* s.a. 377 (p. 248,17f.).

[64] *Chron.* s.a. 374 (p. 247,10ff.): *Melanium, nobilissima mulierum Romanorum et Marcellini quondam consulis filia, unico praetore tunc urbano filio derelicto Hierosolymam navigavit. Ubi tanto virtutum praecipueque humilitatis miraculo fuit, ut Theclae nomen acceperit*'. Because of Melania's friendship with Rufinus Jerome, according to Rufinus (*Apol. c. Hier.* 2,29 (CCL 20, p. 105)), erased her name from his personal copies of the Chronicle after the outbreak of the Origenist controversy. On other alterations in later years see Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, p. 136 and Schöne, p. 96ff.; 117ff. and 151ff.

Jerome's purpose in translating and supplementing Eusebius's *Chronicle* is easily understood. He composed a chronological compendium which served the needs of Christian *litterati* in the Western Empire who maintained the position of Nicene orthodoxy and sympathized with ascetic ideals. His additions observed their literary taste and their theological experience. Vincentius and Gallienus, the dedicatees, and the *amici*, who were mentioned in the *Chronicle*, were encouraged to spread the work. Jerome's literary concept of a Latin chronicle was aimed at winning supporters and patrons who were always of vital importance for an ambitious Christian author. But Jerome flew even higher. His masterpiece of propaganda was to reach the court of Theodosius. At the end of the preface Jerome reveals that he has ended with the sixth consulship of the emperor Valens and the second of the emperor Valentinian, i.e. the year 378 A.D., since he has reserved the remaining period, that of Gratian and Theodosius, for a wider historical survey, *reliquum temporis Gratiani et Theodosii latioris historiae stilo reservavi*[65]. The announcement of a separate description of the reign of Gratian and Theodosius, that is to say of a new imperial history, at such a prominent place perfectly fits with Jerome's ambitions to be succesful as a best-selling Christian writer in the Latin west. This statement of course directed the attention of the western entourage of Theodosius to a man of great literary talent, of some ascetic experience and firm convictions. Perhaps Jerome had high hopes in those days of obtaining access to the inner circle of the *amici imperatoris* and thereby promoting his ecclesiastical career. The *Chronicle*, however, is by no means a 'tumultuous work', as it is called in the preface[66]. This *captatio benevolentiae* ought not obscure the fact that the work is coherently composed and the material logically presented. Jerome used his alleged *opus tumultuarium* to advance the causes of Nicene orthodoxy and Christian asceticism. To all those who identified themselves with the *fides catholica* and the ascetic ideal, Jerome presented himself through his *Chronicle* as a highly capable author, worthy of support.

(vii)

Finally, it should be mentioned that, during his time in the Eastern Empire, Jerome tried to make a reputation for himself not only as a biographer and a translator, but also as an exegete[67]. He published a short treatise on the vision

[65] Hier. *Chron.* prol. (GCS Eus. 7, p. 7); and he adds: *non quo de viventibus timuerim libere et vere scribere - timor enim Dei hominum timorem expellit -, sed quoniam dibacchantibus adhuc in terra nostra barbaris incerta sunt omnia.*

[66] Hier. *Chron.* prol. (GCS Eus. 7, p. 2).

[67] If the *Altercatio Luciferiani et Orthodoxi* (= *Dialogus contra Luciferianos*) is to be placed in this period, Jerome would have also made his first attempt at a polemical-theological pamphlet in the East. But since the dating of the work is controversial (cf. Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, p. 99 n. 473 and 138 n. 689), we should not rush to conclusions.

which Isaiah had of God and of the two Seraphim, one of which touched the prophet's lips with a burning coal[68]. It has come down in two pieces, and some of the manuscripts give the Roman bishop Damasus as addressee[69]. Whether Jerome sent the *tractatus* already from Constantinople to Rome or added the heading *Ad Damasum* during his time in the western capital or even later, cannot be decided. But it should be noted that this little study had the special purpose of displaying a learned commentator of the Bible. Jerome mentioned the various readings of the Septuagint, Aquila, Theodotian, Symmachus, and the Hebrew original and discussed the Hebrew meaning of the names Seraphim and *Jahwe Sabaoth*. The exegesis, however, seems to be strongly dependent on earlier expositors, especially Origen, and prompts doubt about the author's theological and exegetical originality[70]. Nevertheless, Jerome seems to have been already at this early time aware of the importance of a return to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament[71].

(viii)

To sum up. Jerome began the literary production for which he was and still is distinguished in the eastern part of the *Imperium Romanum*. Even then he appeared as a well-read exegete with a profound command of languages, as a talented translator of Greek theological works, and as a capable author of ascetic and monastic literature. Thanks to his linguistic competence Jerome was able to adopt eclectically the works of Greek Christian writers and to endow the Latin West with new literary *genera*. His works of this period also responded to the intellectual needs and literary interests of a constantly increasing number of Christian *viri nobiles, viri diserti, viri locupletes*, as Jerome himself once pointedly remarked[72], that is to say of ecclesiastical and secular dignitaries, who advocated the theological tenets of the *fides catholica* and supported the ascetic movement. From among such people — men and women whose prestige and influence, according to Paulinus of Nola, rested on *honos, litterae*, and *domus*[73] — the *amici* and *patroni* of the ambitious author

[68] Jerome's first scriptural commentary (on Obadiah) has not survived and was probably composed during his college days in Rome, cf. A. Booth, 'The Date of Jerome's Birth', in *Phoenix* 33 (1979), pp. 346-252, esp. 349ff.; Rebenich, *Hieronymus* 29 and n. 60. He had attempted an allegorical and mystical exegesis of which he was later ashamed (Hier. *comm. in Abd.* prol. (CCL 76, p. 350)). Unlike the present work the early commentary is not recorded in the list of his writings given in *vir. ill.* 135.

[69] Hier. *epp.* 18A und 18B on Is. 9,1-9. On the letter cf. Grützmacher i, p. 188ff.; Cavallera i, p. 70ff.; Kelly, p. 77ff. and P. Jay, *L'exégèse de saint Jérôme d'après son Commentaire sur Isaïe* (Paris, 1985), p. 63f.

[70] Cf. G. Bardy, 'Saint Jérôme et ses maîtres hébreux', in *RBen* 46 (1934), pp. 145-164.

[71] Cf. Kamesar (n. 5), esp. 40ff.

[72] Hier. *ep.* 66,6,2.

[73] Paul. Nol. *carm.* 24,481f.

were recruited. Jerome, the experienced hermit and Christian *litteratus*, wanted to make himself the favourite author of wealthy Christian intellectuals, who in their turn were able to support his ambitious projects and ensure his advancement. After his early and immediate success as a leading western protagonist of eastern religious piety, Jerome followed his course. The foundation of his career as a writer of the ascetic movement and of Nicene orthodoxy, as a translator and commentator of the Bible, and as an intermediary between western and eastern theology was laid in the Eastern Empire, in Antioch, Maronia, and, above all, Constantinople.

Ovid, Jerome and the Vulgate

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The Latin Vulgate was the primary cultural document of the Christian West for a thousand years. Yet, though biblical scholars have analyzed the style of specific Vulgate books to learn whether Jerome or another mind produced them[1], the study of the Vulgate as literature is an entirely new field. It comprises 1) literary aspects of the *creation* of the Vulgate, fourth and fifth centuries; 2) the *reception and uses* of the Vulgate as literature, involving the next thousand years of commentary, education, liturgy, and literature; 3) and the *influences* of the Vulgate on vernacular languages and literature. No one person can exhaust any of these areas. My program of research is to do the spadework for each and, with an exemplary study, to set forth its methodology. My first studies concerned the completed Vulgate[2]. My article on the creation of the Vulgate, forthcoming in *Vigiliae Christianae*, covers who translated which books of the Bible, when, using what source texts and comparanda in which languages[3]. That article grounds my sample study in this area, presented today. My thesis is satisfyingly provocative: when translating the Bible, Jerome evidently drew on Ovid's diction in similar narrative contexts. Probably Jerome used this technique of classical allusion through diction elsewhere in the Vulgate as well and drew on other classical authors besides Ovid.

The suggestion that Jerome incorporated classical allusions in the Vulgate is utterly novel. Famous for his erudition, Jerome is known to have drawn on at least thirty-two classical authors[4]. His biblical translations, however, have been assumed to be free of classical influences, largely because of his famous

[1] E.g., A. Condamin, S.J., 'Un procédé littéraire de St Jérôme dans sa traduction de la Bible', in *Miscellanea Geronimiana: scritti varii publicati nel XV centenario dalla morte di San Girolamo* (Rome, 1928), pp. 89-95; S. Rebenich, 'Jerome: The "Vir Trilinguis" and the "Hebraica veritas"'. *Vigiliae Christianae* 47.1 (1993), p. 51.

[2] Tkacz, *The Topos of the Tormentor Tormented* (Ph.D. diss.: University of Notre Dame, 1983), esp. ch. 3 and app. C; 'Literary Studies of the Vulgate: Formula Systems', *Proceedings of the Patristic, Mediaeval and Renaissance Conference* 15 (1990), pp. 205-19: 'Christian Formulas in Old English Literature: *Naes hyre wlite gewemmed* and Its Implications', *Traditio* 48 (1993), pp. 31-61; 'The Medieval Reception of the Vulgate as Literature', paper presented at the 30th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 5, 1995.

[3] '*Labor tam utilis*: The Creation of the Vulgate'.

[4] H. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics: A Study on the Apologists, Jerome and Other Christian Writers* (Goteborg, 1958).

dream sometime in the 370s, perhaps as late as 377, perhaps, according to Stefan Rebenich's new study, in 370[5]. By any dating the dream occurred well before he began revising and retranslating the Bible in 382-85[6]. In his first account of the dream he poses questions which seem to imply total rejection of the classics: 'quid facit cum psalterio Horatius? cum evangeliis Maro? cum apostolo Cicero?'[7]

But, the dream is not anti-classicism: it is anti-vanity. It punishes Jerome's pride in owning a fine *bibliothecam* and his intellectual vanity in perceiving the elegancies of classical composition. Jerome found that what he had learned and vowed in his visionary experience still allowed the use of classical materials to serve Christian ends. This is shown, for instance, by the fact that even in Jerome's two accounts of his dream, in Letter 22 and the *Apology*, he uses a dozen classical references[8].

Over and over again, in his biblical commentaries and letters, especially 53, 57 and 70, Jerome shows his respect for literary aspects of the Scriptures, as well as his scholarly sense that part of how one understands them is to analyze them as written texts. He even uses the word *flores* to refer to quotations from Scripture[9]. Moreover, as Frederic J. Schlatter has just show, Jerome's commentary on Ezekiel contains 'an astonishing statement expressing Jerome's willingness to see the wisdom of Hellenism absorbed into the teaching of the Church'[10]. Neglected evidence for Jerome's handling of the Bible as literature exists in his innovatively presenting the individual biblical books with full prefaces, a practice borrowed from classical literature[11]. Moreover, Jerome discusses the styles, meters, and formats of the Scriptures, and compares the biblical books to classical literature[12].

Striking evidence for Jerome's view that the classics can serve Christianity lies in his prefaces to the Vulgate books. Leaving aside his distinctive *Prologue to Kings*, his classical allusions outnumber the biblical ones in these sixteen prefaces[13].

[5] S. Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis. Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart, 1992), pp. 37-41.

[6] '*Labor tam utilis*', n. 64.

[7] Ep. 22.29.7 (CSEL 54:188-89).

[8] Ep. 22: Hagendahl (1958), pp. 110-11; see also J.J. Thierry, 'The Date of the Dream of Jerome', *Vigiliae Christianae* 17 (1963), pp. 32-34; and J. Bauer, 'Hieronymus und Ovid', *Grazer Beiträge* 4 (1975), pp. 15-16. *Apologia contra Rufinum* 2.31.2-3, see notes in CCL 79:31.

[9] Ep. 117.12.1, written ca. 404-05, cited by Hagendahl (1958), pp. 223-24.

[10] F.J. Schlatter, S.J., 'The Two Women in the Mosaic of Santa Pudenziana', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3.1 (1995), p. 20, treating *In Ezek.* 44.22-31, written 410-414.

[11] S. Berger, *Les prefaces jointes aux livres de la Bible dans les manuscripts de la Vulgate: mémoire posthume* (Paris, 1902), pp. 8, 13.

[12] Tkacz (1995 forthcoming) passim.

[13] Virgil, *Aen.* 4:336: *Prol. Josh.* (Stuttgart Vulgate 1:285-86), *Aen.* 2:329: *Prol. Ezra* (SV 1:638-39), *Georgics* 1.146: *Prol. Dan.* (SV 2:1341-42); Horace, *Carm.* 4.2.11: *Prol. Job* (SV 1:731-32), *Satirae* 1.10,34: *Praef. Pss.* #2 (SV 1:770); Cicero, *Pro Murena* 25: *Prol. Par.* (SV 1:546-47), *ep. ad Brutum* 187: ibid.; Sallust, *Bell. Iugur.* 3: *Prol. Ezra*; Valerius Maximus 3.7: *Prol. Par.*; locus incertus: *Praef. Pss.* #1-2 (SV 1:768-70).

Virgil he quotes three times; Cicero twice; and once each, Sallust, Valerius Maximus, and an unknown author. A sixth author he also quotes two times — I have saved my favorite for last. Remember Jerome's rhetorical question, 'Quid facit cum psalterio Horatius?' Jerome quotes Horace in the *Prologue to Job* and, yes, in the preface to the Psalter.

But what of Ovid? *Quid Hieronymo Naso*? Along with other Early Christian authors, Jerome quotes Ovid[14]. In his commentaries on Isaiah, Ecclesiastes and Hosea Jerome draws on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 1:3-4, 1:19-20 and 4:57-58, respectively, and in his commentary on Jonah, he names Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, and Phaeton[15]. But in the Vulgate itself? *Quid facit cum Vulgata Naso?* Obviously Jerome would not interpolate into his translation an actual quotation from Ovid or any other author. Nor would he grossly intrude with a flagging reference such as *insignis poeta*, as he refers to Ovid in his commentary *In Oseam* 2.16-17. Nor — and this is crucial — would he allude in a biblical translation to a classical text that was dissonant in context; he scorned the *Vergiliocentones* precisely because of their stupid and sacrilegious disregard for context, as when Proba (v. 403) uses Venus's words to Cupid in the *Aeneid* to supply God the Father's pronouncement about Christ at the Transfiguration[16]. When, however, classical and biblical contexts are consonant, allusion would be fitting. Through lexical choices and possibly such features as syntactical patterning Jerome could have alluded to specific classical texts or commonplaces. Note well that such dictional allusions are by their nature unprovable. Nonetheless, if they exist, neither the Vulgate nor the patristic era can be well understood until these allusions are recognized.

How, then, does one explore the possibility of such dictional allusions? The first step, when one has identified a possible allusion, is to verify that the Vulgate book in question is indeed the work of Jerome. Though Jerome indicated that he had translated the entire Bible, not all the books in the Latin Vulgate are his. Even if one accepts his authorship of the entire New Testament translation, clearly he did not translate most of those Old Testament books he considered non-canonical. Jerome, however, is responsible for both the Vulgate Gospel of Mark, which he revised from the Old Latin between 382 and 385, and the Vulgate Esther, which he translated from the Hebrew by 405/06.

The specific classical allusion suggested today is that Jerome uses the wording of *Metamorphores* 2:44, Phoebus's rash promise to Phaeton, in both Mark

[14] E.g., H. Hagendahl, *Von Tertullian zu Cassiodor: Die profane literarische Tradition in dem lateinischen christlichen Schrifttum* (Göteborg, 1983), pp. 18, 46, 37, 139 n. 171.

[15] *In Ecclesiasten* (PL 23:1061-1174) paraphrases *Met.* 1.19-20 in p. 442; *In Os.* 1-3 (PL 25:855-992) quotes *Met.* 4.57-58 in 2:16-17; *In Is.* I-XVIII (PL 24:17-704) paraphrases *Met.* 1.3-4 in both 11.6-7 and 30, 26; *In Ion.* 2.2 (PL 25); Ep. 123.4.2 quotes *Amores* 3.2,83; Hagendahl (1958), pp. 126, 129; 217-19; 227, 231-32; 210-11; 283. See also Bauer (1975) 15-19, who alleges two 'reminiscences' in Ep. 22.5 and 50.5.

[16] Ibid., pp. 188-89.

6:22, Herod's rash promise to Salome, and Esther 5:3, 5:6 and 7:2, Ahasuerus' rash promises to Esther. Phoebus promises his son to grant his wish and invites him, '*quodvis pete* munus'. Similarly Herod rashly promises to give Salome whatever she wishes: '*pete* a me *quod vis* et dabo tibi'. The longer narrative of Esther has three correspondingly longer rash promises from Ahasuerus, and they also use diction similar to that of Ovid and Mark: the king promises rashly to give her '*quid vis*, Hester regina. Quae est *petitio* tua?'[17]

The narrative similarities are what make the dictional allusion plausible. All three accounts — Ovid, Esther, Mark — treat rash promises made in circumstances and with results which have salient points of comparison: in each narrative a young favorite elicits a rash promise from a rather foolish ruler. In each case the favorite's request ends in death, an outcome quite unforeseen by the ruler. Moreover, alluding to the classical narrative helps emphasize the character-revealing contrasts between the biblical narratives: Phoebus and Ahasuerus made immutable oaths, but Herod's promise is not clearly binding, so that his compliance suggests cowardice. Phaeton and Salome each recklessly cause death, but Esther knowingly risks her life to save the lives of a whole people. In short what the classical allusion implies matches the import of the original biblical narratives; thus the allusion enhances the presentation of nuances already in Scripture. This is precisely why Jerome would find the allusion fitting.

Finally one must address the question, could Jerome have found the diction already in the text he was revising or retranslating? Unfortunately, the Vetus Latina edition of neither the Gospel of Mark nor the Book of Esther has yet been published by the Beuron Institute and neither book is scheduled for publication in the foreseeable future[18]. Thus, for the Old Latin of Mark we have only Pierre Sabatier's eighteenth-century edition and the edition of Adolf Jülicher, which uses only eleven manuscripts, while for the Old Latin of Esther, no edition exists, for the relevant material is one of the gaps in Sabatier[19]. It is difficult to judge whether the text of Mark given is one that Jerome could have known: the manuscripts used postdate Jerome, often by several centuries. Using the qualified evidence of Jülicher and Sabatier for Mark, one sees that Jerome might have found in an Old Latin version the words of the rash promise now in the Vulgate.

[17] The brevity of this communication precludes examining the other dictional choices, such as *rogare* and *poscere*, which Jerome could have made.

[18] Professor Hermann Josef Frede, Director of the Vetus Latina Institut in Beuron, graciously provided this information in a letter of 19 August 1994. Unfortunately the relevant passage is not treated in Bonifatius Fischer, O.S.B., *Die lateinischen Evangelien bis zum 10. Jahrhundert. II. Varianten zu Markus* (Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel 15; Freiburg im Breisgau, 1989).

[19] Père Fischer praises Sabatier's masterpiece, yet notes, 'Das Material hat sich seit Sabatiers Zeiten beträchlich vermehrt'; *Kirchensschriftsteller* (Vetus Latina 1; 1949, 1981, 1995), p. 9.

What does this imply? Benjamin Kedar-Kopfstein finds Jerome rigorous in handling the Hebrew, Greek, and Old Latin materials, rejecting a series of terms used repeatedly in the Old Latin. He concludes, 'Indirectly ... Jerome stamped also those words and clauses which he took over from others: by approving them he made them his own'. Moreover, Esther is among the biblical books which Jerome translated last and it is 'smoother' and 'a fine literary version of the biblical narrative'[20]. Thus, even if Jerome found the key terms in an Old Latin version, his choice to retain them may have been a deliberate decision to allude dictionally to the Ovidian rash promise.

A promising next line of research will be to examine Vulgate books known to be Jerome's work, for which the Old Latin counterparts have already appeared in the new Beuron edition, for dictional and possibly syntactical allusions to Jerome's favorite poets, Virgil and Horace, and to his favorite writer of prose, Cicero[21]. Jerome's own questions return to mind. He posed them rhetorically, but today's presentation shows them to be tantalizingly open: 'quid facit cum psalterio Horatius? cum evangeliis Maro? cum apostolo Cicero?'

[20] B. Kedar-Kopfstein, *The Vulgate as a Translation: Some Semantic and Syntactical Aspects of Jerome's Version of the Hebrew Bible* (Ph.D. diss., University of Jerusalem, 1968), pp. 58-60, 271-74, 284-85. See also Condamin (1920), pp. 89-94.

[21] Hagendahl (1958), pp. 101-02, 281-83; also id. (1983), pp. 75-76. Virgil, esp. the *Aeneid*, is quoted at least 174 times; (1958), pp. 276-79 and (1974), pp. 216-17. Horace is quoted at least sixty-five times; (1958), pp. 281-83. Cicero is the prose-writer Jerome cites most, over 136 times; (1958), pp. 284-92.

Jerome and the *Golden Ass*

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It is hundreds of years since the scholar Rosweyde first noted that there was a parallel between Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* or *Golden Ass* and an incident in Jerome's *Life of Paul*[1]. However, since then, there has been very little notice of any other use[2] made by Jerome of Apuleius, although Coleiro has pointed to general similarities in structure and landscape between Jerome's saints' lives and the *Golden Ass*[3]. This is in spite of the fact that Jerome himself records that he read 'Milesian fables' in his youth at Rome[4] — most scholars seem to have taken this to mean just obscene tales in general rather than Apuleius in particular[5].

However, when we look closely at Jerome's *Life of Hilarion* together with Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, we can see rather more parallels than might have been expected from such scholarly silence. It even looks as if Jerome could have had the *Golden Ass* deliberately in mind while writing the *Life of Hilarion*. Hilarion, Jerome tells us, was an avowed ascetic, the first to bring monasticism to Palestine (*Life of Hilarion* 14). Hilarion returns from the great Antony in Egypt to settle near Gaza not far from where he was born (3), and struggles with the demons of temptation (5f.). He begins to perform various miracles and is too successful for his own comfort — he would have preferred a solitary life but attracts crowds of both monks and converts (13f.). His successes are resented by the pagans and he is forced to flee (30), his monastery is destroyed (33), and he wanders round the Mediterranean till he finally settles in Cyprus (33f.).

[1] H. Rosweyde, *Vitae Patrum sive historiae eremiticae* (*PL* 73, 109), and see the discussion by J.B. Bauer, *Wiener Studien* 74 (1961), p. 130f.

[2] Apuleius is not mentioned as a source by the most comprehensive recent study of Jerome's classical sources: H. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics* (Goeteborg, 1958).

[3] E. Coleiro, *VC* 11 (1957), p. 161f. A. de Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire du mouvement monastique* 1.2 (Paris, 1993), p. 79 notes an isolated use of an image from Apuleius' *Florida* in Jerome's *Life of Malchus* and I have discussed Jerome's use of the legal term *postliminium* as a metaphor and Apuleius' similar use of the term: S. Weingarten, *Scripta Classica Israelica* 14 (1995), pp. 143-150.

[4] *Apol.* i 17; *Comm. in Is.* xii, praef. (*CCL* 73a 493-494) where he also speaks of the *Testament of Corocotta*.

[5] See J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings and Controversies* (London, 1975), p. 20 and cf. D. Wiesen, *St Jerome as a Satirist* (Ithaca, 1964). The *Historia Augusta* which is contemporary with Jerome refers to Apuleius' Milesian writings: *Milesias Punicas Apulei sui et ludicra litteraria* (*SHA*: *Clodius Albinus* xii 12).

Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, on the other hand, purports to be the autobiography of Lucius, a Greek, who was attracted to the magic arts (*Met* iii 19), and turned himself into an ass by mistake (*Met* iii 25). After a long series of comic adventures, some of them frankly pornographic in nature, during which Lucius wanders all over Greece searching for some roses to eat, and thereby turn himself back to a man again, he is saved by the intervention of the goddess Isis, whose faithful acolyte he becomes (*Met* xi).

There are various parallels, both verbal and visual, between the *Life of Hilarion* and the *Golden Ass*[6].

In the *Life of Hilarion* (12)[7] we find a story of robbers who set out to search for Hilarion. Having searched for him all night they find him at daybreak and ask jokingly (*quasi per jocum*) what he would do if robbers arrived. He replies that *Nudus latrones non timet* — a naked man does not fear robbers. When they point out that he may be killed, he agrees that this is a possibility but that he is not afraid because he is ready to die[8].

A very similar story is to be found in Apuleius (*Met* i 15): Here a man is preparing to leave an inn before daybreak. The porter protests that it is too early 'Don't you know the roads are infested with robbers (*latrones*)? Even if you have a crime on your conscience and are eager to die I am not such a blockhead as to die for you'. The traveller protests that it is nearly daybreak and anyway, 'What can robbers take from the very poorest?[9] *An ignoras, inepte, nudum nec a decem palaestritis despoliari posse?* Or don't you know, idiot, that a naked man can't be stripped even by ten wrestlers?' The similarities between the stories are clear and both are presented as a joke. However, for Apuleius, the idea that the protagonist might not fear death is presented as

[6] It is not possible in this short paper to include all the parallels between the *Life of Hilarion* and the *Golden Ass*, nor are all the examples of the same kind. We have chosen here to move from a close verbal parallel between the two works, which seems to us undeniable, to more debatable literary allusions, some of which can inevitably only be seen as true parallels in the context of the whole collection. Other similarities exist, for example, in the landscape and specific details of the everyday life of the lower classes, a subject unusual in Roman literature, but which has been pointed out as a typical feature of saints' lives by E. Patlegean, 'Ancient Byzantine hagiography and social history' in *Saints and their cults: Studies in Religion, Sociology, Folklore and History*, ed S. Wilson (Cambridge, 1983); and as a typical feature of Apuleius by F. Millar, 'The World of the *Golden Ass*', *JRS* 71 (1981), p. 63f.

[7] The text of the *Life of Hilarion* (*vita Sancti Hilarionis*) used here is that of H. Hurter reprinted in W.A. Oldfather, *Studies in the Text Tradition of St. Jerome's Vitae Patrum* (Urbana, 1943), p. 42f.

[8] *A vespere usque ad solis ortum discurrentes... Porro clara luce ... quasi per jocum: Quid, inquiunt, faceres si latrones ad te venirent? ... Certe, ajunt, occidi potes. Possum, inquit, possum: et ideo latrones non timeo, quia mori paratus sum.* (*vita Hilarionis* 12).

[9] *Quid tu, inquit, ignoras latronibus infestari vias, qui hoc noctis iter incipis? Nam etsi tu alicuius facinoris tibi conscius scilicet mori cupis, non cucurbitae caput non habemus, ut pro te moriamur. Non longe, inquam, lux abest. Et praeterea quid viatori de summa pauperie latrones auferre possunt?*

ridiculous. Jerome transforms the ridiculous into a transcendent statement of Hilarion's Christian faith. Apuleius' naked man cannot be stripped even by ten professional wrestlers — *palaestritae*. Jerome picks up this unusual Greek word and uses it later for a demonic enemy of Hilarion (18).

When we first meet Hilarion at the beginning of the *Life* (2) he is described as 'a rose among thorns, as the saying goes'. Although Jerome cites this as a commonplace, the combination of roses and thorns is not in fact common in the surviving Latin literature[10]. But it appears several times as a key image in the *Golden Ass*. Lucius, the hero-turned-ass, knows that he must eat roses in order to be saved from his fate as an ass: he begins to search, and the roses he finds often appear among thorns: (*Met* iv 2; x 29). In one incident they are sited in a delightful garden — *hortulum amoenum* — (*Met* iii 29) but Lucius refrains from eating for fear of being killed. Finally Isis (who tells us she is called, among other things, Venus of Paphos, by the people of Cyprus (*Met* xi 5)) saves Lucius and crowns him with roses. Venus appears often in this erotic work of Apuleius, in particular as the persecutor of the beautiful young girl Psyche who fell in love with Love himself (*Met* v 23) as well as the victorious goddess in the mime of the Judgement of Paris (*Met* x 34)[11].

Venus plays an important part in the *Life of Hilarion* (25) also[12]. She is the goddess worshipped by the Saracens of Elusa on whose very festival Hilarion arrives in town and persuades the inhabitants to convert to Christianity. Later Hilarion sails to the goddess' own island of Cyprus and makes his home in the ruins of Paphos, where there still remain some demons for him to struggle with in the ruins of a very ancient temple.

We have already mentioned the story of Psyche in the *Golden Ass*. In another place in this story (*Met* vi 18), Psyche herself is warned not to take account of distractions on her journey, not even a dead man begging for burial while she is in Charon's boat crossing the Styx. One of the temptations of Hilarion (*Life of Hilarion* 7) to distract him from his psalms, (after the more usual naked women) is curiously reminiscent of this incident: a dying gladiator appears to beg him for burial[13].

[10] But cf. Jerome's contemporary Ammianus Marcellinus (xvi 8, 4) where a similar sentiment is found in different words.

[11] At the end of the mime the protagonists are swallowed up by a gaping *vorago terrae*. There may be an allusion to this in the *vita Hilarionis* (6) where a *pompa* consisting of a chariot with racing horses which distracts the praying Hilarion by threatening to run him down is swallowed up by a *hiatu terrae* on his calling on Jesus.

[12] Cf. also *vita Hilarionis* 21, where a Christian virgin is seduced by magic arts including *portentosas figuras in aeris Cyprii lamina* and forced against her will into a passion for a young man. Venus is, of course, patron goddess of Cyprus (as we saw with Apuleius' Isis) and as the demon *proditor castitatis* whom Hilarion exorcises from the girl says, his colleague is the demon of love, as Venus is associated with Cupid.

[13] We could almost add here the warning to Psyche in Apuleius: *nec tu tamen illicita adflectare pietate.*

Another point of resemblance between Jerome and Apuleius is their interest in languages, as both means of communication, and sometimes an obstacle to this, unusual in other classical authors[14]. The *Golden Ass* tells a comic story of a Roman legionary who talks to a Greek speaking countryman in Latin and is inevitably not understood (*Met* ix 39). Finally the soldier is forced to communicate in Greek. On another occasion Apuleius makes a pun on the name of Apollo, the god from Miletus, who although a Greek and an Ionian Greek at that, gave his oracle in Latin for the sake of the author of this Milesian tale (*Met* iv 32)[15]. Jerome has an army officer, of much higher rank but possessed by a demon, who comes to Gaza from France to be exorcised by Hilarion. Hilarion speaks to him in Syriac and from the mouth of this barbarian who knew only Frankish and Latin came an answer in purest Palestinian Syriac[16]. After this marvel the Frank (or his demon), like the soldier in Apuleius, is also forced to give a translation into Greek. Another surprising speaker of Syriac in the *Life of Hilarion* (23) is a Bactrian camel also possessed by a demon. We should note here that Lucius, the man inside the Golden Ass, is also on one occasion compared to a Bactrian camel (*Met* vii 14). Lucius as an ass never manages to speak, so that even here Hilarion goes one better in managing to communicate with the demon in the camel.

Christian commentators in the past have made much of Apuleius' virgin Charite (later called a *matrona*) riding in triumph on an ass (*virginem asino triumphantem*, described as a *pomp(a)*) immediately thinking of the Virgin Mary and the flight to Egypt, or Jesus' entry to Jerusalem, and have tried to use this to demonstrate Apuleius' attitude to Christianity[17]. It is possible that Jerome's description of Aristaenete, the wife of a future praetorian prefect, owes something to Apuleius, for she is described (14) as being so oblivious of the respect due to her — *oblita matronalis pompae* — that her husband could scarcely manage to persuade her to come to Hilarion seated on a little ass — *ut asello sedens pergeret*[18].

The *Life of Hilarion* includes a description of Hilarion's visit to the *habitaculum* where Antony, the father of monasticism, had lived and worked (31)[19].

[14] This is less true of Christian authors — see for example Marcus Diaconus *vita Porphyrii episc. Gazensis* 66 where a divine voice speaks Greek through a Syriac speaking child.

[15] *Apollo, quamquam Graecus et Ionicus, propter Milesiae conditorem sic Latina sorte respondit.*

[16] *Videres de ore barbaro, et qui francicam tantum et latinam linguam noverat, syra ad purum verba resonare: ut non stridor, non aspiratio, non idioma aliquod Palaestini deesset eloquii.*

[17] See L. Herrmann, 'L'âne d'or et la christianisme', *Latomus* 12 (1953), p. 188f.

[18] The relationship between Hilarion and Aristaenete is clearly based on Elisha and the Shunamite woman (II Kings 4:8f. esp v.22 (for the ass)) but it has also has parallels to the relationship between Jerome and Paula, and Jerome relates a similar incident about Paula's scarcely agreeing to ride an ass during their pilgrimage round the Holy Places (*ep* 108).

[19] *Saxeus et sublimis mons ... ad radices suas aquas exprimit, quarum ... ad inferiora delapsae, paulatiu rivum efficiunt; super quem ex utraque ripa palmae innumerabiles multum loco et amoenitatis et commodi tribuunt ... hic aiebant, psallere, hic orare, hic operari ... hanc piscinam ad irrigandum hortulum multo sudore fabricatus est.*

It is clear from Jerome's description that he means this as an image of the earthly paradise: he uses words such as *amoenitas*, for Paradise was traditionally *locus amoenus*, and mentions a garden, *hortulum*, and the work in it *operari* — Adam was placed in Paradise *ut operaretur* (Gen 2:15). Later Jerome describes the last home of Hilarion in very similar terms (43): a remote and isolated mountain, with a river descending from the peak to a *hortulum peramoenum*. However, Hilarion, unlike Antony and Adam, does not work in his *hortulum peramoenum*, nor does he eat the fruit of the trees — he does not commit the sin which led to the Fall. What is more, he fights with demons in the ruins of the ancient temple nearby — presumably the temple of Venus, the goddess of the island. If Antony is a type of Adam before the Fall, Hilarion surpasses him: he is the type of Jesus. *Locus amoenus* is a commonplace for Paradise, but the combination *hortulum (per)amoenum* I have found only in Apuleius before Jerome. In the *hortulum amoenum* of *Metamorphoses* iii 29 we saw earlier that Lucius refrains from eating the roses for fear of death. In the *hortulum peramoenum* in the *Life of Hilarion*, Hilarion refrains from eating the fruit of the trees of Paradise, by eating which Adam and Eve had became subject to expulsion and Fall[20].

The *Golden Ass* purports to be autobiographical and even Augustine appears to have kept an open mind on the subject, writing of it as a work which may or may not be true[21]. At least some of Apuleius' audience must have believed in the truth of his conversion into an ass, as a result of the use of magical arts. From Apuleius' autobiographical *Apology* we know that a friend of Apuleius, Pontianus, introduced him to his mother Pudentilla, a rich widow, whom Apuleius married. Later the son died and the rest of the family took Apuleius to court on a charge of seducing the widow by witchcraft, a serious charge[22]. Apuleius was acquitted but forced to leave town. Jerome too was associated with a rich widow, Paula, who eventually used her money to build two monasteries where they ended their lives living side by side. After Paula's child Blesilla died as a result of repeated fasting encouraged by Jerome, charges were brought against Jerome (*ep* 45,6) evidently about his relations with Paula. There was some sort of enquiry, presumably by a church court, as a result of which a judgment was passed on Jerome (Jerome: *Apol* iii 21). He would

[20] In her translation of the *Life of Hilarion* (in R.J. Deferrari (ed.) *Early Christian Biographies* (*FC* 15, Washington 1952)), M.L. Ewald points out some resemblances (based on one or two words only) between Jerome's descriptions of Hilarion's home and Sallust: *Catalina* 59.2 and *Jugurtha* 17.2. If, however, we compare Jerome with Apuleius' description of the entrance to Hades (*Met* vi 13-14) there are just as many verbal similarities, as well as a general similarity of landscape. There are also direct opposites, so that we have the impression that Hilarion's paradise is a deliberate reversal of Apuleius' Hades.

[21] Augustine *ep.* 136; *Civ. Dei* xviii 18: *Sicut Apuleius in libris, quos Asini aurei titulo inscripsit, sibi ipse accidisse ut ... asinus fieret, aut indicavit aut finxit.*

[22] Apuleius *Apol.* 72-73 and see Schanz-Hosius-Krueger iii 100-102 and bibliography *ad loc.*

appear to have been acquitted but forced to leave Rome[23]. As Kelly notes, 'His last act, before the ship weighed anchor, was to dictate a long letter of protest and self-defence to Asella'[24]. Asella was another of the circle of noble women associated with Jerome at Rome. There is a manuscript tradition that the *Life of Hilarion* itself was sent to her[25].

In the *Life*, Hilarion at one stage, tempted by the devil with seductive images, addresses himself as an ass: *Ego, inquit, aselle* ... (5). Later the devil, in the form of a circus driver leaps on his back, flogs him and tauntingly offers him barley to eat (8). Hilarion under temptation is clearly identified with an ass, and the dedication to Asella, if genuine, would show that when writing the *Life of Hilarion* Jerome was thinking of the woman whose name means 'little ass' (used as a term of endearment)[26] to whom he justified himself after the trauma of his judgement and expulsion. There are, as we have seen, parallels with Apuleius' charges and trial, which could well have resulted in Jerome's identifying with Apuleius, whether consciously or not. We know he felt immense guilt for many years at reading profane literature: there is the famous dream where he is accused of being a Ciceronian, not a Christian, and then flogged on order of the Judge (*ep* 22), which led him to forswear such reading for many years. He was unable to keep to this however, and eventually argued that he was justified in taking what was good from pagan writers and leaving the rest. Had not Moses, the prophets and Paul all used pagan literature? However, whereas Origen in using the same argument cites the passage in Exodus where the Israelites despoil the Egyptians of their gold and silver as his justification[27], Jerome cites the passage from Deuteronomy 21, 10-13 where the Israelites are allowed to take a beautiful woman captured from the enemy provided they first shave her head and cut her nails (*ep* 70)[28].

Jerome, then, consciously or unconsciously identifying with Apuleius, had the *Golden Ass* in mind when writing his *Life of Hilarion*. Time and again Hilarion, in his militant Christianity, far surpasses his pagan rivals; Jerome uses episodes in the *Golden Ass* each time to show how Hilarion can go one better: Hilarion is notably victorious over Venus. The bawdy and indecent *Golden Ass* has been used as a sort of basic antithesis for the *Life of Hilarion* — the beautiful pagan captive has been shorn and converted to Jerome's ascetic Christianity.

[23] See Kelly (*op. cit.* n. 5), pp. 113-114 for a convincing reconstruction of the events from the fragmentary evidence.

[24] Kelly *loc. cit.*

[25] Vallarsi, note to *vita Hilarionis* (*PL* 23, 29 n.*b.*) and see de Vogüé (*op. cit.* n. 3), p. 165 'vraisemblablement authentiques'.

[26] cf. *RACh s.v.* 'Esel' (I. Opelt).

[27] Origen: *ep. ad Gregorium* (*Thaumaturgium*) (*PG* 11, 88-92).

[28] See Hagendahl (*op. cit.* n. 2), pp. 108-9; 208f. and A.S. Pease *TP* 50 (1919), p. 150f.

Much of the discussion on Jerome's saints' lives has seen the hellenistic Greek novella as his model, in spite of the fact that Jerome does not appear to have read pagan Greek literature[29]. In Apuleius we now have a Latin novella as a convincing source.

[29] Hellenistic novella: M. Fuhrmann, 'Die Moenchsgeschichten des Hieronymus: Formexperimente in erzaehlender Literatur', Fondation Hardt *Entretiens* 23 (Vandoeuvres-Genève, 1976), pp. 45-99. For Jerome and pagan Greek literature see Hagendahl (*op. cit.* n. 2).

XVI. Other Latin Fathers after Nicaea

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Le Progrès de l'Intelligence dans le *De Trinitate* d'Hilaire de Poitiers

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1. En vue de saisir le problème que nous pose le *De Trinitate* concernant la possibilité pour l'homme de connaître Dieu, le mieux est de juxtaposer deux affirmations de l'ouvrage à ce sujet. Dans le livre 2, où, traversés le prologue autobiographique[1], le plan et l'invocation inaugurale, est abordé le vif du débat, nous lisons: 'On dépasse le pouvoir signifiant des mots, on dépasse l'extension de l'esprit (*sensus*), on dépasse les conceptions de l'intelligence dans tout ce qu'on va chercher au-delà; on ne le formule pas, on ne le rejoint pas, on ne le possède pas. La nature de la réalité en cause épuise le pouvoir expressif des mots, l'inscrutable lumière éblouit la vue de l'esprit, une totalité qui n'est contenue par aucune borne déborde la capacité de l'intelligence'[2]. C'est le discours de l'apophase. Mais à la fin du livre 11, quand toute la geste du Fils incarné a été réfléchie, nous lisons: 'L'homme s'accomplit comme image de Dieu. Car devenu conforme à la gloire du corps de Dieu, il se surpasse en image du Créateur, conformément à l'économie adoptée dans la formation du premier homme. Dépassés le péché et le vieil homme, devenu homme nouveau en vue de la connaissance de Dieu, il obtient la perfection de son être et par là est image de son Dieu, progressant par la piété jusqu'à l'éternité et destiné par l'éternité à être l'image permanente de son Créateur'[3]. C'est le face à face. Y aurait-il donc une transformation des capacités cognitives de l'homme, à travers la geste du Christ? De fait, et nous le constaterons dans la suite de l'exposé. Mais la donne est plus complexe. A la fin du *De Trinitate*

[1] Jean Doignon a posé avec nuance le problème de la valeur autobiographique des paragraphes 1-14 du livre I du *De Trinitate* au chapitre 3 de la première partie de son *Hilaire de Poitiers avant l'exil* (Paris, 1971), pp. 85-156; il parle à ce sujet de 'stylisation', expliquant bien en fin d'analyse ce que ce mot signifie: 'L'unité profonde de la relation que fait Hilaire de sa "naissance à la foi" est assurée par la présence de l'âme du narrateur à sa propre démarche ... Ainsi, croyons-nous, se trouve résolu le problème par la dualité des modes d'approche du prologue hilarien, entre lesquels ont hésité les érudits qui l'ont analysé: connaissance du moi d'Hilaire, analyse d'un processus normatif de "naissance à la foi"' (p. 156).

[2] 2, 5 (éd. P. Smulders, *CCSL* 72, 72a, Turnhout 1979-1980, p. 42); j'emprunte la traduction en français à celle que le P. Matthieu de Durand est en train de mettre au point pour la collection des Sources Chrétiennes.

[3] 11, 49, *ibid.*, pp. 577s.

l'apophase conserve toute sa pertinence[4], tandis qu'à l'inverse, dès les débuts de l'ouvrage, une possibilité de connaissance de Dieu est offerte. Sur ce dernier point, je cite, dans le livre 1, à propos de la révélation du Buisson ardent: 'Je fus absolument émerveillé de ce signalement si parfait de Dieu, qui exprimait en mots très adaptés à l'intelligence humaine l'inaccessible connaissance de la nature divine'[5]; et un peu plus loin de façon plus précise: 'De sorte que Dieu doit être déclaré suprêmement beau — d'une façon telle qu'il n'est pas enfermé par la perception de notre intelligence, mais n'est pas en dehors de notre intelligence en sa perception'[6].

S'il s'avère que ces propositions divergentes, disons de négation et d'affirmation, ne sont pas isolées, mais s'inscrivent dans le tissu même de l'œuvre, voilà qui va contraindre à densifier nos idées concernant l'épistémologie théologique d'Hilaire[7].

2. De fait, les travaux qui aboutiront à l'édition du *De Trinitate* dans les Sources Chrétiennes, ont permis de cerner des ensembles méthodologiques dans la masse textuelle. Présentant le plan du Traité dans son introduction générale, le Dr Michael Figura pointe en effet des passages où Hilaire prend soin d'exposer, voir de défendre sa façon d'exposer la doctrine de la foi. Les voici: 1, 1-4; 2, 1-5; 3, 24-26; 4, 1-2, 14; 5, 1-3; 6, 1-3; 8, 1-3; 9, 3-5; 10, 1-8, 52-54; 11, 23-24, 45-47; 12, 1. Même si, dans le détail, on peut souhaiter une extension des passages porteurs du thème, et aussi la suppression d'un fragment (12, 1)[8] et l'adjonction de quelques autres (je pense à 3, 1-4; 7, 1-8; 11, 44-49, et 12 tout entier à la place de 12, 1), la découverte est très féconde. Elle permet de mieux rendre compte de ce qui fait une difficulté reconnue du *De Trinitate*: la complexité de son argumentation. Celle-ci pourrait bien être le résultat d'une intention architectonique de l'auteur, ou encore d'une méthodologie théologique consciente et, de plus, rappelée avec soin tout au long de l'exposé.

[4] Références à tirer surtout des livres 10-12. Par exemple, 'La puissance de Dieu dépasse donc l'esprit humain. S'étendre jusqu'à elle, c'est pour la faiblesse, se rendre plus faible, puisqu'elle perd même ce qu'elle tient: la nature des réalités célestes est assez puissante pour l'écraser…', 10, 53, *ibid.*, pp. 507-508.

[5] 1, 5, *ibid.*, p. 5.

[6] 1, 7, *ibid.*, p. 8.

[7] J. Tixeront, *Histoire des dogmes*, t. 2 (Paris, 1909), p. 260, reste trop fixé sur les affirmations d'Hilaire en particulier concernant la philosophie pour saisir la complexité ici indiquée. P. Galtier, *Saint Hilaire de Poitiers, le premier docteur de l'Église latine* (Paris, 1960), n'en reste qu'au côté apophatique de la connaissance de Dieu. Dans l'article du *DSp* consacré à Hilaire, 7, pp. 466-499, C. Kannengiesser progresse vers une prise en compte plus exacte de l'arrière-fond anthropologique de la démarche de son auteur, mais reconnaît que l'"on ne dispose pas encore d'une étude d'ensemble sur l'herméneutique sacrée d'Hilaire' (col. 490) et va jusqu'à affirmer: 'L'anthropologie d'Hilaire ne présente aucune originalité philosophique et elle ne reçoit pas de longs développements autonomes dans ses écrits' (col. 492). Notre exposé voudrait orienter vers une appréciation plus juste de la méthode théologique de l'évêque de Poitiers.

[8] Volontiers, nous penserions que tout le livre 12, arrachant aux adversaires l'exacte interprétation de *Prov.* 8, 22, est une intime synthèse de christologie, de théologie et de méthodologie.

Ces moments de prise de conscience de la méthode suivie, et à suivre, dans le type de parcours théologique pensé par Hilaire s'apparentent les uns aux autres par une certaine couleur littéraire. Pour ce qui est de la *compositio*, ils sont, placés dans des points stratégiques: débuts des livres (tous les livres sauf 11, 12), fins (10, 11), rebondissement de l'argumentation (10)[9]. Souvent, dans cette ligne, ils conduisent à un premier *igitur* qui signale que le débat de fond s'amorce: ainsi en 2, 4: 'Haec igitur licet mutare…', en 3, 4: 'Igitur perfecti Patris…'[10]. Autre point, il y a peu de citations bibliques dans ces passages. En tout cas, le moment n'est pas venu alors d'arracher pied à pied le sens d'un texte litigieux aux interprétations adverses: les références renvoient à des passages eux aussi méthodologiques de Paul, lettres à Timothée et à Tite et les versets 2, 8-9 des *Colossiens*[11], ou encore ce sont de rapides réparties ad hominem[12]. Enfin, pour ce qui est du vocabulaire, on note, ce qui est normal, une concentration des mots de l'épistémologie: *intelligentia, intelligere, ratio, sensus, mens*, etc. Ainsi 1, 1-3, offre 14 emplois tirés de ladite constellation sémantique[13]. On perçoit toujours dans ces passages un écho des paragraphes 1-16 du Prologue, où précisément se met en place tout l'arrière-fond cognitif de la démarche du *De Trinitate*. Et l'ensemble du dernier livre, tout en reprenant aux adversaires la signification de *Proverbes* 8, 22, retravaille le sujet de la connaissance de Dieu et lui donne sa forme achevée. Nos moments méthodologiques sont en quelque sorte tendus, dans la composition générale actuelle[14], entre le début et la fin de l'ouvrage[15].

[9] Cf. mon étude 'L'impassibilité du Christ selon Hilaire de Poitiers. *De Trinitate* X', dans *Studi sul cristianesimo antico e moderno, in onore di Maria Grazia Mara*, éd. par M. Simonetti et P. Siniscalco (Augustinianum, 35; 1995), pp. 349-357.

[10] *Op. cit.* n. 2, p. 39 et 75. On décompte 187 *igitur*; 214 *ergo* dans *Trin.* Difficile à interpréter; mais nous voyons dans la multiplication de ces conjonctions de coordination, caractéristique du raisonnement, le signe que les Pères, Hilaire et les autres, attachent la plus grande attention à l'exactitude des processus mentaux de l'intelligence.

[11] Ainsi *I Tim.* 4, 1-2 en 10, 2,17-19, *op. cit.* n. 2, p. 459-460; *II Tim.* 4, 3-4 en 10, 2, 3-6, *ibid.*, p. 459; *Tite* 1, 9 en 8, 8, 3, *ibid.*, p. 320; *Col.* 2, 8-9 en 2, 8, 22-23, *ibid.*, p. 46; 3, 3, 7-8, *ibid.*, p. 74; 9, 1, 11-14, *ibid.*, p. 370 repris p. 371 et 372, 9, 1, 33, 45. Sur ce dernier passage, voir J. Doignon, 'Un terme difficile de *Col.* 2, 9 éclairé par Hilaire de Poitiers: corporaliter', dans *RBén.*, 105 (1995), pp. 5-8. Il y aurait certainement à mieux cerner le dossier des textes biblique auxquels Hilaire se réfère pour fonder sa méthodologie théologique.

[12] J'ai attiré l'attention sur cette utilisation antirrhétique de la Bible dans mon étude à paraître dans *Origeniana sexta*, 'Typologie des références à la Bible dans le Discours sur la prière'.

[13] Op. cit. n. 2, p. 1-3. *Intelligentia*[2], *sensus, intelligibilis, cognoscere, intellegere*[2], *comprehendere, incomprehensibilis*[2], *incomprehensibiliter, inenarrabiliter, sentire, contueri.* Autre exemple, en 9, 1-5, *ibid.*, p. 373-376, *demonstrare, intelligentia*[4], *intelligere, significare, ratio*[2], *nescire, ignorare*[2].

[14] Même en tenant compte de la genèse de l'ouvrage, qui n'a donc pas été composé d'une seule venue. Mais Hilaire s'est préoccupé, on le sait, de marquer la cohérence de son développement.

[15] Tous les indices précédents devraient permettre de serrer mieux le contour des moments méthodologiques.

Cependant, tout en ayant entre eux une parenté littéraire sensible, les textes méthodologiques n'en subissent pas moins la pression du mouvement général imprimé au développement. Voici qui explique, littérairement, la différence bien réelle entre les livres 1 et 12, malgré la parenté indiquée au début de l'exposé. Ainsi 2, 1-3 introduit la question de la nomination jouant difficilement avec la réalité[16]; ainsi 6, 1-3 laisse surgir la dureté des temps pour le théologien[17]. Dans l'un et l'autre exemples, comme dans tous les autres cas, la connexion est étroite entre les données qui apparaissent et la réflexion fondamentale sur la possibilité humaine de connaître et de comprendre quelque chose au sujet de Dieu.

3. D'ores et déjà, notre brève approche littéraire des passages isolés analytiquement permet de pressentir la complexité de leur contenu: il y a tout d'abord une permanence des données épistémologiques dans le *De Trinitate*; il y a ensuite un développement selon le devenir littéraire et aussi temporel du parcours; il y a enfin les forces qui permettent la conjonction de la permanence et du développement dans la connaissance théologique. Déployons brièvement la richesse de la thématique de nos passages selon ces trois axes.

Cinq grands sous-thèmes portent la réflexion méthodologique hilarienne: a. Dieu dépasse toute comparaison, toute expression et toute conception humaines; b. la philosophie païenne, surtout réutilisée par les hérétiques — cette précision est capitale —, est donc à écarter, selon les conseils de Paul, notamment à Timothée et à Tite, ou en s'aidant de *Colossiens* 2, 9; c. les mots, notamment ceux de l'Écriture Sainte, sont solides en eux-mêmes, mais fragiles par leur malléabilité à la mobilité du couple intelligence-volonté en l'homme; d. quoi qu'il arrive, même par rapport à l'incompréhensible, l'intelligence et la raison comprennent toujours quelque chose, ne serait-ce que cette incompréhensibilité même; e. la déviation, même par rapport aux mots les plus saints, et même pour des motifs de piété, est toujours possible; c'est qu'alors on s'est éloigné soit de la 'vertu' des mots (= leur sens), soit de leur 'cause' (= leur contexte)[18]. Il n'est pas possible, dans le cadre de cet exposé, de corroborer par des citations les sous-thèmes retenus[19]. Aussi bien notre 4e section, recherchant les fondements théologiques et anthropologiques de la méthodologie, reviendra sur les sous-thèmes a, d, e.

[16] 2, 3: 'Il s'est trouvé, en effet, bien des gens pour accueillir la simplicité des paroles célestes en fonction de leurs opinions arbitraires et non de l'évidence de la vérité elle-même; leur interprétation n'est pas celle que demanderait le sens des mots', *op. cit.* n. 2, p. 39. Autre exemple, 8, 4: 'En outre le sens commun nous fait comprendre que plusieurs natures ne sauraient se regrouper sous le nom d'une seule et que des êtres ne peuvent être qu'un seul quelque chose quand il n'y a pas entre eux de différence spécifique', *ibid.*, pp. 316-317.

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 196-198, à comparer avec 1, 15-19, *ibid.*, pp. 15-19.

[18] Cf. entre autres 4, 14, *ibid.*, p. 116: 'Intelligentia enim dictorum ex causis est adsumenda dicendi, quia non sermoni res sed rei est sermo subiectus. Verum omnia editis simul et dicendi causis et dictorum uirtutibus prosequemur'.

[19] On se contente de donner un exemple pour chaque sous-thème: a. 2, 9, *ibid.*, pp. 46-47; b. 9, 1, *ibid.*, p. 370; c. 2, 3, *ibid.*, p. 39; d. 3, 26, *ibid.*, pp. 99-100; e. 6, 7, *ibid.*, p. 202.

Deux sous-thèmes, suggérés autobiographiquement dans le Prologue[20], ne relèvent pas de la structure de la connaissance et sont plutôt conjoncturels, devenant partie intégrante de l'épistémologie concrète en matière de connaissance théologique au cours du développement: a. la nécessité vitale de comprendre de la foi ce qui peut en être compris pour le faire comprendre aux simples, victimes concrètes des déviations dans l'interprétation des mots de ladite foi; exemple: 4, 1[21]; b. la subtilité de plus en plus enchevêtrée des adversaires, notamment avec la mise en lumière en méthodologie de la volonté qui entraîne l'intelligence où elle veut[22] et met le théologien fidèle dans des angoisses mortelles concernant ce qu'il doit faire, parler ou se taire; exemple: 8, 1[23]. De cet environnement sociologique en même temps qu'historique de la connaissance sort renforcée la nécessité de comprendre Dieu si peu que ce soit, mais en vérité: '... C'est de façon perverse qu'Alexandrie a divulgué dans le monde presque entier l'idée de deux dieux, qu'elle nie. C'est de façon pernicieuse que la Pannonie a soutenu que Jésus le Christ était né de la Vierge Marie. Et au milieu de tout cela l'Église risque, à cause d'assertions vraies, de ne pas maintenir la vérité, dès là qu'on introduit en elle dans un dessein irréligieux ce qui peut être aussi bien le soutien que la destruction de la religion'[24].

Deux forces enfin permettent précisément à l'intelligence de Dieu de grandir en fonction des difficultés mêmes qui surgissent, alors que tout semble contraire: a. la foi, qui bien loin, pour Hilaire, de 'chercher l'intelligence', la donne concernant les mots de l'Écriture; nous allons y revenir; b. la 'nature' qui, par elle-même, de façon quasi teilhardienne, est un dynamisme de progrès: 'Donc le progrès nécessaire de notre nature, qu'une loi de l'univers conduit à s'augmenter sans cesse, nous fait attendre sans qu'il y ait là de l'impudence, un progrès vers une nature plus haute, l'accroissement étant conforme à la nature comme la décroissance lui est contraire'[25]. Et c'est Dieu,

[20] Références dans le Prologue: l'épiscopat, 1, 14, et l'attaque hérétique, 1, 15-19, *ibid.*, pp. 15-19.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 101: 'Et primum cognoscendum ... uirtutemque corrumpant' = 'Et d'abord il faut qu'on sache quelle est la témérité de leur doctrine, le péril d'irréligion qu'elle comporte. Ensuite, en quoi leur opinion s'oppose à la foi des apôtres, avec laquelle nous sommes en accord, nous; quels sont leurs arguments habituels en sens contraire, les expressions équivoques qui leur servent pour abuser la simplicité de leurs auditeurs. Enfin, par quels artifices d'interprétation ils altèrent la vérité et la force des affirmations divines'.

[22] Cela arrive précisément au moment où, dans le *De Trinitate*, la réflexion théologique est elle-même encombrée de la subtilité hérétique concernant la filiation par identité de volonté, à partir du livre 7.

[23] *Op. cit.* n. 2, pp. 312-313: 'Quel mal alors pour les auditeurs qu'une prédicatiuon stupide, qui sous couvert de sagesse entraîne un jugement stupide (...) Il faut donc contredire et l'impiété insolente, et l'insolence au vain bavardage, et le vain bavardage qui séduit. Il faut contredire par une saine doctrine, avec une foi vraie, avec une parole franche, en sorte qu'il y ait la franchise du vrai et ce vrai qui est la santé'. Parler ou se taire: voir 5, 1, *ibid.*, p. 151.

[24] 7, 3, *ibid.*, p. 262.

[25] 9, 4, *ibid.*, p. 375.

lui-même et directement, qui est l'auteur bienveillant de ces deux forces, leur donnant, dans son unité de se conjoindre et non pas de s'annuler. Nous voici conduit de l'épistémologie, ayant pesé à quel point elle tient à cœur à Hilaire, au contenu même de ce qui est à connaître, Dieu et l'homme.

4. Il est possible, désormais, au moins en une esquisse, de saisir synthétiquement comme Hilaire parvient à unir la répétition du même, disons la structure de l'intelligence et le développement de cette dernière depuis les linéaments de ce qui est perçu modestement lors de la conversion jusqu'à la vision face à face, à travers la loi intangible de l'apophase et les difficultés concrètes sans nombre qui se présentent sur le terrain. Nous nous contenterons ici d'indiquer ce qui nous apparaît être les deux moyens fondamentaux de cette union qui ne cessent de se renforcer l'un l'autre tout au long du traité.

a. Hilaire prône une voie pour se sortir de l'alternative de la cataphase et de l'apophase, lui-même n'employant pas ces termes techniques, ni, que je sache, rien d'approchant. C'est celle de l'intelligence modeste, qui, par sa modestie même, d'une part, se déprend de ses propres enflures pervertissantes, d'autre part et du même coup, est enseignée directement par Dieu dans la simplicité et la solidité des mots de l'Écriture. Par exemple: un père n'est un père que s'il a un fils. On peut comprendre cette proposition aussi bien avec des minuscules qu'avec des majuscules. Dans cette ligne, Hilaire passe tout son temps dans le *De Trinitate* à défaire les sophismes, et cela non pas seulement pour conformer à la saine doctrine, mais pour que l'intelligence soit sauvée. Il n'y a pas de sacrifice de l'intelligence pour Hilaire. Il y a sa guérison et son assomption, à elle qui, dès lors, apparaît en son fond comme la pure ouverture à ce que Dieu dit et fait, comme et quand Dieu le dit et le fait[26]. Il me faut ici insister sur la critique hilarienne d'une apophase outrée qui se perdrait en elle-même. Nous en sommes à la fin du livre 10, cet exposé concernant le problème difficile des souffrances du Christ dans sa Passion, Hilaire s'appuie sur Romains 10, 7, 'La parole est près de tes lèvres et de ton cœur'. Il écrit: 'C'est piété de ne pas douter et justice que de croire et salut que de le (Jésus Seigneur) confesser.

[26] Références sur les deux registres: a. la mise en pièces de l'intelligence fausse; b. l'indication de l'intelligence modeste. a. 3, 24, *ibid.*, p. 96-97: '... Lui-même, il ne se perçoit au vrai qu'en tant qu'il est; et, pour le reste, son intelligence ne s'étend pas au-delà des bornes fixés à sa nature. Car son mouvement, il ne le doit pas à lui-même, mais à son auteur. Voilà pourquoi ce qui existe à partir d'un auteur est imparfait pris en soi-même, tenant d'ailleurs sa consistance. Inévitablement aussi, sur les points où il se croit parfaitement sage, il déraisonne...'; b. 10, 53, *ibid.*, p. 508: 'On doit, par conséquent, regarder le soleil de la façon qu'il est possible de le regarder et ne recevoir de sa lumière que ce qu'on en tolère, de crainte que si nous voulions en attendre davantage, nous n'en recevions même moins que notre capacité. De même les desseins du ciel doivent être compris juste dans la mesure où ils permettent qu'on les comprenne. Ils doivent être espérés dans la mesure où ils se donnent à saisir, de peur que, si nous ne nous contentons pas de la part qui nous est faite par indulgence, nous ne perdions ce qui nous est octroyé; il y a donc en Dieu quelque chose que l'on peut percevoir; oui, vraiment cela y est, pourvu qu'on ne veuille que ce que l'on peut...'.

Non pas se répandre en incertitudes, ni déborder en bavardage stupide (...) Que personne, par conséquent, n'utilise ce qui a été dit à raison de notre ignorance pour s'en faire une occasion d'impiété. Il fallait en effet connaître...'[27]; je souligne 'connaître'.

b. Hilaire, par tout le développement sotériologique de son traité[28], donne à comprendre ce qu'il précise à plusieurs reprises: ce qui explique, en dernier lieu, que Dieu se fasse entendre de notre intelligence, c'est l'Incarnation du Fils, comme c'est la remise par le Fils glorifié de tout au Père, Dieu étant alors tout en tous (I Cor. 15, 20-28, expliqué précisément au livre 11), qui explique la cataphase parfaite du face à face éternel. La christologie, pour Hilaire, est ce qui communique en dernière analyse à son épistémologie conquérante tout l'élan qui est le sien. Contentons-nous ici d'un texte, parmi tant d'autres, pour que cette donnée, un peu étonnante, soit tout à fait avérée: 'Quant au Dieu Monogène, bien qu'il soit devenu aussi un homme issu d'une naissance, il n'est cependant pas autre chose que Dieu tout en tous. Cette soumission du corps par laquelle l'élément charnel en lui est englouti dans le spirituel constitue Dieu tout en tous celui qui est aussi homme en plus d'être Dieu: voilà jusqu'où se hausse cette humanité qui est la nôtre. Quant à nous, nous nous hausserons jusqu'à une conformité de gloire avec cette humanité qui est la nôtre. Renouvelés dans la connaissance de Dieu, nous serons remodelés à l'image du Créateur'[29].

Trop succinctement, mais, avec une réelle simplicité, finalement, nous entrevoyons donc comment épistémologie, anthropologie, théologie, christologie, tout peut arriver à se nouer, sans confusion, dans le *De Trinitate*: du côté de l'homme, dans la foi, il y a la conversion à l'intelligence modeste, du côté de Dieu, il y a l'œuvre même de l'Incarnation du Fils.

[27] 10, 70, *ibid.*, p. 526. 'Ignorationem nostram', bien que désignant les difficultés qu'entraîne la foi en la mort et en la résurrection du Christ, recouvre parfaitement l'apophatisme fondamental mis en œuvre par Hilaire en théologie. Sur le danger, avec des conséquences sur l'établissement du texte lui-même, d'un apophatisme unilatéral, voir J. Doignon, 'Y a-t-il, pour Hilaire de Poitiers, une *inintelligentia* de Dieu? Étude critique et philologique', *Vigiliae Christianae*, 33 (1979), pp. 226-233. Je cite cette seule quasi-conclusion: 'Le Dieu d'Hilaire en effet n'est pas l'Etre inconnaissable des philosophes et des gnostiques. L'auteur du *De Trinitate*, à l'école de saint Paul, n'a jamais reculé devant l'emploi d'*intelligere* pour exprimer l'idée (*sensus*) de Dieu chez l'homme'. L'édition dans les Sources Chrétiennes corrigera en ce sens le texte du P. Smulders en 8, 38, 31, *op. cit.* n. 2, p. 352; 11, 47, 6, *ibid.*, p. 575.

[28] On sait que l'interprétation la plus actuelle du *De Trinitate* insiste sur l'enveloppement sotériologique de la réflexion théologique de l'évêque de Poitiers; voir, par exemple, B. Studer et B. Daley, *Soteriologie in der Schrift und Patristik. Handbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, t. 3 (Fribourg-Bâle-Vienne, 1978), pp. 130-135: 'Diese Heilslehre, in deren Mittelpunkt die assumptio carnis im vollen Sinn als exaltatio gloriosa totius Christi steht, ist im Grunde genommen eine Weiterführung der Lehre über die salus carnis des Irenäus und Tertullian. Die Linienführung ist indes einfacher und klarer geworden' (p. 135).

[29] 11, 49, p. 577.

5. Si nous jetons un regard rétrospectif sur les analyses précédentes, nous pouvons tout d'abord reconnaître qu'effectivement Hilaire présente d'autant mieux le progrès dans la connaissance de Dieu pour les hommes qu'il en analyse plus finement les conditions de possibilité, dans un très grand respect de l'intelligence humaine. Mais que représentent cette centaine de pages, sur laquelle nous avons porté notre attention, parmi les six cents et quelques que comporte l'édition du *CCSL*? J'aurais tendance à parler à leur sujet de levain encore caché dans la pâte. On ne s'est pas encore, à ce jour, tellement rendu compte de leur spécificité. A ce titre, cette brève étude n'est qu'un essai dont toute la vertu ne peut être qu'apéritive. Reste que ce petit sixième de l'ensemble, une fois repéré, montre déjà sa capacité à faire lever le pain pétri par le boulanger Hilaire. La compacité du *De Trinitate* a quelque chose de légendaire[30]. Les travaux des Smulders, des Simonetti, etc., sur la genèse de l'œuvre ont déjà contribué à faire éclater la masse, la rendant plus aisée à aborder. Ce qui est présenté ici est une autre manière de favoriser la fermentation nourricière. Montrer qu'Hilaire a tâtonné dans la rédaction de son traité est une chose. Commencer à déceler que, jamais, à quelque moment que ce soit de l'élaboration, il ne se départit du souci d'être intelligent et de rendre intelligent en est une autre[31]. Il me semble qu'il y a encore à laisser la pâte monter de cette manière, au profit de ceux pour la foi desquels l'évêque Hilaire a jugé vital de combattre par l'écrit.

[30] Le 'Rhône de l'éloquence latine', Hier., *In Gal. 2, praef., PL* 26, 355.

[31] Cf. J. Doignon, *art. cit.* n. 27, avec cette autre affirmation: 'Il nous suffit d'espérer qu'au terme de l'enquête critique et philologique à laquelle nous venons de nous livrer, nous avons dissipé l'équivoque créée par la conjecture inopportune du mot *inintelligentia*, par lequel la plupart des éditeurs du *De Trinitate* depuis Érasme ont cru pouvoir rendre compte de la perception hilarienne du mystère de Dieu', p. 230.

Priscillianist Duplicity Reconsidered

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... Although we have articulated our faith in repeated *libelli* and condemned the dogmas of all heretics..., nevertheless even now, because you want it, just as is written, 'always prepared to confess to anyone who requests of us an account of the faith and hope that is in us', we have not wanted to remain silent, since you command it. (Priscillian, *Apology*)[1].

I follow the opinion of my lord and my father and begetter and teacher.... Whatever he said, I say. For we read what is written: 'If someone preaches to you otherwise than what has been preached to you, let that one be anathema'. And on that account, all that Priscillian either taught wrongly or wrote wrongly I condemn with the author himself. (Dictinius, from *Transcript of the Professions Held in the Toledan Council Against the Sect of Priscillian*)[2].

My question concerns the interpretation of coerced speech. The first of the above-cited texts comes from Priscillian's *Apology*, explicitly presented as a command performance, a tract of self-defense produced at episcopal request by a scholar threatened with charges of heresy and sorcery[3]. The second text comes from the minutes of a council held some twenty years later at Toledo, convened to pass judgment on the orthodoxy of certain bishops and clergy accused of lingering adherence to a 'sect of Priscillian'. Both of these documents are 'public transcripts', to invoke the language of political scientist James C. Scott. As Scott points out, the performance of power relations implicated in public speech conditions and constrains the expressions of all actors involved. As a result, a society's 'public transcripts' may diverge from and be in significant tension with the back-stage talk or 'hidden transcripts' that constitute the various insiders' discourses[4]. Historians of ancient Christianity rarely (if ever) have

[1] *Tractatus* (hereafter *Tract.*) 1, 3.7-4.2. Critical edition: G. Schepss, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 18 (1889).

[2] *Exemplar professionum habitarum in concilio Toletano contra sectam Priscilliani* (hereafter *Exemplar*) ll. 62-66. Critical edition: Henry Chadwick, in *Priscillian of Avila. The Occult and the Charismatic in the Early Church* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 234-239.

[3] Although it is not crucial to my argument in this essay, I am assuming that Priscillian is the most probable author of all of the Würzburg tractates and that the first tractate was penned in the tumultuous period between the Council of Saragossa and Priscillian's consecration to the episcopacy of Avila. Support for these positions is offered in my *The Making of a Heretic: Gender, Authority, and the Priscillianist Controversy* (Berkeley, California, 1995), pp. 56-57, 191-192 nn. 47-51.

[4] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance. Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, 1990). I am aware that my appropriation of Scott's concepts may seem somewhat idiosyncratic: whereas he focuses on the most clearcut cases of domination (e.g., slavery or serfdom), I am looking rather at more ambiguous and unstable power relations negotiated among late fourth-century Christian bishops, presbyters, and teachers.

direct access to the 'hidden transcripts' of the society we study; with limited resources for reconstructing the private conversations of slaves or *humiliores*, women, heretics, or other subordinated groups, we are left to wonder what tales might have been told by those gathered in the 'secretive conventicles' that loomed so large in the anxious imaginations of late Roman elites. Still, with a little sleuth work, we may be able to trace some of the strategies by which the relatively disempowered asserted their perspectives even under circumstances in which conformity might literally be a life-or-death matter. The 'arts of resistance' of accused 'heretics' included strategic appropriations of the dominant ideology or 'orthodoxy' — e.g., Priscillian's appeal in a letter addressed to Bishop Damasus of Rome to Damasus' own letter, 'in which, almost like gospel laws, you had enjoined that nothing be decided against those absent and unheard'[5]. The 'arts of resistance' also included more transgressive public articulations of parts of the 'hidden transcript', which might take the form of sudden explosions of suppressed sentiment or, more frequently, of cautiously duplicitous performances in which a carefully cultivated ambiguity of speech provided protection while allowing some range for dissent even on the public stage.

Priscillian's *Apology* makes particularly heavy use of the strategy of 'coded' or ambiguous speech. As I interpet him, Priscillian is not a 'gnostic' but is indeed, as his accusers claim[6], influenced by gnosticizing texts; furthermore, since reading habits are a point of contention in his community, he must mask certain aspects of his own practice. Two remarkably (and, I think, deliberately) obscure passages from the *Apology* reveal both the exegetical practices under attack and the subtle rhetorical strategies of Priscillian's defense.

In the first of these passages, Priscillian seemingly responds to criticisms of his interpretations of scriptural beasts. He begins with a strong denunciation in which he appears to align himself with his critics' position, agreeing to condemn those who interpret 'griffins, eagles, asses, elephants, serpents, and unnecessary beasts' symbolically, constructing out of scriptural animal figures, 'as it were, a mystery of divine religion' and calling 'sacrament what they do not know is a mystery of destruction'[7]. Through a skillful manipulation of scriptural citations, Priscillian represents himself as indignantly opposed to what is surely a 'straw man' position, namely the idolatrous worship of animal deities. With this his accusers can scarcely disagree. Yet at the same time Priscillian manages to assert his own controversial perspective on the correct interpretation of scriptural

[5] Priscillian, *Tract.* 2, 35.22-24.

[6] Already at the Council of Saragossa, Hydatius had brought up the issue of Priscillian's reading of apocryphal works (*Tract.* 2, 41.21-25). *Tract.* 3 is devoted to a cautious and canonically based defense of extra-canonical reading, a theme that also surfaces in the other two major apologetic works of the Würzburg corpus (*Tract.* 1, 30.11-33.6; *Tract.* 2, 41.21-42.12).

[7] Priscillian, *Tract.* 1, 7.26-8.8. As Chadwick notes, this position is close to that of the *Physiologus* (*Priscillian of Avila*, pp. 92-94).

beasts. Any scriptural mention of animals or fabulous beasts must be understood as a reference to demonic powers and moral vice, Priscillian continues: the beasts' 'works and abominableness of form are the nature of the demons, not the truth of divine gnosis'[8]. The interpreter who denies this confuses demons with God, evil with virtue, and thereby condemns himself, he insists. Citing the apocalyptic visions of bestial adversaries described in Daniel and Revelation, Priscillian argues that

> The prophets wanted all that was put in their visions to be read by everyone and, having been understood, to be avoided; and therefore the hearts of those who, investigating those things, did not understand rightly what it was that they read, have been given to the beast and their flesh will be devoured[9].

Although he does not explicitly acknowledge that his reading habits are here implicated, I suspect that Priscillian's use of gnostic apocrypha to interpret canonical references to animals underlies his adamant insistence on a single correct interpretation for all scriptural references to animals. Elsewhere in his *Apology*, Priscillian identifies scriptural beasts both with the seven planetary gods and with demons called by the names Saclas, Nebroel, Samael, Belzebuth, Nasbodeus, and Belial[10]. An apocryphal work like the *Apocryphon of John* could have suggested just such an identification[11]. In this gnostic text, salvation hinges on the recognition that the 'archons', represented in bestial form, are not gods but ignorant and despicable demons whose rule drags humanity down under the weight of temporality, immorality, and animal nature[12]. With some such form of gnostic dualism exerting intertextual pressure on Priscillian's ascetic reading of the canonical scriptures, the true identity of scriptural beasts becomes crucial to the exegete[13]. Far from abandoning his position on the interpretation of scriptural 'critters', Priscillian uses it to issue a subtle challenge to dissenters — who thereby reveal themselves lukewarm in their own condemnation of the demonic — while also holding open the possibility for agreement in the anathematization of idolatry.

A second, similarly slippery passage occurs later in the *Apology*, where Priscillian responds to the bishops' request that he express his opinion concerning 'the individual things that have been written'[14]. From what follows it is apparent that Priscillian has been asked to respond to a certain gnostic or

[8] Priscillian, *Tract.* 1, 8.3-4.

[9] Priscillian, *Tract.* 1, 9.15-18.

[10] E.g., Priscillian, *Tract.* 1, 15.1-2,5-7, on the association of the gods with scriptural beasts; *Tract.* 1, 17.29-18.16, on the association of gnostic demons with scriptural beasts.

[11] As noted by Chadwick, *Priscillian of Avila*, pp. 91-92.

[12] See, e.g., Nag Hammadi Codex II 1, pp. 10, 11, 24.

[13] For a fuller discussion of Priscillian's 'intertextual' theory and practice of exegesis, see my 'Canonical References to Extra-Canonical "Texts": Priscillian's Defense of the Apocrypha', *Seminar Papers: Society of Biblical Literature* (Atlanta, Ga., 1990), pp. 60-67.

[14] Priscillian, *Tract.* 1, 18.28.

Manichaean text that he has been accused of reading; this text seemingly includes the story of the chief archon Saclas' seduction of Eve and the subsequent birth of Cain and Lamech, and perhaps also the initial creation of Adam and Eve through the union of the archons Saclas and Nebroel[15]. Significantly, Priscillian does *not* choose to condemn the controversial account of creation outright. Instead, he manages once again to assert his resistance to the disciplining of his reading habits while yet offering some form of agreement with his opponents' perspective. Seeming to comply with his accuser's request that he condemn certain interests in the demonic, he does so by affirming that those who *worship* demons[16] — another 'straw man' position — are '*rightly* related to the earthly Adam' and *rightly* identified as the product of Eve's intercourse with the demon Saclas[17]. Instead of rejecting the gnostic creation story, he validates its perspective by linking it subversively both with his accusers' position and with his own indirect critique of their position. At the same time, Priscillian offers an orthodox interpretation by reading the apocryphal text in relation to a canonical intertext[18].

In the end, Priscillian not only represents his own ambiguous exegetical methods as transparently orthodox but also turns the tables and suggests that his episcopal accusers are the real dissimulators. He portrays Bishop Hydatius as spurning the Christian call to scholarship, mired in a state of ignorant sloth that merely masquerades as spiritual discernment[19], and condemns him for his 'pursuit of domestic enmities under the name of religious matters'[20]. At a slightly later stage in the controversy, he charges Hydatius with deploying 'deceptions' to obtain the imperial rescript used against Priscillian and his supporters[21]. At these points Priscillian's 'hidden transcript' of resistance seems to break more clearly into the open.

The published minutes of the proceedings of the Council of Toledo offer a still sharper view of the power relations enacted via heresy accusations. The surviving excerpts of the minutes of the inquisition of the accused Galician bishops and clergy include portions of the retractions of three of the accused ecclesiastics, apparently selected by an 'orthodox' Galician editor interested in preserving their most dramatic anathematizations of Priscillian and his teachings.

[15] Chadwick, *Priscillian of Avila*, pp. 94-95.
[16] Priscillian, *Tract.* 1, 17.29-18.2.
[17] Priscillian, *Tract.* 1, 18.29-19.4.
[18] Priscillian first places Eve's adultery in the context of the allegorical representation of Israel as the unfaithful wife of God in the canonical prophets; next, he complements the apocryphal account of Eve's adultery with the canonical affirmation that she will return to her rightful husband and to God through child-bearing; finally, he avoids both a literal interpretation of child-bearing and a crude material dualism by further equating Eve with the 'mother' church whose legitimate children are identified by their good works (*Tract.* 1, 19.4-21.20).
[19] Priscillian, *Tract.* 2, 42.8-14; *Tract.* 3, 41.7-12.
[20] Priscillian, *Tract.* 1, 33.12-13.
[21] Priscillian, *Tract.* 2, 40.27-41.2.

In part due to this principle of selection, the element of coercion and constraint that marks the speech of the accused is nakedly apparent in this text.

> Bishop Dictinius said: Hear me, excellent priests, correct all, because to you correction has been given.... For this I reprove in myself, that I said that the nature of God and humanity is one.
>
> Likewise he said: I not only ask for your correction, but I also convict and condemn all my presumption concerning my writings....
>
> Likewise he said: I also said a little before and now I repeat again, whatever I wrote in my former understanding and in the beginnings of my conversion, I reject all of it with my whole heart[22].

And so on. Dictinius' father and fellow bishop Symphosius goes so far as to request that his interrogators give him the piece of paper from which they have recited Priscillian's teachings, so that he can condemn the doctrines word by word[23]. The presbyter Comasius likewise asks to read aloud from a paper on which is inscribed the episcopal condemnation of Priscillian and his teachings[24]. In such literalistic performances of compliance, there seems to be little space for articulating resistance. Yet perhaps Dictinius, at least, finds an opening for a cautiously duplicitous defiance. In the passage cited at the outset, Dictinius solidly aligns himself with Bishop Symphosius: 'I follow the opinion of my lord and my father and begetter and teacher.... Whatever he said, I say'. This is in itself potentially ambiguous, since Symphosius has on the one hand demonstrated his eagerness to be found in agreement with the council, on the other hand been shown to have honored Priscillian as a martyr. Is there not further ambiguity, possibly even the hint of a wink, in Dictinius' subsequent qualified condemnation of Priscillian? 'All that Priscillian either taught wrongly or wrote wrongly (*male docuit aut male scripsit*) I condemn with the author himself'[25].

Others among the accused Galicians surfaced the 'hidden transcript' far more directly. In the face of the council's condemnation of Priscillian as a heretic, Bishop Herenias' clergy 'sponanteously and without having been interrogated, shouted that Priscillian was a catholic and holy martyr'. Bishop Herenias did not disagree but added a further inflammatory comment, noting darkly that Priscillian 'had been a catholic to the end, suffering persecution from bishops'[26].

The point of this brief rehearsal is neither to reinscribe the representation of heretics as rebels and calculating dissimulators, nor to glorify the roles of religious dissenters. The point is, rather, to seek an escape from the often

[22] *Exemplar*, ll. 10-26.
[23] *Exemplar*, ll. 27-30.
[24] *Exemplar*, ll. 50-58.
[25] *Exemplar*, ll. 61-66; cf. Symphosius' similarly worded condemnation of Priscillian, ll. 59-60.
[26] *Exemplar*, ll. 108-111.

falsely posed alternatives of 'sincerity' and 'dissimulation' or 'orthodoxy' and 'heresy'[27], by acknowledging not only the polysemic complexity of all speech — particularly the most public — but also the constraints placed on discourse by the unstable power relations underwritten by an ideology of orthodoxy that demands the improbable performance of absolute unanimity. On what grounds can the historian judge Priscillian's and Dictinius' claims to represent 'orthodoxy' as any less (or more) 'sincere' and plausible than their accusers' similar claims?[28] Priscillian, after all, went on to be appointed to the episcopacy of Avila, and even Augustine acknowledges Dictinius' catholic status[29]. Yet in the pressured moment in which heresy accusations were invoked, the 'public transcript' required the radical, even violent, suppression of particularity and difference, and any performer could potentially be unmasked as a wolf in sheep's clothing[30].

[27] This is precisely how the issues have been framed by the historiographic tradition, which has often split along confessional lines. Hilgenfeld's critique of Paret's early commentary on the Priscillianist corpus is a classic instance of the 'orthodox versus heretic' debate that once again burned hotly in the years following the discovery and publication of the Würzburg tractates (Friedrich Paret, *Priscillianus ein Reformator des vierten Jahrhunderts. Eine kirchengeschichtliche Studie, zugleich ein Commentar zu den erhaltenen Schriften Priscillians* (Würzburg, 1891); A. Hilgenfeld, 'Priscillianus und seine neuentdeckten Schriften', *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie* 35 (1892), pp. 1-85). See also Puech's cautious critique of Babut's vigorous and creative rewriting of Priscillian as an orthodox ascetic (E-Ch. Babut, *Priscillien et le priscillianisme* (Paris, 1909); A. Puech, 'Les Origines du priscillianisme et l'orthodoxie de Priscillien', *Bulletin d'ancienne littérature et d'archéologie chrétiennes* 2 (1912), pp. 81-95, 161-213).

[28] Of course, it is both possible and necessary to raise historical questions about why and how Priscillian and his followers came to be condemned as heretics; indeed, in my *The Making of a Heretic*, I attempt just such an analysis. My aim here is simply to indicate the limits of the heresiological perspective that has dominated the historiographic tradition (as well as its 'reformed' resistance), pointing toward new lines of questioning that may yield fresh insights on the controversy.

[29] Augustine, *Contra mendacium* 5.

[30] One would be hard pressed to name any major late ancient Christian figure who was not threatened at some point with just such an 'unmasking'. My claim is not that all patristic theologians were 'really' heretics, but that the success or persuasiveness of any performance of orthodoxy was (and is) always open to debate. Addressing a different historical context within which an analogous cultural formation took shape, Lionel Trilling notes that the early modern concept of 'sincerity' (like the ancient concept of 'orthodoxy', as I am suggesting) 'plays a curiously compromised part': 'We play the role of being ourselves, we sincerely act the part of the sincere person, with the result that a judgment may be passed upon our sincerity that it is not authentic' (Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (Cambridge, Mass, 1972), pp. 10-11).

The Authorship of the Gregorian *Dialogues*: The State of the Question

Francis CLARK, London

The Reformer Philip Melanchthon saw in the Gregorian *Dialogues* a main source of radical debasement of belief and practice in the mediaeval Church. Accordingly he scornfully referred to their author as 'that Gregory whom they (the papists) call "great", but whom I call the dance-leader and torch-bearer of a theology falling into decay'[1]. But not long afterwards the hitherto universal attribution of those *Dialogues* to Pope St Gregory I was challenged by another Protestant humanist, Huldreich Coccius (Koch) of Basle[2]. Coccius was soon followed by other scholars likewise arguing that the work, one of the most celebrated and influential books in Christian literary history, was spurious.

There followed some two centuries of sharp controversy on the question, coloured by inter-confessional antagonism. The whole monastic and spiritual tradition derived from St. Benedict (for whose biography the *Dialogues* is the sole source), as well as some important points of Roman Catholic doctrine and practice, seemed to be impugned by the thesis of Coccius and the other critics. After the eighteenth century the controversy subsided. The nineteenth-century Liberal Protestant historians of religion, returning to the position of Melanchthon, were well content to recognize Gregory the Great, one of the Roman Church's most venerated popes, as the veritable author of the *Dialogues* and consequently as *pater superstitionis* and founding father of *Vulgärkatholizismus*, wherefore they dubbed him '*ein recht kleiner grosser Mann*'[3]. To this day the *Dialogues* have continued to puzzle and disconcert students of the period, especially those who highly esteem St. Gregory and at the same time take his authorship of that work for granted. Typical of their puzzlement is the comment of J.M. Wallace-Hadrill: 'The *Dialogues* are the joker in Gregory's pack. What are we to make of them in the grand company of the *Moralia*, the *Homilies*, the *Regula Pastoralis* and the *Register*?'[4] Most recently Owen Chadwick, while praising Gregory's greatness in other respects, added this qualifying criticism: 'But he also wrote a book, the *Dialogues*, full of strange miracles but not of good

[1] '... Gregorius quem isti Magnum ego praesultatorem καὶ δαδοῦχον theologiae pereuntis voco': *Corpus Reformatorum* vol. 11 (1843), col. 16.

[2] In the preface (dated 1551) to his edition of Gregory's works published at Basle in 1554.

[3] Their comments, and the history of those controversies, are summarized in chapter 3 of my two-volume work, *The Pseudo-Gregorian Dialogues* (Studies in the History of Christian Thought, vols. XXXVII and XXXVIII; Leiden, 1987) (hereafter referred to as *PsGD*).

[4] Cf. *Speculum* 61 (1986), p. 769.

sense and so unlike the rest of his works that some critics have tried to prove that he did not write it'[5].

The publication in 1987 of my work, *The Pseudo-Gregorian Dialogues*, the title of which declares its thesis, has renewed the long dormant controversy. Judgements passed on that book may be divided into three categories. First, there are the critics, not a few and including some eminent scholars, who have firmly and indignantly rejected its arguments and conclusions. Some of them would declare a decree of *damnatio memoriae* on it. There are others, however, who have judged it very differently. In a second category are a number of commentators who consider that the book has rendered the question of the authenticity of the *Dialogues* an open one, or that it has at least changed the *status quaestionis*, in such wise as to require a reappraisal of the provenance and composition of that work. And in a third category there are those, among them scholars of special authority in this field, who accept my substantial argument and the conclusion that the work can no longer be ascribed to Gregory.

Vehement rebuttals

The most eminent and influential of the critics in the first category, staunch defenders of the traditional attribution, is Dom Adalbert de Vogüé, of the Abbey of La Pierre-qui-vire, a leading authority on the monastic history and literature of late antiquity and the early middle ages, whose annotated edition of the text of the *Dialogues* is a standard resource. His authoritative opposition to my book, forcefully pronounced in a 67-page article[6] and vigilantly pursued in several other publications, has undoubtedly been a principal factor in convincing many people that my thesis must be untenable, and that there is accordingly no need for them to scrutinize for themselves the evidence presented there. Two other scholars of renown who have published substantial and influential critiques firmly rejecting my findings are Fr. Robert Godding S.J.[7] and Dr. Paul Meyvaert[8] (the latter with particular acerbity).

[5] *A History of Christianity* (1995), p. 136. Many other scholars have written similar comments, some of them more outspokenly: e.g. P. Courcelle: 'After having read ... the four books that constitute the *Dialogues*, one feels oneself seized with nausea. How could Gregory, that great administrator revealed to us in his *Registrum Epistolarum*..., and that great contemplative revealed to us by his *Moralia on Job* and his *Homilies on Ezekiel*, have written such silly stuff?' (*Journal des Savants*, July-September 1967, p. 154).

[6] 'Grégoire le Grand et ses "Dialogues" d'après deux ouvrages récents', in *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 83 (1988), pp. 281-348.

[7] 'Les *Dialogues* ... de Grégoire le Grand: à propos d'un livre récent', in *Analecta Bollandiana* 106 (1988), pp. 201-29; further critiques by Fr. Godding are to be found in *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* (1988), pp. 619-21, and in *Bulletin Codicologique* (1989), pp. 36-7.

[8] 'The enigma of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*: a response to Francis Clark', in *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 39 (1988), pp. 335-81. Cf. also his further 'Comment' in *JEH* 40 (1989), pp. 344-6.

The first volume of *The Pseudo-Gregorian Dialogues* considers the external evidence relating to the origins and emergence of the *Dialogues*, and documents the strange and long continued *incognito* of the work (and of the person of St. Benedict whose biography it contains) in the age of its supposed appearance. Not only is there no sure evidence that its existence was known in the lifetime of St. Gregory and for much of the seventh century, but rather there is evidence indicative of the contrary. I do not present the argument from that long silence as in itself probative of the spuriousness of the book, but as a significant preliminary to the positive substance of my case, which is contained in my second volume.

The three redoubtable critics named above concentrate their fire on that preliminary *argumentum ex silentio*. All three essentially base their rejection of *PsGD* on time-honoured objections drawn from two early documents: the 'Letter to Maximian' contained in the Gregorian *Registrum* and the text-collection of Paterius. These they think prove conclusively that the existence of the *Dialogues* was known in Gregory's lifetime, making it needless to discuss in any detail the very numerous and converging arguments, drawn from the internal evidence of the text, which are set out at length in my second volume, and which constitute the main substance of my case to demonstrate the non-Gregorian character of the *Dialogues*[9].

It is relevant to point out here that the traditional defence of the Gregorian authenticity of the *Dialogues* had been based very largely on three other supposedly reliable early and explicit testimonies to that effect, drawn from the lists of Gregory's works contained in the *Liber Pontificalis* and in the writings of Isidore of Seville and of Ildephonsus of Toledo. I have shown, and it is now generally admitted, that those three allegedly probative testimonies were spurious, originating at a later date through interpolations in manuscripts. The critics of *PsGD* pass over as insignificant this collapse of major arguments which have been traditionally assumed to show that the Gregorian authorship of the *Dialogues* was attested by reliable early witnesses. Instead they now rest their case essentially on the two remaining testimonies mentioned above; I argue that these are ultimately no more probative than those other three traditional testimonies which for so long buttressed the traditional opinion and which have now been exposed as counterfeit.

I have answered the counter-arguments of those critics in articles in *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, *The Heythrop Journal* and *Studia Ephemeridis*

[9] Fr. de Vogüé does consider, and rejects, a limited number of the very numerous arguments from internal evidence in Volume II of *PsGD*, but he passes over the greater number of them undiscussed. He does not disguise his impatience with much of the book, especially the five chapters on 'the Inserted Gregorian Passages' ('*Je n'arrive même pas à m'y intéresser*'). He is strangely silent on my 11th chapter, which other Benedictine commentators have found so significant, showing how recent major advances in the historiography of early Benedictine monasticism, and of the cult of St. Benedict, are directly relevant to the *Dialogues* question.

'Augustinianum'[10]. In these articles I developed the reasons (already given in *PsGD*) which argue that the supposed contrary witness of the two items of external evidence cited by those critics as decisive testimonies cannot apodictically settle the whole issue of the Gregorian authorship of the *Dialogues*; and, above all, cannot nullify the converging force of the massive internal evidence contained in the text itself, which manifests the non-Gregorian character of that text.

The negative reaction of those three main opponents of *PsGD* has been echoed by several writers of short reviews and notices. A few have condemned the book with notable asperity and scorn, summarizing its arguments in caricature form and showing by their comments that they have not troubled to read it through. Others have expressed their dissent more urbanely[11].

Intermediate positions

In the second category of commentators on *PsGD* are a number of scholars who, while not declaring positively in favour of its central thesis, acknowledge that the book has rendered the question of authorship an open one, or at least that the new evidence and the problematic questions that it presents necessitate critical revision of generally accepted opinions about the composition and emergence of the *Dialogues* and about the corpus of Gregorian writings.

So, for instance, Professor Giuseppe Cremascoli, author of specialist studies on that period of history and literature, judges that *PsGD* weakens confidence in the traditional thesis, and declares himself to be among those who 'are ready to admit that the paternity of the *Dialogues* is a problem that is still open'. 'Indeed', he observes at the end of his perceptive and sympathetic discussion of my book, 'if we take as certain and established the Gregorian authorship of the *Dialogues*, too many things turn out to be incomprehensible and strange'[12].

[10] 'The authorship of the Gregorian *Dialogues*: an old controversy renewed', *Heythrop Journal* 30 (1989), pp. 257-72; 'St. Gregory and the enigma of the *Dialogues*: a response to Paul Meyvaert', in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 40 (1989), pp. 323-43; 'The renewed controversy about the authorship of the *Dialogues*', in *Studia Ephemeridis 'Augustinianum'* 34 (1991), pp. 6-25. While I do not consider that the counter-arguments of those three principal opponents of *PsGD* have disproved the central conclusion of the book, I recognize that Fr. Godding (especially) and also Fr. de Vogüé have made some valid corrections on incidental points, of which I have taken account. (None of them substantially affects my total case). For instance, I acknowledge the force of Fr. Godding's observations about the dating and provenance of the earliest surviving MS fragments of the *Dialogues*, which give me added reason for agreeing that the work must have originated somewhat earlier than the date (c. 670) which I tentatively indicated in *PsGD*. I did in fact point out in that book (on p. 746) that 'if it could be shown that the *Dialogues* were in existence some decades before that date, my case would not be substantially affected'.

[11] E.g. Fr. P.A. Cusack, in 'Authenticity of the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great', in *Cistercian Studies* 24 (1989), pp. 339-42.

[12] 'Se i *Dialogi* siano opera de Gregorio Magno: due volumi per una *vexata quaestio*', in *Benedictina* 36 (1989), pp. 179-92.

Other open-minded commentators, while reluctant to abandon the traditional ascription of the *Dialogues* to Gregory but impressed by the manifold literary, historical and theological inconsistencies and problems that I have shown to be revealed by close scrutiny of the text, suggest that those discrepancies can be explained by postulating the intervention of later hands in the composition of the work, deforming to a greater or lesser extent an unedited Gregorian project that the great pope himself never published or put into final form. (In this they unwittingly echo the theory of the seventeenth-century Anglican patristic scholar William Cave)[13].

Thus Fr. Stephan Kessler S.J.[14] proposes the hypothesis that a second hand, 'perhaps the notary Paterius, the deacon Peter or another of the curial officials', made 'a reworking of Gregorian materials', materials which the pontiff had assembled at an earlier date, but which, because of the pressures of his office and ill health, he was unable to edit before his death[15]. 'This hypothetical proposed solution', writes Fr. Kessler, 'could explain the theological inconsistencies and historical flaws that in fact exist between the authentic works and the *Dialogues*'. In support of his last observation, he refers to relevant pages in *PsGD* in which such inconsistencies are documented.

A distinguished historian of Italian society in that period, Professor Giorgio Cracco, likewise proposes, in view of the evidence presented in my book, the hypothesis that Gregory never published or perfected the *Dialogues*, that a 'man of his circle' put the work into its present form not long after his death, and that it was that curial redactor who was responsible for 'the contradictions, incongruities and inconsequentialities, not a few, that are to be found in the *Dialogues*'[16]. Professor Cracco still affirms his conviction of Gregory's substantial authorship of the *Dialogues*, while gracefully acknowledging the validity of my disproof of the argument drawn from the *Liber Pontificalis* with which he

[13] Cave's summary judgement on the authorship controversy was as follows: '*Perpensis ex utraque parte argumentis, restat ut hi dialogi saltem sunt dubiae fidei, a Gregorio Magno, ut videtur, scripti, a recentioribus aucti et interpolati*'. (See *PsGD*, pp. 38-39).

[14] 'Das Rätsel der Dialoge Gregors der Grossen: Fälschung oder Bearbeitung? Zur Discussion um ein Buch von Francis Clark', in *Theologie und Philosophie* 65 (1990), pp. 566-578.

[15] Even Dr. Meyvaert is prepared to allow that Gregory never published the *Dialogues*. In his *JEH* article, though vehemently disagreeing with me on the central question of Gregorian authorship, he concedes that the evidence I have presented, indicating a deep silence concerning the existence of the *Dialogues* in Gregory's lifetime, needs explanation. He thinks that it points to the conclusion that the pontiff deliberately refrained from authorizing publication of the work, and he suggests psychological reasons for such reticence (*art. cit.*, pp. 372-81). Fr. de Vogüé expresses firm objection to Dr. Meyvaert's concession to me on this point, in an article, 'Les Dialogues, œuvre authentique et publiée par Grégoire lui-même', in *Studia Ephemeridis 'Augustinianum'* 34 (1991), pp. 29-40.

[16] 'Francis Clark e la Storiographia sui "Dialogi" di Gregorio Magno', in *Rivista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa* 27 (1991), pp. 115-124.

had earlier supported that conviction[17]. While objecting that there are 'not infrequent "inventions" and strained interpretations' in *PsGD*, Professor Cracco nevertheless makes the following emphatic appraisal of the wider importance of that work:

'Let it be made very clear: even prescinding from its basic thesis, Clark's book brings a fundamental and decisive contribution to knowledge about Gregory the Great, about the vicissitudes and influence of his works in the 7th and 8th centuries. I say more: no one who is concerned with this epoch (among the least known of the middle ages) and of the sources relating to it (among the most uncertain because almost all transmitted through later codices) can ignore the work of Clark .... One must recognize that after his contribution our knowledge of the "Gregorian" mediaeval period is no longer the same, and demands rethinking, to say the least .... After it, one must admit, the comforting landscape of Gregorian studies is no longer the same'[18].

Extended discussions of *PsGD*, courteously appreciative on several points while still doubtful or non-committal on the central issue, were written by a number of specialists in early Benedictine monasticism: the late Dom Pierre-Patrick Verbraken[19], Dom Pierre Cazier[20], the late Dom Pierre Minard[21] and Dom Pius Engelbert[22]. Dom Julian Stead shows an open mind to the thesis of my book[23].

[17] At the 1982 Gregorian conference at Chantilly Professor Cracco proposed as his first objection to my thesis that Gregory's authorship of the *Dialogues* was attested by its inclusion in the list of the pope's writings given in the early-seventh-century entry in the *Liber Pontificalis*, a contemporary historical source of unique importance. In his article, however, he courteously acknowledges that I have conclusively demonstrated in *PsGD* that the mention of the *Dialogues* in the *Liber Pontificalis* was not in the original text, but was interpolated at a later date. (Godding and Vogüé — the latter somewhat reluctantly — have made the same admission).

[18] *Art. cit.*, pp. 120, 122.

[19] 'Les *Dialogues* de Saint Grégoire le Grand sont-ils apocryphes?', in *Revue Bénédictine* 98 (1988), pp. 272-7.

[20] *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 90 (1988), pp. 238-40.

[21] 'Les Dialogues de saint Grégoire et les origines du monachisme bénédictin: à propos d'un livre récent', in *Revue Mabillon* 41 (1988), pp. 471-81. The author concluded his critique of *PsGD* with this prediction: 'De toute façon l'éclatement de cette "bombe", si l'on permet l'expression, relancera un courant d'études sur les multiples aspects abordés par cette thèse, pour le bénéfice de la connaissance de saint Grégoire le Grand, de son époque, et des origines du monachisme bénédictin'.

[22] In his review article ('Hat Papst Gregor der Grosse die "Dialogen" geschrieben?', in *Erbe und Auftrag* 64 (1988), pp. 255-265), Dom Engelbert admitted that when he first read *PsGD* he was 'very impressed' by its arguments; but later developments (following the intervention of Dom de Vogüé in the controversy) led him to have second thoughts, and to say: 'I am no longer so convinced of the correctness of its central thesis'. Cf. also his further contribution to the debate, 'Neue Forschungen zu der *Dialogen* Gregors der Grossen: Antworten auf Clark's These', in *Erbe und Auftrag* 65 (1989), pp. 376-94).

[23] In his editorial introduction to *St. Benedict: a Rule for Beginners* (New York 1994).

Positive appraisals

I come to the third category of commentators on *PsGD*, namely of those scholars who have pronounced firm approval of the work and have welcomed its conclusions. I cite unblushingly a number of these testimonies, since they are relevant to a balanced presentation of 'the state of the question' at the present time. Eminent among commentators in this category is Dom Robert Gillet of the Abbey of Notre Dame de Paris, a magisterial authority on the writings and spirituality of St. Gregory. His positive appraisal of *The Pseudo-Gregorian Dialogues*[24], based on long and careful consideration of all the manifold arguments of that book, has provided a notable counter-balance to the negative verdict pronounced with such weight by his fellow Bendictine Dom Adalbert de Vogüé (and has accordingly vexed the opponents of the book[25]).

I quote a reflection made by Père Gillet at the conclusion of his detailed and sympathetic exposition of the arguments of *PsGD*, a reflection that shows clearly his recognition of the non-Gregorian character of the *Dialogues*:

'The *Dialogues* "date" as much by their style as by the distance that separates them from our psychology and our Christian devotion; whereas a doctor and a pastor of such exceptionally profound spirituality as St. Gregory the Great finds spontaneously, as would a great poet or artist, a language which resists the passage of time and which reaches what is most intimate and what is deepest in each one of us'.

An English Benedictine scholar, Dom Henry Wansbrough, writes of *PsGD* with firm agreement and generous appreciation. He concludes his review of the book with the words: 'It is a joy to follow an argument presented with such courteous cogency. For this Benedictine at any rate, its conclusions are liberating'[26]. Naturally some monastic critics are less enthusiastic about the implications of my findings, which, when accepted, entail drastic revision of venerable traditions concerning the person of St. Benedict and the early history of Benedictine monasticism[27].

[24] 'Les *Dialogues* sont-ils de Grégoire?', *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 36 (1990), pp. 309-14. In his article on Gregory the Great in *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastique* (*DHGE*, vol. 21, cols. 1409-11), Fr. Gillet had already given a firmly sympathetic review of and commentary on my arguments, as presented at the 1982 Gregorian conference at Chantilly. (Text in the Acta of that conference, *Grégoire le Grand* (Paris 1986), pp. 429-443).

[25] The learned Bollandist Joseph Van de Straeten, reacting against Dom Gillet's favourable summary of my case in *DHGE*, referred his readers to the critiques of *PsGD* by Vogüé and Godding as sufficient proof, without need for any further scrutiny, of the falsity of my thesis. He commented: 'Père Gillet semble avoir été impressioné. Il est maintenant établi que cette thèse est à écarter sans ambages. Voir R. Godding ... et A. de Vogüé...' (*Analecta Bollandiana* 106 (1988), pp. 471).

[26] In *The Heythrop Journal* 30 (1989), pp. 365-7.

[27] In a spirited review in *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 50 (1988), pp. 312-4), Père Gueric Coilleau wrote: 'Là où l'argument de silence nous émeut particulièrement, c'est quand il touche à la connaissance et au culte de S. Benoît, à l'apparition et à la diffusion de la Règle. Là, en effet, Clark peut s'appuyer sur la recherche récent...'.

Nevertheless not a few who have probed the evidence thoroughly and objectively do not flinch from the unpalatable conclusions to be drawn from it. A reviewer in *Benediktijns Tijdschrift*[28] welcomes the book as 'a magisterial study', 'disconcerting but enthralling', and says it may confidently be expected to bring a new understanding of the origins of the biography of St. Benedict.

Several positive appraisals of *PsGD* have come from farther afield, from scholars in other traditions and countries who are not overawed by the weight of 'establishment' consensus on this question, and who have assessed with an independent openness of mind the evidence presented in that book. Such an appraisal is given in an article by Dr. C.F.A. Borchardt, of the University of Pretoria[29], who judges that the case presented in *PsGD* is 'very strong'. Professor Harry Rosenberg, of Colorado State University, appends a cautious proviso to his acceptance of that case: 'Finally, is Clark's revisionist study correct? My conclusion is a qualified "yes" — qualified because we must still weigh in the considered judgments of the many scholars with expertise in each facet of Clark's comprehensive and complex structure'[30]. Professor Zwi Werblowsky, of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, emphatically declares his judgement that proof of the non-Gregorian authorship of the *Dialogues* 'has been cogently and convincingly argued by Dr. Francis Clark in a major study which combines erudition with methodological sophistication'. He concludes with the reflection: 'One wonders how, after Dr. Clark's publication, it is still possible seriously to maintain the Gregorian authorship'[31].

The appreciative assessment of *PsGD* by Dr. Alf Härdelin, a Swedish historian of the Church, presents in a fair and favourable light the force of my arguments drawn from both external and internal evidence[32]. In a concluding reflection he wonders whether, even if it had been demonstrated to Gregory's Liberal Protestant critics that he did not write the *Dialogues*, they would yet have considered him clearly vindicated from the charge they levelled against him, namely, of being the founding father of debased *Vulgärkatholizismus*. Would they still have objected, he asks, that even 'the genuine works' of 'the genuine Gregory' contain central Roman Catholic doctrines, especially those concerning sacramental power and the salvific value of good works, which they would consider erroneous and debased. I would point out in reply that Gregory was certainly not the originator of those central doctrines of the Catholic Church; and that it was not on the evidence of those teachings but on that of the *Dialogues*

[28] (1987), 169-170.

[29] 'The Ongoing Debate on the Gregorian Dialogues', in *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 18 (1992), pp. 96-107. There is also a shorter appreciative review of the book by the same author in Dutch, in *Nederlands Gereformierte Tydskrif* (1990), pp. 280-1.

[30] *Church History* 58 (1989), pp. 88-9.

[31] *Numen* 39 (1992), p. 110.

[32] *Kyrkohistorisk Arsskrift* (1988), pp. 120-3.

that the Liberal Protestant historians' denunciation of Gregory as *pater superstitionis* was essentially based, as Walter Berschin has pointed out[33].

An interesting contribution to the reopened authorship debate comes from the Antipodes, in an article by Dr. Peter McEniery entitled 'Pseudo-Gregory and Purgatory'[34]. Building on my demonstration that St. Gregory is not the author of the *Dialogues*, he further corroborates it by drawing attention to some passages in Gregory's *Moralia*, 'not discussed by Clark, which strengthen his case'. He argues that those passages, giving Gregory's elevated scripture-based teaching about the necessity for expiation and spiritual purification for sin, contrast incompatibly with the crude tales, contained in Book IV of the *Dialogues*, of fiery purgation of departed souls labouring in penal detention, and of their release therefrom — tales which, because of their supposedly Gregorian authority, strongly influenced the questionable development of the concept and imagery of purgatory in the middle ages, and even coloured the Tridentine debates on the subject. Those developments, he observes, present 'an offence to many outside the Roman Church'. He asks whether it is not now justifiable to expect 'an official clarification or some degree of retraction' of the mediaeval and post-mediaeval concept of purgatory, which had been distorted by unwitting acceptance of a false premise — namely, that the teaching of the *Dialogues* on the subject was the teaching of St. Gregory the Great, Doctor of the Church.

Another publication relevant to the *Dialogues* controversy is that of Dr. William McCready, *Signs of Sanctity: Miracles in the Thought of Gregory the Great*[35]. I hail this insightful study, completed before the appearance of *PsGD* but published later, as providing an unintended yet significant corroboration of one of my many substantial arguments for the non-Gregorian character of the *Dialogues*.

Dr. McCready and Dom de Vogüé are in disagreement at a vital point, as to whether it is possible to attribute to St. Gregory the Great responsibility for presenting, for the edification of the Christian faithful, a pattern of fictitious, often secondhand and falsely authenticated tales. Dom de Vogüé — rightly, I agree — detects such tales *passim* in the *Dialogues*, but explains their presence as the adoption by Gregory of a pedagogical *genre* of writing appropriate to the mentality of that age. Dr. McCready makes cogent objection to that explanation, which he shows to be incompatible with St. Gregory's spiritual teaching,

[33] 'Alle diese Urteile stützen sich auf Lektüren oder Kostproben aus den *Dialogen*': *Biographie und Epochenstil im lateinischen Mittelalter*, Stuttgart 1986, vol. 1, p. 307. Berschin wryly points out the paradoxical contrast between this Liberal Protestant judgement on Gregory, denouncing him as the pope who crudely debased mediaeval faith and piety by his authorship of the sub-Christian *Dialogues*, and the elevated eulogy of Erich Caspar, who wrote: 'Fragt man nach dem grössten christlichen Character, so gebührt Gregor unter allen Päpsten die Palme'.

[34] *Pacifica* 1 (1988), pp. 328-33.

[35] Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, 1991 (Studies and Texts, no. 91).

especially as it concerns the God-centred values of truth and veracity[36]. Reviewing McCready's book, I made the following comment on the discordance between his views and those of Vogüé and other commentators (including Godding)[37] who share the latter's viewpoint: 'Both he (McCready) and the commentators he criticizes can be seen to be right. They are right in laying at the door of the author of the *Dialogues* a deliberate design of fictitious authentication of his concocted tales; he is right in arguing that it is impossible to attribute such a mendacious design to Gregory the Great'[38].

The future of the debate

How will the debate over the authorship of the *Dialogues* develop during the years ahead? Researchers wishing to investigate more deeply the issues on which this debate centres, by studying *PsGD* for themselves, now encounter some not inconsiderable deterrents to such study. As well as the daunting length (and price) of that book, and the vast multiplicity of its arguments, there is, not least, the authoritative dissuasion from reading it arising from the firmly negative verdict passed on it by the trio of prominent critics mentioned above, a verdict that has been repeated by several others. In consequence, the number of people with interest and competence in this field who have so far actually read through and studied attentively the whole of the massive case contained in the 773 pages of *PsGD* is relatively limited. Nevertheless, enough scholars of repute have already done so, and have passed positive judgement on that book, to give good grounds for confidence that eventually its argument and conclusions will be generally vindicated.

The 'establishment' position on this issue will surely not remain immune from criticism and revision. A new generation of scholars will not be deterred from examining for themselves and assessing the issues raised in this renewed

[36] Criticizing McCready's book, Dom de Vogüé retorts that its author (like 'another contemporary Anglo-Saxon, Francis Clark') is 'imprisoned in a strict moralism', and misled by an 'anachronistic and unrealistic ethic'. (*Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 85 (1990), pp. 371-7). However, Vogüé does not do justice to McCready's argument. That argument is not simply that St. Gregory's scrupulous veracity would preclude him from any narration of fictitious miracle stories; but McCready argues even more cogently (as I too argue in *PsGD*) that it is impossible to impute to St. Gregory a constant practice of falsely attesting such accounts of miraculous events as certainly true, and as authenticated by the eyewitness testimony of trustworthy informants known to him personally, while at the same time well knowing that the tales were fictitious, and that (as Dom de Vogüé has to admit on his premises) he himself had adapted many of those tales from earlier models and had simply invented others, craftily disguising his literary counterfeits.

[37] *Analecta Bollandiana* 108 (1990), pp. 442-4.

[38] *The Heythrop Journal*, 33 (1992), p. 340).

controversy over the *Dialogues*[39]. They will surely contribute new insights to the discussion of the origin and character of that famous and enigmatic book. As an illustration of refreshing readiness to subject to independent scrutiny the received orthodoxy in this matter, I venture to cite the testimony of one such researcher, belonging to the rising generation of younger Benedictine scholars. Setting out, as he explained, to counter my apparent iconoclasm, he carried out an exhaustive critical study of *PsGD* and its arguments. With respectful admiration for his objectivity and perseverance, I quote (with his permission) his relation of the eventual outcome of his long investigation: 'My original intention had been to attempt a refutation, but the more I read, the more convincing I found your argument, so that now I find myself quite won over to the position that the *Dialogues* are not a genuine work of St. Gregory the Great'.

A number of commentators have pointed to a parallel between this newly revived controversy and an earlier debate, long and often bitter, over the question of the dependence of the *Regula Benedicti* on the *Regula Magistri*[40]. In that debate, which began in 1938 and lasted some 40 years, another traditional conviction, likewise relating to the origins of Benedictine monasticism, was, after much heated recrimination, eventually discredited and dethroned by an unpalatable revisionist thesis. One of those commentators (G. Mathon)[41], remarking that in his *DHGE* article Dom Robert Gillet had already noted an analogy between that earlier dispute and the new challenge to the authenticity of the *Dialogues*, goes on to make this prediction: 'Here we may expect something similar. A period of denial, be it to digest the shock, then readjusting to the situation'. Meanwhile the differing judgements on the case presented in *The Pseudo-Gregorian Dialogues* remain sharply polarized.

[39] In a review of *PsGD* in *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* (48, 1992, pp. 272 seq.), H. Schneider writes: '... die Kontroverse noch nicht beendet ist, und in der Tat is sie schon weitergeführt'.

[40] Cf. *PsGD* pp. 196-7.

[41] *Bulletin de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 14 (1988), pp. 457-9.

John Cassian on John Cassian

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The details on the identity cards of the church fathers are often annoyingly scanty. This is also true in the case of John Cassian. The standard text books and dictionary articles do however give the impression that a relatively well established biography is available. They draw support both from the biographical remarks of others and from Cassian's own autobiographical testimony.

I. The testimony of others

1) *Gennadius of Marseilles*

In his catalogue of authors *De viris inlustribus*[1], Gennadius presents John Cassian with a fine memorial:

Cassianus, natione Scytha, Constantinopolim a Iohanne Magno episcopo diaconus ordinatus, apud Massiliam presbyter, condidit duo id est virorum ac mulierum monasteria, quae usque hodie extant.

The list of his works follows and finally a reference to his death:

et in his scribendi apud Massiliam et vivendi finem fecit Theodosio et Valentiniano regnantibus.

This refers to the time between 425-450 and his death is generally located in the year 435.

The brevity of the entry corresponds to the usual style of Gennadius' catalogue. Since the compiler himself lived in Marseilles we may presume that he was a well informed and a trustworthy source. His credibility is enhanced by the fact that he lists the literary œuvre of Cassian in the form in which we know it. Granted there are some minor variations in the titles of some *Conlationes* or Conferences; nor do we find an explicit statement that Gennadius personally had read the works. Nevertheless one may assume that he was familiar with Cassian's writings, and had devoted them sufficient attention to notice Cassian's firm claim to have written 'experientia magistrante'.

In addition we learn where he came from: *natione Scytha*. That appears to be clear: a native of Scythia, coming from Scythia. As a result the corresponding

[1] Which appeared in the years 474/76.

entry on his identity card is almost unanimously recorded as — born in the province of Scythia Minor, that is, in a part of present day Rumania, more precisely in Dobrudja on the West coast of the Black Sea. Most recently in his article 'Some critical considerations and new arguments reviewing the problem of St. John Cassian's birthplace': *OCP* 57 (1991) 257-280, Theodor Damian has spared neither effort nor personal zeal in defending Cassian's Scythian origins. But the problem remains! Let us for the moment put aside Gennadius' '*natione Scytha*' as enigmatic information.

Gennadius further tells us that John Cassian spent some time at Constantinople and links him with John Chrysostom who is said to have ordained him as a deacon. Chrysostom was bishop in the capital of the empire from 397-404. Therefore Cassian must have visited there within this span of years. This information is above suspicion. Cassian himself vouches for it and gives a fine indication of his relationship to Chrysostom and his veneration of the unfortunate bishop[2]. He assigns himself the zeal and love of a pupil and calls to mind that it was Chrysostom who accepted him into holy orders and ordained him to God. He exaggerates his emotional closeness to the faithful in Constantinople by calling them 'fellow citizens on account of the love of our hometown'[3]. Indeed the stay at Constantinople had been important on various levels.

Gennadius' next information is less clear: *apud Massiliam presbyter*. The issue is not whether Cassian was really a priest, even his bitter enemy Prosper of Aquitaine called him a '*vir quidam sacerdotalis*'[4]. The issue is rather the place and point in time of his ordination. The text of C.A. Bernoulli's Gennadius edition[5] does not help us to a decisive answer. The edition of E.C. Richardson seems to opt for Marseilles as the scene of his ordination. The formulation '*apud Massiliam presbyter*' deserves attention. Gennadius is called '*Massiliae presbyter*'[6]. The little known Musaeus to whom Gennadius in a moving tribute devotes much attention is introduced as '*Massiliensis ecclesiae presbyter*'[7]. This wording corresponds to the usual presentation of a priest in Gennadius' catalogue. The rare expression '*presbyter apud*' occurs in the treatment of Vincent of Lerins ('*apud monasterium Lerinensis insulae presbyter*')[8] and, corresponding exactly to the case of Cassian, Salvian of Marseilles (*apud Massiliam presbyter*)[9]. Now it is also the case that the place and time of Salvian's ordination are not known, and we know nothing of a direct pastoral activity on his part within the christian community at Marseilles. He simply lived as a

[2] *De incar.* 7, 31, 1.
[3] *De incar.* 7, 31, 3.
[4] *Contra Coll.* 2, 1.
[5] (Leipzig, 1895), p. 81.
[6] *De vir. ill.* 101 (97).
[7] *De vir. ill.* 80 (88).
[8] *De vir. ill.* 65 (83).
[9] *De vir. ill.* 68 (84).

priest within the confines of the christian church at Marseilles. I interpret the information about Cassian in the same way: Gennadius does not explicitly make him a priest of the *ecclesia Massiliensis*, he did however know that he lived as a priest in Marseilles. I would like to make the following suggestion: he was ordained in Rome, but without an obligation to Rome — thus an example of a 'presbyter honoris causa'!

Gennadius himself is a witness to the two-fold monastic foundation — *condidit duo monasteria*: he has the monastery for men and that for women in front of him. (Despite the foundation of the monastery for women Cassian consistently uses the masculine forms for the monks he addresses in his writings! We presume that he also had the female readers in mind!). Further proof is provided by archaeological research and obtainable from local history. The existence of Cassian's monasteries is beyond doubt. However just what enabled Cassian to found two monasteries in Marseilles is a topic worthy of discussion.

Finally we should remark that Gennadius does not call him '*monachus*' although he presented other authors as '*monachi*'.

2) *Further testimonies*

There are only very few other testimonies which can support the reconstruction of the *Vita Cassiani* which I have just outlined. One of these is the *Dialogus de vita S. Joannis Chrysostomi* of Palladius. In it Cassian's sojourn in Constantinople is confirmed and he is clearly established as a partisan of Chrysostom. Further we learn that in the year 404 the deacon Cassianus travelled with the priest Germanus to Innocent I in Rome. Among other delegations they expressed the protest of the Johnite clergy against the unjust deposal of their bishop. Palladius adds that they also delivered a list of Constantinople's ecclesiastical treasures, a remark which has sometimes led Cassian research to conclude that Chrysostom gave Cassian the care of the cathedral treasury[10].

Another testimony is Ep. 7 of Innocence I. However it merely confirms that the priest Germanus and the deacon Cassian arrived in Rome and carried out their mission. Thus Rome is established as the scene of at least a short visit of John Cassian.

How long he stayed in Rome remains a matter of speculation. Clarity would be gained if we could definitely identify 'the conpresbyter Cassianus' who is mentioned in Innocent I's letters 19 and 20 (from the year 415) with John Cassian. This has repeatedly been the case since Tillemont; however it still remains uncertain. And even if we were to accept the identification we would not gain that much information on Cassian's stay in Rome through it. The conpresbyter mentioned in the papal letter came from Antioch! Cassian would

[10] J.N.D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth. The Story of John Chrysostom — ascetic, preacher, bishop* (London, 1995), pp. 252-253; cf. O. Chadwick, *John Cassian* (Cambridge, ²1968), pp. 31-32.

have had to have already spent quite some time there in order to be a position to provide reliable information about the local situation. The length of his stay in Rome might be settled in another way, that is, through Cassian's own words in the *praefatio* to the *De incarnatione Domini*. He claims that the then deacon and later pope Leo insisted upon the book and ordered him to write it. With submissive respect he fixes his eyes on his lofty patron. A standard *praefatio* usually emphasized its patron and Cassian is a master in the art of creating *praefationes*! One cannot easily deduce the intensity of the relationship between the patron and the one commissioned from these texts. Thus to speak of a 'close friendship' between Leo and Cassian seems to me to be a daring assumption. Even if the date for Cassian's stay in Rome is postponed until the years 418/9 (which is scarcely possible) this is only the very beginning of the time in which Leo slowly made his way into public life. It is unlikely that a deep personal relationship developed between Cassian and the much younger roman cleric Leo. However the fact that Cassian was commissioned to write 'against Nestorius' reveals that his stay in Rome had been a lengthy one, that he had not been too far removed from important ecclesiastic affairs and thus had not disappeared out of important ecclesiastical memories. So it would be sufficient if Cassian had been in Rome until 410 or 411[11].

At the end of this review John Cassian's identity card is still incomplete. We have Constantinople, Rome and Marseilles as places of residence, and one reliable date, the year 404. His date of birth is nowhere to be found. Is it legitimate to argue from the usual age for an ordination as deacon — 25 to 30 years old? Then his date of birth would fall between 370/375. However it is not easy to operate on the basis of hierarchical rules and John Chrysostom certainly did not always allow his actions to be dictated by ecclesiastical canons.

However the traditional biography, let us call it biography of consent, has more to say. It is based on a version of Cassian's life-story, which consists above all in the vivid account of his travels among the eastern monks — 'always on the go from place to place' or *ad cognoscendam vitam doctrinamque alienam*[12]. These travels can only be outlined with the help of Cassian's own accounts. Therefore it is now time to listen to John Cassian on John Cassian. This will then be compared with what we have already heard from other testimonies. Finally his travels *per Aegyptum et Palaestinam* among the eastern monks must be reappraised.

[11] Cf. Chadwick, p. 32.
[12] Cf. Augustine, *Conf.* X, 3, 3.

II. John Cassian on John Cassian

'*...natione Scytha*' still stands on Cassian's incomplete identity card. How does this place of origin fit in with his personal account? Unfortunately he did not write an autobiography in which he relates his own life-story (or as modern biographical researchers would say 'reproduces' his life). But he wrote his writings with *engagement* and certainly wove in his life-story. He wants to present us with '*Lebensabschnittsgeschichte*', a reflection on the periods of his life, in which he uses the individual phases of his life for further purposes. Gennadius' fully accepted this when he said that Cassian wrote '*experientia magistrante*'.

1) *Cassion on his place of origin*

One can approach an answer through some sections of his writings.

a) *De institutis, praef.*

The opening sentences of the *praefatio* of the *De institutis coenobiorum* express its dedication to Castor the bishop of Apt. Cassian has to follow the classical rules for an *exordium*. He respects these rules, giving them however a Christian twist by working with a text from the Bible. Just as King Solomon (1Kings 7:13-14) once commissioned the artist Hiram with the interior furnishing of the temple at Jerusalem, so Cassian felt himself commissioned by Castor to furnish the monastery with a spiritual community. Hiram is described as a 'a poor man and a foreigner' (*pauper et alienigena vir*). In the corresponding expression Cassian calls himself 'needy and in every sense very poor' (*egenus omnique ex parte pauperimus*)[13]. Each of the commissioned men is assigned two adjectives. But in his own case, as has been often noticed, Cassian has dropped the description 'foreign' (*alienigena*). Was it merely the case that at the time he received the commission Cassian was no longer a foreigner for Castor or are there other reasons which prevent him from calling himself a foreigner in the South of Gaul?

b) *De inst.* 11, 18

Cassian proclaims the long-known dictum of the fathers: Under all circumstances the monk should avoid women and bishops (*Omnimodis fugere debere monachum mulieres et episcopos*). It is not without shame that he adds that he has managed neither the one nor the other. He couldn't escape from the hands of the bishop when he allowed himself to be ordained a deacon and priest. And he managed the *fugere mulieres* just as poorly, since he never managed to

[13] *Praefatio*, 2.

avoid his own sister (*nec germanam vitare potui*). This confession is nothing to be proud of. It must be taken seriously. If Cassian is '*natione Scytha*' then his sister must also be so. How then did she get from distant Scythia to Marseilles? The attempts of Cassian research to explain this have to date resorted to a sort of step by step family immigration O. Chadwick holds that:

> *Inst.* XI, 18 proves that at some stage he associated with his sister in a way not quite creditable to a monk.

He thus would like to restrict the time during which Cassian and his sister lived together to Constantinople and Rome, namely, periods in which Cassian lived as an '*urban ecclesiastic*'. Of course he also shares the opinions of others:

> that his sister came later to join him at Marseilles, that for her he instituted the female monastery...[14].

However if Cassian writes about living together with his sister in a text which is addressed to the monks of southern Gaul, then we must assume that he is referring to a reality which is well known there, and is thus speaking about a sister who is living with him in Marseilles. Instead of developing a complicated theory of step by step family immigration, I prefer to opt for Marseilles as the place of origin of both brother and sister.

c) *Conference 24*

The last Conference takes the form of a long conversation with Abbas Abraham. Cassian is plagued by the temptation to return to his homeland: *ad repetendam provinciam nostram atque ad revisendos parentes cotidianis animae aestibus urguebamur*[15]. Instead of spending more time in distant foreign parts Cassian longs simply to live near his relatives. With their generous support he could live in undisturbed contemplation. His well respected ascetic style of life might be the occasion of many conversions. The temptation paints a wonderful picture of the scenery in his homeland:

> *...ipsarumque amoenitas iucunda regionum ante oculos pingebatur, quam grate et congrue solitudinis spatiis tenderetur, ita ut non solum delectare monachum possent secreta silvarum, sed etiam maxima victus praebere conpendia*[16].

Despite recognising that in this period Cassian was operating within a particular literary tradition Henri-Irénée Marrou nevertheless held that Cassian is here describing his Scythian homeland, 'home, sweet home!', in particular northern Dobrudja[17]. And the already mentioned Theodor Damian agrees with him:

[14] Chadwick, p. 31.
[15] *Conl.* 24, 1, 2.
[16] *Conl.* 24, 1, 3.
[17] H.-J. Marrou, 'La patrie de Jean Cassien', in *Patristique et humanisme* (Paris, 1976), pp. 345-361, p. 346.

Speaking about the woods of his home country, we can easily think of Dobroudgea's woods which are in all descriptions appropriate with the delightful views that Cassian mentions[18].

One could of course also write about southern Gaul with such enraptured enthusiasm. But the aim of the 24th Conference is not a lesson in geography.

Its theme is *mortificatio* and how it must be suitably lived out in ascetical-monastical life: persevering in the monastery which stands in a harsh environment, earning his living by some modest work, subject to the *imperium senioris* and the *voluntas Abbatis*.

The ideal scene, the locus amoenus, is a aberration and a dangerous illusion. For this reason the *amoena habitatio* is forbidden territory for the monk.

The brief description of the country-side, composed as rhetoric with clear traces of *ekphrasis*, cannot be a reference to Cassian's real homeland, be this in the East or in the West. Such a landscape is nowhere and everywhere!

But in the twenty-fourth Conference which we are considering there occur some details which point to a homeland in southern Gaul. I don't want to press the reference to the wintery cold and frosty unbelief[19]. What must be said is that in the homeland for which he yearns the monastic life is as yet scarcely known!:

... nostra provincia ..., in qua aut nullum aut certe rarissimum professionis huius virum invenire possibile est[20].

It must be clear to everyone from his writings that Cassian considered southern Gaul to be a developing country as regards monasticism.

The report that Cassian wanted to return to the country and the places '*in quibus erat maioribus nostris avita possessio*' also deserves attention[21]. In this report he is making a specific admission. Cassian is thinking about his hereditary property. A little later he explains: One cannot simply settle down as a hermit, let alone found a monastery in an inhabited and cultivated area: the land in question must belong to us and be under our control[22].

I would like to return to the foundation of the monasteries at Marseilles. *Cassianus condidit duo monasteria*. The founding of a monastery without property and a secure legal status can only take place in hagiographical texts! In his interpretation of Ps 104(103):17 (Yahweh planted the trees of Lebanon, 'there the sparrows build their nests') Cassiodorus explains the founding of a monastery in uplifting terms indebted to Augustine[23]: The sparrow is a small but prudent bird and refers to the meekness of the monks. They build their

[18] Damian, p. 272.
[19] *Conl.* 24, 8, 5.
[20] *Conl.* 24, 18; Cf. *De inst., praef.* 3.
[21] *Conl.* 24, 1, 3.
[22] *Conl.* 24, 19, 2.
[23] *En. Ps.* 103, *serm.* 3, 16.

monastery in the cedars of Lebanon, that is, on the property of rich Christians (*in patrimonio potentium Christianorum*)[24]. And Cassian used the *potentes christiani* to found monasteries in Marseilles. Granted the local bishop Proculus as well as influential and wealthy Christians might also be considered as candidates. However why should one not think of the property and wealth of Cassian's own family. Resorting to such *potestas* and *possessio*, to use once again Cassian's own words, the founding of the monasteries in Marseilles is more easily understood.

Further, and also in this context, it is widely accepted that John Cassian came from a wealthy family. His literary skill points to a thorough and careful education and this could usually only have been afforded by a wealthy family. In the 14th Conference he himself synopsises his literary education and the enduring knowledge which he has gained from the '*instantia paedagogi vel continuae lectionis*'[25]. The lays of the poets, their fables and war stories are now a source of distraction to his prayer. When Cassian here describes his literary-learning as a troublesome encumbrance he is speaking within the ascetic-monastic tradition (one may think of Jerome's dream in Ep. 22,30) and is following the requirements of the theme of the 14th conference, in which Abbas Nesteros only recognises the validity of *scientia spiritualis*. The question where Cassian acquired his classical education, an education which included a knowledge of Greek may be answered in different ways. Scythia Minor was a romanised province with a Greek background. In the fourth century it certainly may not be dismissed as a barbaric or uncivilized land. However we know nothing of stimulating centres of education. One may hardly argue that Ovid's enforced sojourn at Tomi resulted in an enduring promotion of culture[26]! So in this matter as well, cogent reasons force one to have recourse to the western part of the empire and to the educational possibilities available in Gaul. We should not forget that Gennadius of Marseilles also claimed to know Greek.

But what remains to be said about the '*natione Scytha*' of Gennadius? When Gennadius writes '*natio*' or '*genus*' in his catalogue of authors he means geographical origin. Cassian's entry would then present the exception to this practice. Another exception must also be mentioned in the case of Cassian. While in the cases of six authors Gennadius each time adds the term '*monachus*' and twice adds that they belong to the '*monasterium Lerinense*', any such indication of his state of life is missing in the case of Cassian. Or is it not hidden within the expression '*natione Scytha*'? This conclusion is supported by the considerably stereotypical construction of the sentences which is dictated by the catalogue form. Scytha is accordingly not the roman province, but the well-known Egyptian monastic settlement, the Scetis. The first Conference leads us to this

[24] *Expos. in Ps.* 103, 17.
[25] *Conl.* 14, 12.
[26] Damian p. 270 suggests this.

well-known monastic arena: *De habitatione Scetii* and Cassian begins his account with the words: 'Because in the desert of Scete...' — '*Cum in heremo Sciti...*'.

The manuscript tradition and the various comments prove that objections were repeatedly raised against Gennadius' '*natione Scytha*'. Recently it has been our colleagues in Vienna, Kurt Smolak and above all Klaus Zelzer, who have used new arguments in order to interpret Gennadius' comment on Cassian's place of origin in terms of his monastic homeland. Mr. Zelzer assures us that we may without hesitation combine Gennadius' comments with Cassian's own account which points to a homeland in southern Gaul: '*Cassianus natione Scytha*, ein Südgallier', in: *Wiener Studien* 104 (1991) 161-168[27].

So when John Cassian finally settled down in Marseilles this was simply his return home after a long absence. All speculation why a supposed easterner should spend the last decades of his life in southern Gaul is redundant. And those imaginary midwives for example Lazarus of Aix and Heros of Arles who laboured to secure a sojourn for Cassian in Marseilles may leave the stage[28].

2) *His stay among the monks of Palestine and Egypt*

Bishop Castor expected from Cassian fundamental guidelines on how to live an orderly monastic life for the monastery which he initiated. Cassian promised him the *norma orientis* and informed his patron that monastic life would endure in Gaul only if it followed the example of the East since from the very beginning of the Apostolic preaching monasteries were founded by holy and spiritual fathers. For Cassian the East consists primarily in Palestine and Egypt; here and there he allows Mesopotamia and other monastic landscapes to fall within his field of vision. Since even the most authentic descriptions cannot adequately communicate the ascetical-monastic life — *totum namque in sola experientia usuque consistit* —, Cassian accordingly limits his teaching to what he himself has seen, heard, learned and tried to do while he lived among the monks of Palestine and Egypt.

... ipsorum incitati cotidianis adhortationibus et exemplis vel agere tentavimus vel didicimus vel visu percepimus...[29]

He must of course admit that the encounters lie far in the past and that his memory of the events is no longer complete.

[27] See K. Smolak, 'Skytische Schriftsteller in der lateinischen Literatur der Spätantike', in V. Gjuzelev und R. Pillinger, *Das Christentum in Bulgarien und auf der übrigen Balkanhalbinsel in der Spätantike und im frühen Mittelalter* (Vienna, 1987), pp. 23-29.

[28] H.-J. Marrou, 'Jean Cassien à Marseille', in *Patristique et humanisme* (Paris, 1976), pp. 363-372.

[29] *De inst., praef.*, 4-5.

Ex visu et auditu

Cassian lived among the monks of Palestine and Egypt. The first part of *De inst.*, books I-IV, cast a summary glance on these two monastic landscapes and on their monastic practice. But what he relates is in no way limited to what he himself has experienced. Nor can the examples which are scattered throughout the account always be traced to his own encounters. I can only reinforce what J.C. Guy wrote long ago: his works '*... sont l'œuvre d'un témoin oculaire, mais ne sont pas que cela*'[30].

No one would doubt that the second part, books V-XII, is the fruit of his desk alone. The same judgment applies to the *Conlationes Patrum*. Granted the emphasis here falls on the personal encounters with the fifteen fathers. These encounters are often framed by concrete and scenic details. But the contents of the fathers' speeches come entirely from Cassian. He skillfully gathers his well known literary sources, moulds them into a unity and places them in the mouths of the fathers. His aim was to have the *instituta monastica* made incarnate in the fathers[31].

A sort of itinerary with place names also occurs. In the first part, books I-X, he tells of seven fathers from the desert of Scete and makes a digression to the Cellia. In the second part, books XI-XVII, he relates the encounters with three fathers from the region of Panephysis (near the eastern Nile delta) and with their teaching. The last part, books XVIII-XXIV, with four fathers, returns to the monastic landscape of Scete. If we take this itinerary seriously then Part II should stand before Part I. For at the beginning of Conference 11 we read:

> We quickly decided to go to Egypt and to visit the greatest number of holy men in the remotest areas of the desert of Thebais. (But he never arrived there!) Their renown had spread throughout the world and our urge was not so much to rival them as to get to know them. And so we sailed to an Egyptian city named Thennesus, ...[32].

As a result attempts to reorganise the order of the parts of the Conferences exist, placing Part II at the start. However the order which Gennadius has passed on speaks against these attempts.

The individual travel routes are only vaguely described so that a precise itinerary cannot be reconstructed. Granted there are some exact references, such as the information that the monks of Cellia were about 50 kilometres distant from those of Scete and separated by a wide desert which Cassian had to cross to visit them. In Conference 6 he tells us of such a visit. But for what purpose did Cassian undertake the excursion? Not to describe the monastic scene at Cellia, nor to visit Evagrius Ponticus who lived there since 383, but to ask the

[30] 'Jean Cassien, historien du monachisme égyptien?', in *Studia Patristica* 8 (1966), pp. 363-372, p. 367.

[31] *Conl., praef.* 6.

[32] *Conl.* 11, 1; translated by C. Luibheid, *John Cassian. Conferences* (New York, 1985).

unknown Abbas Theodore the solution to the problem of theodicy. Further the occasion for this question is not some startling event among the Egyptian monks but rather the murder of some monks in distant Palestine[33]. Therefore this particular visit might arouse some doubts.

In addition Cassian claims that he paid a lengthy visit to Abbas Paphnutius in Scete. He calls him the priest of 'our community'. Yet apart from this we merely hear of a restless, knowledge-seeking journey under the 'stars' of the Egyptian monastic heavens or through the 'glorious blooms' of the monastic paradise. Cassian is behaving like 'the prudent bee' which Athanasius had discovered in Anthony[34]. Or may one think of Tertullian:

Age iam, qui voles curiositatem melius exercere in negotio salutis tuae, percurre ecclesias apostolicas...[35]

How long did Cassian remain among the monks of Palestine and Egypt? '*A pueritia nostra inter eosdem constituti*' he writes in the *Praefatio* to *De inst*[36]. *Pueritia* is only an approximate guide to a youth's age: up to seventeen years old but often even longer[37]. Cassian claims to have begun his monastic life in a monastery in Bethlehem. He twice refers to it vaguely as a Syrian monastery[38], otherwise the coenobium in Bethlehem[39] is further qualified as a monastery lying near to the cave of the nativity[40]. We only know about this monastery in Bethlehem from Cassian and what he tells of it is not beyond criticism[41]. The more famous monastery near the cave of the nativity is that of Jerome and Paula, founded after 386. It is the unanimous opinion of Cassian research that Cassian's monastery is not to be identified with that of Jerome. The arguments do not convince me. They have however deeply established themselves in the standard lives of Cassian and lead to a particular presentation of the facts. Namely, Cassian must have been in Bethlehem before Jerome and must also have left Bethlehem before Jerome arrived there, that is before 386. The possibility that the two met has usually been excluded. Why does this occur? Merely on the grounds that Cassian devotes some friendly words to the later bitter enemy of Origen, that he fails to criticise Jerome, and above all that he was supposedly so little influenced by him in his writings. But we must recognise that he was familiar with Jerome's writings and made use of them.

[33] *Conl.* 6, 1.
[34] *Vita Antonii* 3, 4.
[35] *De praescriptione haeret.* 36, 1.
[36] *De inst., praef.* 4; *Conl.* 17, 7.
[37] *Pueritia/parvulus* may also be a reference to spiritual youth.
[38] *Conl.* 11, 1; 19, 1, 3.
[39] *Conl.* 11, 5.
[40] *De inst.* 3, 4, 1; 4, 31; *Conl.* 17, 5.
[41] On the monasteries in Bethlehem see, B. Bagatti, *Gli antichi edifici sacri di Betlemme* (Jerusalem, 1952), pp. 236-237.

Therefore the year 386 is not well established and may not be used as a pivotal point in the chronology.

But let us instead listen once again to Cassian himself. The seventeenth Conference is predominantly used to reconstruct the biography. Here we learn that in his youth Cassian entered the monastery in Bethlehem. He claims that he only spent a short time there. The bare 'elements of faith' (*prima fidei rudimenta*) are what he claims to have learnt and internalised here[42] or, again in his own words, a modest lesson in the art of fostering community life (*coenobialibus disciplinis tenuiter instituti*)[43]. The pursuit of higher perfection drove him to Egypt. The fathers in Bethlehem were not very enthusiastic about this plan. Cassian then took a solemn oath (*coram cunctis fratribus in spelaeo in quo dominus noster ex aula uteri virginalis effulsit*) to return soon to his home monastery[44]. It was only on the strength of this assurance — *sponsio, pactio, sacramentum* — that they allowed him to depart, however only for a short visit to the saints and monasteries of that province[45]. Accordingly Cassian was granted only a short monastic educational tour.

However after a lengthy stay among the 'Saints and monasteries' of Egypt the return to Bethlehem had to be excluded, for only the Egyptian way of life fostered the advance in perfection. Because of his oath serious scruples were attendant on this insight.

The matter of conscience is revealed to Abbas Joseph and his lengthy argumentation is devoted to justifying the breach of faith. Joseph speedily relieves Cassian of his moral dilemma. Fortunately a *sponsio inconsulta* or *definitio incauta* is at hand[46]. So one must focus on the purpose, namely spiritual progress and higher perfection. Since it is this aim which leads Cassian on through the desert and keeps him in Egypt, the original obligation is invalid. Cassian need not reproach himself for lying nor for breaking an oath. Apart from this solution the Conference has little to do with the personal problem. Abbas Joseph gives a thorough instruction on lying which should be used like the famous plant hellebore[47]. With long quotations from the Old and New Testaments he explains the *utiliter mendacio uti*. He only returns to the original question at the end of the Conference. In brief he holds that a monk must always remain true to his *propositum*. Apart from this *nihil oportet abrupte monachum definire*[48].

Should we still call this biographical information? O. Chadwick is vaguely reminded of an apologia. But then Cassian would have to explain why he

[42] *Conl.* 11, 1.
[43] *Conl.* 19, 11.
[44] *Conl.* 17, 5, 2.
[45] *Conl.* 17, 2, 2; 5.
[46] *Conl.* 17, 8.
[47] *Conl.* 17, 17.
[48] *Conl.* 17, 8, 1.

abandoned the promising way of perfection in Egypt to live as an urban-ecclesiastic in the empire's major cities. Chadwick too makes a different suggestion and I support this one. We have here an instruction for the monks of southern Gaul on when lies are permitted and on the danger which earlier personal obligations represent for the basic obligation to seek perfection[49]. Cassian's supposed personal experience is used as an instrument, and employed as the peg on which he may hang some moral catechesis.

However there are other reasons why the seventeenth Conference is valued in the reconstruction of Cassian's Egyptian monastic travels. For in the final section we read that after seven years, Cassian, his conscience at peace, journeyed to Bethlehem in order to be dispensed from his oath and that after this he joyfully returned to the solitude of the desert of Scete. This 'seven years' is the only reference which we have to the duration of his first stay in Egypt. Since Tillemont every chronological endeavour concerned with Cassian's life has swallowed it. However in one of the oldest manuscripts, the so called Corbie Codex from the seventh or eighth century, this last sentence with its mention of the number of years is missing[50]. The matter is therefore not beyond doubt.

Let us now turn to the end of Cassian's stay in Egypt. He nowhere tells us when or for what reasons he left his wonderful paradise for monks. It is usual to resort to the tenth Conference for this. The ninth and the tenth Conferences form a unit, On Prayer[51]. In each case the speaker is Abbas Isaac. Each of the two Conferences may be precisely dated, Spring 399, that is shortly before and shortly after the arrival of Bishop Theophil of Alexandria's letter on the celebration of Easter. In this letter Theophil launches a heavy attack on the anthropomorphites and condemns their opinions as heresy. The condemnation caused the monks to protest loudly, the letter was not promulgated and Theophil was himself accused of heresy. Only Paphnutius with whom Cassian was staying was on the side of the bishop. Cassian, who presents himself as an eyewitness, reduces the whole conflict to the opposition between educated and uneducated monks. Sarapion, an elderly man of merit, stands for the uneducated monk. Cassian paints his spiritual anguish in vivid terms:

> Ah the misfortune! They've taken my God away from me. I have no one to hold on to, and I don't know whom to adore or to address[52].

We are not told the particulars of the educated monks. But when Abbas Isaac practically reproduces Evagrius Ponticus teaching on *pura oratio* in his lecture on prayer we learn the sympathies of the educated monks. They are followers of Evagrius Ponticus and admirers of Origen. Now Cassian never

[49] Cf. Chadwick, p. 17.
[50] M. Petschenig in notes on *Conl.* 17, 30; Chadwick, p. 17.
[51] Reference to *De inst.* 2, 9, 1.
[52] *Conl.* 10, 3, translation C. Luibheid.

explicitly mentioned Evagrius Ponticus[53] who died in the desert of Scete about this time, although he owed so much in his teaching to him! The events of Spring 399 as told in the tenth Conference do not make the end of his stay among the Egyptian monks easy to understand. Indeed he does not even mention his departure.

Only a glance at the wider events in Egypt, now however without Cassian, lead us to conclude that Cassian's stay in Egypt must have come to an end in this time[54].

In the year 399 *Cassianus, natione Scytha* ceased to exist. When did the period of his life which he spent there begin? I would like to distance myself from the theory that he spent the lengthy span of seven or twice seven years there. Perhaps his journey to Egypt was indeed merely a visit, granted an extraordinarily extended one.

Conclusion

John Cassian encountered the Eastern monks in person. However my impression is that his stay among them was considerably shorter and less intense than has often been argued. Perhaps it should be conceived in these terms: A pilgrimage to the Holy Cities was fashionable in the fourth century. The pilgrim eventually finds himself in a monastery in Bethlehem from where, once more in the spirit of the pious tourism of his day, he sets off to Egypt: *cursim sanctos ac monasteria circuire*[55]. A more lengthy stay did indeed develop out of this visit but I do not dare to suggest how long it lasted. The encounter with the monks and the experience of living with them fostered his appreciation of the ascetical-monastic life. As a result he later devoted all his strength to teaching its spiritual foundations and practical form.

The key to his monastic writings lies

a) in (the terms) *experientia* and *usus*. If one is always talking about something and expect to be heard on the matter then one must be able to refer to one's own experience and personal accomplishment[56]. Let me quote Cassian once more:

> It is beyond doubt that no one may speak more truly or better about these [the coenobitic and hermitic perfection] than he who has attained both perfections through long practice and is schooled by experience (*longo usu ac magistra experientia*)[57].

[53] Perhaps one may identify the '*frater*' (*de provincia Ponti*) in *De inst.* 5, 32 with him, thus J.C. Guy, *SC* 109, p. 242; Damian sees him in Cassian's fellow traveller Germanus!
[54] Chadwick, pp. 29-30. P. Rousseau, *Ascetics, Authority, and the Church. In the Age of Jerome and Cassian* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 170-172.
[55] *Conl.* 17, 2, 2.
[56] *Conl.* 3, 7, 4.
[57] *Conl.* 19, 7.

Cassian has no choice but to lay claim to *experientia* and *usus* — *Et ego in arcadia*!

b) The only absolute monastic authorities for the monks of southern Gaul are the monastic fathers in the East because the latter are linked through an unbroken line of tradition with the cradle of monasticism — *in tempore praedicationis apostolicae*. The myth of the apostolic origin of the monastic life (Cassian presents us with two versions) may be uplifting but it is not true[58]. Yet Cassian finds himself following a fixed concept of tradition widespread in southern Gaul. He applies it to the ascetic-monastic life. As a result he can only legitimate his ascetical-monastic doctrine by placing it in the mouths of the Egyptian monastic fathers: Therefore one should not consider what I write to be my property but rather theirs. The stream arises from the spring, and whatever is attributed to the pupil must be referred back to the honour of the Master[59].

In his writings Cassian lays claim to personal experience and limits himself to the communication of what he has experienced — I have done it, tried to do, heard, and seen! To use a modern concept one may describe his writing as 'narrative identity'. His information on himself — John Cassian on John Cassian — merges with its presentation and is absorbed by it, and historical-biographical truth is subjected to the dominating goal — the monastic perfection — as has been demonstrated through Conference 17. His biography is, as it were, 'instrumentalized'. Cassian is therefore no storyteller but a committed moralist and a kind of '*Systematiker*' of the ascetic life. A major point is the primacy of the hermitical life over the coenobitic life. Cassian had left the coenobium in Bethlehem '*propter perfectiorem vitam*'. However he sees how brothers everywhere follow the lure of the desert without attaining the *perfecta vita* in solitude. He therefore insists that the coenobium is the indispensable condition of, and training for, the *vita solitaria*. The biographical information that he left the monastery in Bethlehem too early and without sufficient training belongs in this context. So too do the accounts of monks who returned to the coenobium after long years in solitude. For the initial school provides for most monks the more healthy and helpful climate their whole life long.

In addition it is only the monastery, with its *perfecta vita communis* which is of immediate apostolic origin. For the apostles' preaching led to the *vita communis* in Jerusalem and through Peter's pupil Mark in Alexandria. And these apostolic foundations survived in marvellous fashion:

> From this number of perfect men and, if I may put it so, from this most fertile root there came subsequently those flowers and those fruits, namely the holy anchorites[60].

[58] De inst. 2, 5; *Conl.* 18,5. — A. de Vogüe, 'Monastisme et église dans la pensée de Cassien', in *Théologie de la vie monastique* (Paris, 1961), pp. 213-240.

[59] *De incar.* 7, 31, 6, there referring to John Chrysostom.

[60] *Conl.* 18, 6, 1.

And he reminds us how the hermitical life began with Paul and Anthony, the wonderful fruits of these coenobia. Cassian has not only forged his own life-story into a system but the history of monasticism as well.

Cassian, the zealous teacher and committed pioneer of monastic life, disappears behind his work. He might rightly say, to use the words of Isidore of Seville:

> *Lector non nostra leget, sed veterum releget, quod enim ego loquor, illi dicunt, et vox mea ipsorum est lingua*[61].

Or let me recall the fine verses of the German poetess, Annette Droste von Hülshoff:

> My texts will live on
> when I have long disappeared
> Some will be stirred by them
> who felt the same as I
> Whether they were given by another
> or from my own hand
> Lo, the texts might live on
> But I disappeared[62].

[61] *Quaest. in Vet. Test., praef.* 5, 5.

[62] From: *Das geistliche Jahr, Am fünften Sonntag in der Fastenzeit. Meine Lieder werden leben, / Wenn ich längst entschwand: / Mancher wird vor ihnen beben, / Der gleich mir empfand. / Ob ein andrer sie gegeben / Oder meine Hand: / Sieh, die Lieder durften leben, / Aber ich entschwand!*
[Translation: Dr. Hilarey H.-M. Mooney]

Grégoire le Grand et le pouvoir royal

Bruno JUDIC, Lille

Une réflexion sur le pouvoir au haut moyen âge ne peut ignorer Grégoire. Sans doute est-il d'abord un auteur spirituel, dans les *Moralia*, mais en tant qu'évêque de Rome et du fait des circonstances historiques, il s'est trouvé mêlé à tous les problèmes du pouvoir politique de son temps et nous en a laissé un clair témoignage dans sa correspondance. C'est bien sûr dans l'écart entre les *Moralia* et le Registre des lettres — plus ou moins bien comblé par ses autres œuvres, homélies, hagiographie — que résident de délicats problèmes d'interprétation. Dans un livre magistral, M. Reydellet a voulu et su reconsidérer l'ensemble de l'œuvre de Grégoire pour y dégager les tendances profondes[1]. Retenons au moins dans un premier temps la tendance de Grégoire à l'assimilation du pouvoir royal et du pouvoir impérial. Cette tendance résulte d'abord d'une intention morale: le comportement nécessairement semblable de tous ceux qui sont en position d'exercer un pouvoir de commandement et de coercition: empereur, rois bien sûr, mais aussi éventuellement évêques. Il a paru intéressant de prolonger la réflexion de M. Reydellet en recherchant dans les œuvres de Grégoire tous les souverains concrets qu'il connaît ou qu'il mentionne. Il ne s'agit donc pas d'examiner d'abord les développements de Grégoire sur le pouvoir temporel, déjà bien connus[2], mais de voir concrètement des figures 'royales', quelque soit leur contexte, rois contemporains ou rois bibliques.

Grégoire mentionne presque tous les empereurs romains des Vème et VIème siècles à l'exception de Zénon et Anastase au tournant de ces deux siècles. D'abord ses contemporains: Phocas, Maurice, Tibère[3]. Justin I est mentionné dans les *Dialogues* sous le nom de Justin l'Ancien ce qui implique la connaissance de Justin II, successeur de Justinien. Ce dernier est mentionné dans les *Dialogues* et dans le Registre de lettres en relation directe avec la culture juridique

[1] M. Reydellet, *La royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville* (Rome, 1981). Cf. aussi N. Staubach, 'Germanisches Königtum und lateinische Literatur', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 17 (1983), pp. 1-54.

[2] Par ex. *Mor.* 21, 15; 24, 25; 26, 26.

[3] Pour Phocas, *ep.* 13, 34; pour Maurice: *ep.* 3, 61; 5, 30; 5, 36; 5, 37; 6, 16; 6, 61; 7, 6; 7, 30; cf. M. Reydellet p. 447-453 et E.H. Fischer, 'Gregor der Grosse und Byzanz', *Zeitschrift der Savigny Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Kanonistische Abteilung* 36 (1950), pp. 17-144. Cf. aussi M. McCormick, *Eternal Victory. Triumphal rulership in late Antiquity, Byzantium and the early medieval West* (Cambridge et Paris, 1990). Tibère est mentionné dans *Moralia*, 14, 56.

de Grégoire, comme pour l'empereur Léon I (457-474), Théodose II, Arcadius et Honorius[4]. Il connaît Pulchérie et aussi Marcien[5]. Pour le IVème siècle il faut relever Gratien, Valentinien et Théodose[6] et surtout Constantin. On observera le contexte souvent juridique de la mention de ces empereurs. Pour Constantin, Grégoire est un maillon important dans le développement de l'image de Constantin bien étudié par E. Ewig[7]. Cette bonne connaissance de la succession impériale n'est pas surprenante, elle s'appuie d'ailleurs sûrement sur sa propre tradition familiale[8].

En ce qui concerne les rois barbares, il mentionne ses contemporains, en Gaule: Brunehaut, son fils Childebert II, ses petits-fils Thierry et Théodebert ainsi que le roi de Neustrie Clotaire II[9], en Espagne: Reccared (586-601)[10], en Italie: Agilulf (590-616)[11]. Si on remonte un peu dans le temps, pour la Gaule, on trouve la mention de Childebert I[er] (511-558) en relation avec Arles[12], pour

[4] Justin l'Anc., dans *Dial.* III, 2, 1. Justinien et d'autres empereurs sont mentionnés dans *ep.* 13, 50 rassemblant des constitutions impériales concernant l'Eglise.

[5] Pulchérie est mentionnée en tant que *Helena nova* dans une lettre à l'impératrice Léontia de juil. 603 (13, 42). Marcien est mentionné dans une lettre de Pélage II, vers 583-586, à propos des Trois Chapitres, lettre que Grégoire a peut-être lui-même rédigé. Cette même lettre mentionne les conciles œcuméniques et les empereurs qui leur sont associés, ainsi Théodose II pour Ephèse.

[6] *Ep.* 13, 50.

[7] Cf. E. Ewig, 'Das Bild Constantins des Grossen in den ersten Jahrhunderten des abendländischen Mittelalters', *Historisches Jahrbuch* 75 (1955), pp. 1-46, relève la mention d'un monastère au Mont Soracte dans *Dial.* I, 7, 1 mais sans indication d'un patronage (la *Vita Silvestri* y fait séjourner Silvestre avant la conversion de Constantin). A. de Vogüé, *Dial.* II, p. 439: possibilité d'un oratoire S. Silvestre à Subiaco au temps de Benoît. Il existe aussi une homélie sur l'Ev. (I, 9) prononcée le jour de la S. Silvestre dans la basilique S. Silvestre.

[8] M. Reydellet émet l'hypothèse que la famille de Grégoire aurait eu une position anti-ostrogothique. On peut encore se demander ce que Grégoire sait des empereurs romains antérieurs, donc païens. Cf. *Hom. Ev.* I, 20, l'empereur Tibère dans Luc 3, 1; *Hom. Ev.* I, 8, César Auguste dans Luc 2, 1; *Hom. Ev.* 39, 1, Vespasien et Titus. Grégoire en savait sûrement beaucoup plus comme le laissent penser ses biographes rapportant l'anecdote de l'empereur Trajan, cf. Anonyme de Whitby, Paul Diacre P.L. 75, c. 56-57, Jean Diacre, c. 105. Cf. H. Leclercq, 'Trajan', *D.A.C.L.* 15-2, (1953), et A. Graf, *Roma nella memoria e nelle immaginazioni del medio evo*, vol. 2 (Turin, 1883), pp. 1-45.

[9] Brunehaut et Childebert II (575-595); *ep.* 5, 58; 5, 59; 5, 60; 6, 5; 6, 6; puis Théodebert II d'Austrasie (595-612) et Thierry II de Burgondie (595-613): *ep.* 6, 51; 9, 216; 9, 227; 11, 47; 11, 50; 13, 7; 13, 9; 13, 10; 13, 11; Clotaire II (584-629), *ep.* 11, 51.

[10] Grégoire connaît Reccared (*ep.* 1, 41 à Léandre de Séville) en 599 *ep.* 9, 229.

[11] Relations avec Agilulf: *ep.* 5, 34; 5, 36; 6, 33; 9, 11; 9, 44; 9, 66; 9, 196; 11, 6. Dans *Hom. Ez.* II, préf., Agilulf est le fléau du moment. Pourtant la réalité est plus complexe, la reine Théodelinde est catholique, *ep.* 4, 2; 4, 4; 4, 33; 4, 37; 5, 52; 9, 68; 14, 12, baptême catholique du jeune Adaloald. On conserve encore aujourd'hui dans le trésor de Monza des objets qui attestent des liens établis entre Rome et la cour de Pavie: évangéliaire, reliquaires, croix pectorale. Paul Diacre, *Hist. longob.*, juge avec beaucoup de sympathie le comportement de Grégoire vis à vis de la couronne lombarde. Aussi tout semble indiquer que Grégoire a projeté un royaume catholique en Italie comme il en existait déjà en Gaule et en Espagne.

[12] Cf. *ep.* 9, 217, Childebert I fondateur d'un monastère en Arles. Grégoire connaît Césaire et Aurélien. La mention de ce roi mérovingien montre aussi qu'il a une idée assez claire de l'ancienneté relative de la conversion des Francs même s'il ne mentionne jamais Clovis.

l'Espagne, l'arien Léovigild (568-586) à cause de l'affaire Herménégild[13]. Pour l'Italie, on peut s'étonner du sort commun réservé à Théodoric et à Totila qui apparaissent pourtant si différents au regard de la postérité. On met cela habituellement en relation avec la présence contemporaine du roi lombard que les Homélies sur Ezéchiel présentent comme l'ennemi par excellence[14]. La situation est pourtant plus complexe: le rôle de la reine catholique Théodelinde, les négociations de paix, le baptême finalement d'Adaloald. Il faut ajouter à la série les exarques de Ravenne. L. Bréhier a écrit au sujet de cette institution qu'il s'agit de 'véritables vice-empereurs'[15]. Or à Ravenne l'exarque est lui aussi successeur de Théodoric. La vision négative de ce dernier ne rejaillirait-elle pas sur l'exarque Romanus (589-596) avec lequel Grégoire est en conflit? Pour l'Afrique on a la mention d'un *rex Wandalorum* anonyme dans les *Dialogues* et là aussi Grégoire perçoit sans doute une certaine continuité avec l'existence d'un exarque à Carthage[16]. En Angleterre enfin Grégoire va jusqu'à évoquer avec Ethelbert roi du Kent la figure de Constantin et avec sa femme Berthe la figure d'Hélène. Est-ce déjà l'annonce du grand basculement historique du VIIIème siècle de la papauté vers l'Occident?[17]

Il ne faut pas oublier cependant la Méditerranée orientale. Dans une lettre de 593 à Domitien évêque de Mélitène Grégoire le félicite d'avoir essayé de convertir l'empereur des Perses. Remarquons que Grégoire emploie le mot *imperator* fidèle à une vieille conception du monde où ne coexistent que deux empires à la fois rivaux et civilisés; l'empire romain et l'empire perse. Grégoire devait bien connaître l'état des relations avec la Perse car c'est pendant son séjour à Constantinople (entre 579 et 585) que furent remportées par les Byzantins des victoires décisives sur les Perses. Cette lettre contient une formule ironique de Grégoire: un Ethiopien entre noir dans le bain et en ressort noir cependant le garçon de bain reçoit son salaire[18]. Dans les *Moralia* Grégoire explique que l'Ethiopie signifie la religion païenne. Ici le *balneum* évoque indirectement le baptême mais on peut penser aussi à deux passages

[13] L'affaire Herménégild (*Dial.* III, 31) dans M. Reydellet, pp. 481-485 et J. Fontaine, 'Conversion et culture chez les Wisigoths d'Espagne', *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'alto Medioevo, Settimane di Spoleto* 14 (Spolète, 1967), pp. 87-147.

[14] Totila dans *Dial.* II, 14-15; Théodoric dans *Dial.* IV, 31. Théodoric sert d'*exemplum* pour le motif de l'enfer, cf. J. Le Goff, *La naissance du purgatoire* (Paris, 1981), p. 130. Totila illustre le conflit du saint et du roi, dans un épisode de la vie de saint Benoît, cf. Reydellet, p. 491 et *Dial.* III, 5 et III, 12.

[15] L. Bréhier, *Vie et mort de Byzance* (Paris, 1992), p. 48.

[16] Cf. *Dial.* III, 1, 1-8: Genséric?, *ep.* 9, 9 à Gennadius exarque d'Afrique.

[17] Lettres à Ethelbert et à Berthe en juin 601, *ep.* 11, 35 et 11, 37. Cf. J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Early germanic kingship in England and on the Continent* (Oxford, 1971), p. 25s.

[18] Cf. *ep.* 3, 62. A propos de l'Ethiopie, cf *Mor.* 18, 52, 84: 'Sous le nom d'Ethiopie on a l'habitude de désigner la religion païenne (*gentilitas*) noire d'abord du péché d'infidélité'. Les deux passages des *Dial.* sont IV, 42, 3-4 et IV, 57, 3-7; dans les deux cas les thermes sont des lieux infernaux de purification, cf. J. Le Goff, *La naissance du purgatoire*, p. 128.

des *Dialogues* où les thermes sont des lieux infernaux de purification; dans ces thermes Grégoire met en scène un garçon de bain; dans les *Dialogues* le salaire matériel impossible à verser est transformé en salaire spirituel.

Venons-en aux rois bibliques. Deux figures reviennent souvent: Saül et David. Saül était humble quand il a été choisi, il s'est ensuite enorgueilli de sa position et Dieu l'a alors abandonné. Cet exemple moral vaut pour toute âme. Remarquons cependant que dans *Mor.* 25, 16 l'histoire de Saül est complétée par une citation d'Osée 13, 11: *Dabo tibi reges in furore meo*, qui insiste sur le fait même du roi.

David a aussi fondamentalement et le plus souvent un rôle d'exemple moral[19] cependant on trouve aussi dans *Mor.* 18, 14 David comme *typum Domini*, David est alors une figure christique, évocation d'une royauté spirituelle et mystique. Dans *Mor.* 10, 30 David est rapproché de l'élu, *electus*, qui serait ici plutôt un évêque. Grégoire écrit: 'Il arrive souvent que celui qui est élu (*electus*), qui est mené vers la félicité éternelle, est opprimé ici-bas par une adversité continuelle, l'abondance des richesses ne le soutient pas, la gloire des dignités ne le montre pas honorable, aucune affluence de serviteurs ne l'entoure, aucune pompe des vêtements ne le pose aux yeux des hommes; mais il est considéré comme méprisable par tous, et il est estimé indigne de la grâce de ce monde ... Ainsi David, son père lui-même avait méprisé le saint David en refusant de le présenter aux yeux du prophète Samuel...'[20]. Quatre expressions sont employées ici: *rerum abundantia, dignitatum gloria, obsequentium frequentia, vestium pompa*, qui renvoient à des spécifications très concrètes du haut fonctionnaire byzantin: importance de la hiérarchie, relations de subordination, notion d'étiquette. La *vestium pompa* rejoint les détails très précis que Grégoire donne dans une lettre à Jean de Ravenne sur les vêtements que l'évêque peut ou ne peut pas porter et dans quelles circonstances[21].

Nous retrouvons David dans une construction savante qui implique plusieurs rois bibliques dans *Mor.* 7,35: '... on peut élever les yeux de l'âme et voir quelle grande citadelle les élus de Dieu opprimés extérieurement commandent intérieurement.... A leurs yeux assurément tout ce qui est éminent du point de vue temporel n'est pas haut.... C'est pourquoi ils n'épargnent aucune puissance qui se dresse contre la vérité; mais ils écrasent par l'autorité de l'esprit

[19] Ainsi dans *Mor.* 8, 36, 56; 9, 16, 23; 12, 18, 23; 23, 21, 41; 27, 10, 17; Mor. 30, 10, 37 et 33, 12, 25: mémoire du crime et allusion à la pénitence.

[20] *Mor.* 10, 30, 51: *Saepe namque contigit ut electus quisque, qui ad aeternam felicitatem ducitur, continua hic adversitate deprimatur, non hunc rerum abundantia fulciat, non dignitatum gloriam honorabilem ostendat, nulla ei obsequentium frequentia suppetat, nulla hunc humanis oculis vestium pompa componat; a cunctis vero despicabilis cernitur, et hujus mundi gratia indignus aestimatur. ... Hinc est quod David sanctum pater ipse despexerat, quem prophetae Samuelis oculis praesentare recusabat.*

[21] Cf. *ep.* 5, 15.

ceux qu'ils considèrent élevés par l'orgueil...'[22]. Suivent alors neuf exemples selon une gradation qui suit l'ordre de l'histoire du salut: 1) Moïse contre Pharaon, 2) Nathan contre le roi pécheur, 3) un homme de Dieu contre Jéroboam, 4) Elie contre Achab, 5) Elisée contre Joram, 6) Elisée et Naaman, 7) Pierre et les *sacerdotes ac principes*, 8) Paul et le *sacerdotum princeps*, 9) Etienne. Les *potestates* sont donc le pharaon explicitement qualifié de *Aegypti rex*, David sous la formule *peccans rex*, Jéroboam qualifié de *rex*, Achab *superbus rex* et Joram fils d'Achab. Naaman le Syrien n'est pas un roi mais il possède les attributs du puissant comme supra: *cum equis et curribus, talentorum copia ac vestium*. A chaque *potestas* est associé un prophète ou un homme de Dieu. Cependant les trois derniers exemples, néo-testamentaires, n'impliquent plus de souverain temporel en apparence. Nous sommes dans le schéma du conflit du saint et du roi, analysé par M. Reydellet autour de l'affaire Herménégild[23]. Le schéma est rendu plus complexe par l'art de Grégoire.

En effet la même série d'exemples est répétée une deuxième fois en ordre inverse en partant d'Etienne pour finir avec Moïse. La première série montrait comment les hommes de Dieu osent parler aux puissances, la deuxième série veut montrer que ces hommes de Dieu ne succombent en rien à l'orgueil. Ce procédé stylistique de présentation symétrique d'une argumentation se retrouve dans *Past.* 3, 20 à propos de la façon de pratiquer l'aumône[24]. Il met nécessairement en évidence les deux extrémités de la même série, ici Moïse ou plutôt Moïse et Pharaon appelé encore dans la deuxième série *rex Aegyptius*, et Etienne. A la base d'une sorte de pyramide Moïse figure le pasteur comme guide spirituel et Pharaon le *rex* par excellence; au sommet Etienne le protomartyr occupe une position originale car la puissance qu'il affronte n'a ni nom ni fonction précise: ceux qui le persécutent, ceux qui le lapident; toute la place est prise par le fait même du martyre. On pourrait supposer que le personnage d'Etienne résout le conflit du saint et du roi en rappelant ce que Grégoire écrit dans les *Dialogues* à propos d'Herménégild: roi parce que martyr, mais il faudrait encore se demander de quel type de royauté il s'agit désormais[25].

[22] *Mor.* 7, 35, 53: *Libet inter haec oculos mentis attollere, et electos Dei exterius oppressos quantae intrinsecus arci praesideant videre. ... In horum profecto oculis quidquid temporaliter eminet altum non est. ... Unde et nullis contra veritatem potestatibus parcunt; sed quos attolli per elationem conspiciunt, per spiritus auctoritatem premunt.*

[23] Cf. M. Reydellet, p. 490 et s. Sur le thème de l'homme de Dieu, cf. G. Cracco, 'Ascesa e ruolo dei "Viri Dei" nell'Italia di Gregorio Magno', *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés IVème-XIIème s.* (Etudes Augustiniennes, 1981), pp. 283-297.

[24] Cf. B. Judic, 'Structure et fonction de la *Regula Pastoralis*', *Grégoire le Grand, CNRS* (1986), pp. 411-412.

[25] On ne peut ici que renvoyer à notre article: 'Le politique enchâssé dans le religieux chez Grégoire le Grand', à paraître, où l'on évalue les positions récentes sur la sacralité royale: E. Demougeot, 'Grégoire le Grand et la conversion du roi germain au VIème siècle', *Grégoire le Grand, CNRS* (1986), pp. 191-206, C. Brouwer, 'Egalité et pouvoir dans les Morales de Grégoire le Grand', *Recherches Augustiniennes* 27 (1994), pp. 97-129 qui la refusent, en particulier contre M. Reydellet, op. cit. E. Ewig, 'Zum christlichen Königsgedanken im Frühmittelalter', *Das Königtum, seine geistigen und rechtlichen Grundlagen* (Constance, 1956), pp. 7-74; R. Markus, 'The Sacred and the Secular: from Augustine to Gregory the Great', *The Journal of Theological Studies* 36 (1985), pp. 84-96; id. 'Gregory's the Great "Rector" and his genesis', *Grégoire le Grand, CNRS* (1986), pp. 137-146; id. 'Gregory the Great on Kings: Rulers and preachers in the Commentary on 1 Kings', *The Church and Sovereignty, Studies in honour of Michael Wilks*, ed. by D. Wood, (1991), pp. 7-21; C. Straw, 'Gregory's politics: theory and practice', *Gregorio Magno e il suo tempo* (Studia ephemeridis Augustinianum 33-1; Rome, 1991), pp. 47-63; F.E. Consolino, 'I doveri del principe cristiano nel Registrum epistularum di Gregorio Magno', *Augustinianum* 33 (1993), pp. 57-82, à des titres divers, penchent vers plus ou moins de sacralité.

Relevons que chaque étape de l'argumentation est traitée différemment et échappe à une opposition simple. Après Moïse, c'est Nathan face au *peccans rex*, un roi pécheur qui est désigné sous son nom dans la deuxième série: *David rex*. Ce thème du roi pécheur est implicite ailleurs à propos des larmes de pénitence de David. Il est intéressant de remarquer que dans le Commentaire sur le premier livre des Rois c'est Ezéchias qui est aussi un roi pénitent: 'la peine de mort fut promise au roi Ezéchias par l'oracle du prophète; mais le roi s'affligea devant le Seigneur, dans les larmes de la pénitence, par crainte de mourir, cette mort dont il serait mort, il ne la reçut pas de celui qu'il craignit'[26]. L'exemple revient deux fois dans ce même Commentaire alors que dans les *Moralia* et dans le *Pastoral* Ezéchias est celui qui se croit juste à tort mais il n'y est pas question de pénitence. Le thème de la pénitence royale est, on le sait, appelé à un grand avenir. Il est clair en tout cas que David ne peut pas être un roi du même type que le pharaon, le roi qui se reconnaît pécheur, le roi pénitent, est une catégorie nouvelle, en contraste avec un pouvoir royal plénier qui ne peut être limité par le pouvoir divin car il est lui-même divin.

En troisième place, quand l'homme de Dieu affronte Jéroboam, l'opposition est compliquée par l'intervention d'un troisième personnage: 'l'homme de Dieu ... sans craindre le roi ... exerça contre l'autel l'autorité d'une parole libre: Autel, autel, voici ce que dit le Seigneur Dieu, voici qu'un fils naîtra de la maison de David, du nom de Josias, et il immolera sur toi les prêtres des hauts lieux'. Grégoire ne s'étend pas davantage sur cette figure du roi réformateur de Juda, figure christique par la référence à la maison de David; mais on voit se dresser ainsi la figure d'un roi bon, positif, face à un roi mauvais. Relevons que ce personnage de Josias est destiné à une importante réutilisation à l'époque carolingienne sans doute à partir d'Isidore de Séville. Sur ce troisième exemple, Grégoire a donc encore compliqué son schéma en mettant en présence un prophète et deux rois, un prophète entre deux rois. En quatrième position on revient à une opposition simple entre Elie et le roi Achab qualifié de *rex superbus*, ce qui l'assimile à l'essence d'un pouvoir royal 'pharaonique'. Mais de nouveau en cinquième position on retrouve trois personnages:

[26] *Commentaire sur I Rois* 2, 150, S. C. 391, p. 245-247. Cf. *Mor.* 12, 31 et *Pastoral* 1, 4. Nous n'épuisons pas bien sûr toutes les mentions de rois bibliques chez Grégoire.

à l'opposition entre Elisée et Joram, simplement dit 'fils d'Achab', s'ajoute la présence de Josaphat, *rex Judeae*, roi positif lui aussi.

Dans la deuxième série les oppositions demeurent plus simples et il y a moins de rois. Elisée n'est plus opposé à Joram mais associé à la veuve pour laquelle il ressuscite son fils. Cet épisode fait ainsi pendant à la rencontre avec Naaman. Il n'est pas étonnant que cette deuxième série insiste sur l'humilité des hommes de Dieu, du reste à la fin de la série, Moïse se voit flanqué de Jethro, pour la même raison d'une recherche de l'humilité. Il faudrait comprendre aussi pourquoi les rois n'interviennent que dans les exemples vétéro-testamentaires. Notons d'abord que Grégoire en bon connaisseur de l'Ecriture opère certainement une distinction entre les rois, 'légitimes', de Juda et les rois, 'séparatistes', d'Israël. Seul l'Ancien Testament lui offre une galerie de rois (comme plus tard dans la sculpture gothique) susceptible d'interprétations variées. Le Nouveau Testament, représenté ici par Pierre, Paul et Etienne, implique trop directement l'Eglise présente pour l'opposer aussi nettement à une puissance politique. Le conflit est donc davantage intériorisé: face aux prêtres de l'Ancienne Loi. Il est important aussi de voir le lien entre ces trois exemples et trois cultes majeurs à Rome au VIème siècle mais ces trois cultes semblent culminer non pas avec Pierre mais avec Etienne, ce qui soulignerait comme on l'a vu ci-dessus le fait du martyre comme solution du conflit du saint et du roi.

Il faut relever, pour conclure, une certaine continuité entre les rois bibliques et les rois contemporains. Non seulement Grégoire peut y voir une continuité dans les conduites morales, dans les bons et les mauvais exemples mais on s'est aperçu aussi que l'empereur romain peut être à la fois le souverain chrétien contemporain et le souverain païen du récit évangélique. On pourrait aussi aisément songer à une continuité pour Grégoire et ses contemporains entre le *rex Babyloniae* vétéro-testamentaire et l'empereur des Perses obstiné dans sa noirceur. C'est que fondamentalement, comme l'avait montré W. Ullmann, le texte biblique est très souvent immédiatement 'parlant' pour un homme du VIème siècle; aussi bien l'environnement que les institutions peuvent apparaître en continuité[27].

[27] Cf. W. Ullmann, 'The Bible and principles of government in the middle ages', *La Bibbia nell'alto Medioevo, Settimane di Spoleto* 10 (Spolète, 1963), pp. 181-228. Voir aussi dans le même vol. P.E. Schramm, 'Das Alte und das Neue Testament in der Staatslehre und Staatssymbolik des Mittelalters', pp. 229-256 avec le problème de la rénovation du sacre qui dépasse le cadre de cet article.

Hilaire de Poitiers, *De Trinitate*, 1, 10-12: Réponse à des 'propos antichrétiens' sur l'Incarnation

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L'étude que le Professeur J. Doignon a faite du prologue du *De Trinitate* a montré combien ces pages d'Hilaire étaient informées par la tradition apologétique latine: influence de Lactance et de Minucius Felix, lorsque Hilaire évoque, pour en montrer l'insuffisance, les valeurs morales et les croyances religieuses de 'la plupart des mortels', conformité de la 'voie utile et nécessaire' qui conduit Hilaire à la 'connaissance de (son) Seigneur' avec les 'degrés' donnant accès à la 'vérité' reconnus par Lactance et la 'règle de foi' exposée par Novatien, reprise de thèmes de l'*Octavius* et de l'*Apologeticum* dans la description du mode de connaissance de Dieu créateur, même place faite par les apologistes et Hilaire au prologue johannique, où sont révélées la naissance du Verbe et la nouvelle naissance à laquelle l'homme est appelé[1]. Outre ses thèmes, l'apologétique a parfois conféré au prologue du *De Trinitate* un ton polémique, qui se donne libre cours dans le catalogue des croyances païennes[2] ou qui, surgissant dans l'exposé, inspire quelques formules, par exemple contre la philosophie et ses tromperies[3]; ailleurs, la volonté d'Hilaire de présenter, au-delà du seul 'progrès de (son) âme', le contenu de la foi justifie, de sa part, un mode d'expression précis et ferme, la définition de la foi passant par sa défense contre les erreurs qui pourraient l'entacher. Il en est ainsi dans l'énoncé des 'leçons de la doctrine évangélique'[4] qui fait suite à la citation des versets 1-14 du premier chapitre de Jean.

Le premier enseignement du prologue johannique est relatif à la divinité du Verbe. Des versets 1 et 14, Hilaire déduit que Dieu est Père et qu'il partage 'l'éternité, l'infinité et la beauté' avec un 'Dieu unique engendré', affirmation aussitôt assortie d'une triple mise en garde (§11, l. 2-9):

[1] J. Doignon, *Hilaire de Poitiers avant l'exil* (Paris, 1971), pp. 85-156, plus particulièrement, pp. 111-113; pp. 116-120; p. 131; pp. 132-134; pp. 155-156.

[2] Hilaire de Poitiers, *De Trinitate*, 1, 4 (CCL 62, p. 3-4, l. 1-20).

[3] Hilaire de Poitiers, *De Trinitate*, 1, 13 (CCL 62, p. 13, l.17-18): 'Respuit captiosas et inutiles filosofiae quaestiones fides constans, neque humanarum ineptiarum fallaciis succumbens spolium se praebet ueritas falsitati'.

[4] Hilaire de Poitiers, *De Trinitate*, 1,10 (CCL 62, p. 9, l. 6-7): '... doctrinae euangelicae ... instituta cognoscit (animus)'.

'Ac primum ad cognitionem *Dei* (v.1) *Patris* (v.14) inbuitur. Et quod antea de creatoris sui aeternitate et infinitate et specie naturali sensu opinabatur, hic nunc proprium esse etiam *unigenito* (v.14) *Deo* (v.1) accipit:
non in deos fidem laxans, quia ex Deo Deum audit (cf. v.14 *unigeniti a Patre*)
non ad naturae diuersitatem in Deo ex Deo decedens, quia *plenum gratia et ueritate* (v.14) Deum ex Deo discit;
neque praeposterum ex Deo Deum sentiens, quia *in principio apud Deum esse* (v.1) Deum conperit'.

Trois négations, justifiées chacune par une proposition causale renvoyant au texte de Jean, réfutent les conclusions auxquelles conduirait une interprétation erronée des versets 1 et 14, puisque Hilaire précise que croire en un Dieu Père et en un Dieu unique engendré ne revient pas à croire en deux dieux qui seraient de nature différente et dont l'un serait postérieur à l'autre[5].

Quelques lignes plus bas (fin du §11, l. 20-27), le commentaire du verset 14 sur le Verbe incarné révèle le même souci de prévenir une mauvaise lecture des paroles évangéliques:

'Ac ne *uerbum caro factum* aut aliquid aliud esset quam Deus *uerbum* aut non nostri corporis *caro* esset, *habitauit in nobis* (v.14): ut dum *habitat* non aliud quam Deus maneret, dum autem *habitat in nobis* non aliud quam nostrae *carnis* Deus *caro factus esset* (v.14): per dignationem adsumptae *carnis* non inops suorum, quia *tamquam unigenitus a Patre plenus gratiae et ueritatis* (v.14) et in suis perfectus sit et uerus in nostris'.

Formant une solide armature syntaxique de part et d'autre des mots *habituait in nobis*, les propositions introduites par *ne, ut, dum, quia* soulignent avec insistance que le Verbe incarné est à la fois vrai Dieu et vrai homme.

En dehors des versets 1 et 14 qui lui révèlent la vraie nature de 'Dieu unique engendré', Hilaire retient du prologue johannique les versets 11: *Il est venu chez lui, et les siens ne l'ont pas reçu*, 12: *Tous ceux qui l'ont reçu, il leur a donné la possibilité de devenir fils de Dieu*. A partir de ces versets, du mot *uoluntas* du verset 13 et du début du verset 14: *Et le Verbe s'est fait chair et il a habité en nous*, Hilaire expose le 'second enseignement fondamental du prologue de Jean: les perspectives ouvertes par l'Incarnation sur la divinisation de l'homme comme progrès vers Dieu'[6]. La présentation de cette autre 'leçon de la doctrine évangélique' est, elle aussi, marquée du soin mis par son auteur à en définir exactement le contenu, afin de dissiper des erreurs et des objections dont nous essaierons de retrouver la formulation, à partir du commentaire d'Hilaire.

[5] J. Doignon, *Hilaire de Poitiers avant l'exil* (Paris, 1971), p. 141 a montré que ces mises au point peuvent être rattachées à des discussions contenues dans l'*Aduersus Praxean*.
E.P. Meijering, *Hilary of Poitiers On the Trinity* (Philosophia Patrum 6; Leiden, 1982), p. 45 voit dans ce 'bref résumé des vues d'Hilaire sur les relations entre le Père et le Fils' l'annonce de développements ultérieurs, dont il donne les références, dans le livre 2 du *De Trinitate*.

[6] J. Doignon, *Hilaire de Poitiers avant l'exil* (Paris, 1971), p. 141.

Les lignes qui précèdent immédiatement la citation de *Jn* 1,1-14 font le point sur l'état de l'âme d'Hilaire au moment où elle va découvrir successivement les 'enseignements' de l'Evangéliste et de l'Apôtre: 'd'une part, elle gardait une conviction ferme qu'elle tenait de sa pieuse profession de foi au sujet de Dieu, d'autre part, elle avait conçu un souci inquiet pour elle-même et pour son habitacle, dont elle pensait qu'il devait périr avec elle-même'[7]. Si l'âme a trouvé des assurances dans la lecture de la Loi et des prophètes, elle reste comme hantée par la crainte de la mort physique. Mais, dans le prologue de Jean, 'l'esprit découvre plus d'espérance qu'il n'en attendait'; il sait désormais que son 'Père et créateur prend soin de lui; il pense qu'il ne sera pas réduit au néant par celui qui l'avait tiré du néant pour le faire subsister en ce qu'il était lui-même'[8]. Or, l'espérance apportée par l'Evangile, la certitude qu'a l'esprit de n'être pas promis au néant sont autant de réponses au 'philosophe qui s'acharne sur notre espérance d'éternité'[9], aux 'impies' dont, sous forme d'éthopée, Hilaire rapportera les propos railleurs en commentant deux versets du Psaume 118: au verset 69, Hilaire fait entendre, parmi d'autres, cette question ironique des 'impies', lorsqu'ils voient les 'serviteurs de Dieu' non exempts de souffrances: 'Où est votre espérance en Dieu?'[10]; au verset 116, mettant en scène ceux qui 'se moquent de l'attente de notre foi', Hilaire leur prête cette même question: 'Où est votre espérance, Chrétiens? La mort a un égal pouvoir sur tous les hommes'[11]. Il ne fait aucun doute que, pour ces contradicteurs, la mort est dissolution de la matière, retour au néant, ce qu'elle était précisément pour le païen Cécilius qui professait devant Octavius et Minucius Felix que 'l'homme, ainsi que tout être vivant qui naît, respire et se développe, est un agrégat spontané de substances élémentaires; en elles, inversement, l'homme, ainsi que tout être vivant, se partage, se décompose et se dissout'[12].

[7] Hilaire de Poitiers, *De Trinitate*, 1, 10 (CCL 62, p. 9, l. 1-5): 'Fatigabatur autem animus partim suo partim corporis metu. Qui cum et constantem sententiam suam pia de Deo professione retineret, et sollicitam de se adque hoc occasuro secum, ut putabat, habitaculo suo curam recepisset...'.

[8] Hilaire de Poitiers, *De Trinitate*, 1, 11 (CCL 62, p. 11, l. 1-2): 'Hic iam mens trepida et anxia plus spei inuenit quam expectabat'; 1, 12 (CCL 62, p. 12, l. 4-7): '...curam in se parentis sui creatorisque cognoscens non in nihilum redigendam se per eum existimans, per quem in hoc ipsum quod est ex nihilo substitisset'.

[9] Hilaire de Poitiers, *Tractatus super Psalmos*, 63, 8 (CSEL 22, p. 230, l. 11): '...si spem aeternitatis nostrae philosophus inpugnet...'.

[10] Hilaire de Poitiers, *Commentaire sur le Psaume 118*, 9, 6 (SC 347, p. 18, l. 7-10): 'Namque cum inreligiosi quique per passiones aliquas emendari seruos contuentur, exprobrare haec ita solent: "Ubi fides? ubi spes in Deum? ubi auxiliantis uirtus? ubi boni Dei misericordia est?".

[11] Hilaire de Poitiers, *Commentaire sur le Psaume 118*, 15, 7 (SC 347, p. 162-164, l. 6-11): 'Plures autem sunt qui hanc exspectationem fidei nostrae arguunt et inridunt dicentes talia: "Quid ieiunia, quid continentia, quid castitas, quid iactura patrimoniorum utilitatis adfert? Ubi spes uestra est, Christiani? Mors aequaliter dominatur uniuersorum; in omnium corporum naturas commune ius illi est"'.

[12] Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, 5, 8 (CUF, p. 6): 'Homo et animal omne, quod nascitur inspiratur attollitur, elementorum ut uoluntaria concretio est, in quae rursum homo et animal omne diuiditur, soluitur, dissipatur'.

Après l'enseignement des versets 1 et 14 (§11, l. 2-9), Hilaire développe celui des versets 12 et 13 sur la condition des 'fils de Dieu' (§11, l. 9-15):

'Rarissimam deinde huius salutaris cognitionis fidem esse, sed praemium maximum noscit, quia et *sui non receperunt* (v.11) et *recipientes* in *filios Dei* (v.12) aucti sunt, *non* ortu *carnis sed* fidei (v.13). Esse autem *filios Dei* (v.12) non necessitatem esse sed *potestatem* (v.12), quia proposito uniuersis Dei munere non natura gignentium adferatur, sed *uoluntas* (v.13) praemium consequatur'.

Pas moins de trois 'oppositions'[13] sur le même schéma: *non ... sed* concourent à mettre en valeur l'idée qu'on ne naît pas 'fils de Dieu', mais qu'on le devient[14]. Ainsi soulignée par des antithèses, la déclaration prend valeur de démenti opposé à ceux dont, par deux fois, le même *Commentaire sur le Psaume 118* formulera les objections, avant que l'exégète n'y réponde. Aux 'impies' qui mettent sur le compte de Dieu le fait qu'ils ne le connaissent pas (*in psalm.* 118,5,12) ou qui prétendent que seul un 'don de Dieu' permet de demeurer dans la foi (*in psalm.* 118,14,20), l'exégète, prenant appui sur les versets qu'il commente, rétorquera que 'le don de dieu' dépend de l''initiative' que nous prenons par la 'prière' ou de l''initiative de notre volonté'[15]. Comme celles qui, précédemment, avaient trait à la mort, les paroles 'impies' qu'Hilaire rapportera à propos des versets 36 et 112 du Psaume 118 et dont l'écho est peut-être encore perceptible dans le commentaire des versets 12 et 13 du prologue johannique apparaissent moins théoriques, si nous les rapprochons des propos tenus par Cécilius, pour qui il n'y a pas de différence entre le Dieu des chrétiens et le destin auquel la plupart des hommes croient. Et le païen mis en scène par Minucius Felix en tirait deux conclusions: on est chrétien, non parce qu'on a choisi de l'être, mais parce qu'on a été 'élu'; de ce fait, celui

[13] *Rhétorique à Herennius*, 4, 21 (CUF, p. 153): 'Contentio est cum ex contrariis rebus oratio conficitur'; 4, 58 (p. 207): 'Contentio est per quam contraria referuntur'. La dernière de ces 'oppositions': 'non natura gignentium adferatur, sed uoluntas praemium consequatur' est relevée par un homéotéleute et par l'isocôlie.

[14] J. Doignon, *Hilaire de Poitiers avant l'exil* (Paris, 1971), pp. 144-145 a retrouvé dans ces 'jeux de notions' 'des analyses du *De mortalitate* de Cyprien et ... des traits de vocabulaire cicéronien'.

[15] Hilaire de Poitiers, *Commentaire sur le Psaume 118*, 5, 12 (SC 344, p. 212-214, l. 1-11): 'Sed forte per hanc prophetae religiosam modestiam quisquam impie loqui ita audebit: si, inquit, omnia a Deo sunt, humana ergo ignoratio caret culpa, cum nihil obtinere possit, nisi quod donatum a Deo sumpserit. Et primum hoc impietatis est uoluntas, existimare idcirco se ea, quae sunt credentium propria, non consequi, quod sibi a Deo indulta non fuerint. Sed omnem occasionem huius impiae excusationis propheta submouit. Primum enim, cum orat, conueniens infirmitati suae egit officium; dehinc Dei muneribus humanae deuotionis studia conexuit'.

Commentaire sur le Psaume 118, 14, 20 (SC 347, p. 150, l. 1-7): 'Ac ne quod a multis dici saepe solet rationis aliquam habeat auctoritatem, cum adserunt proprium Dei munus esse, ut quis in Dei rebus atque operibus uersetur, excusantes infidelitatem suam, quod cessante erga se Dei uoluntate maneant infideles. Est quidem in fide manendi a Deo munus, sed incipiendi a nobis origo est. Et uoluntas nostra hoc proprium ex se debet, ut uelit'.

qui, dans l'au-delà, subit un châtiment éternel est victime d'un 'juge unique, qui punit dans les hommes leur sort et non leur volonté'[16].

Toujours centré sur l''espérance' que l''esprit' découvre dans sa lecture du prologue de Jean, le commentaire d'Hilaire s'arrête enfin sur le verset 14 et s'attache à dégager le sens de l'Incarnation pour les 'fils de Dieu' (§11, l. 15-20):

'Ac ne idipsum quod unicuique esse *Dei filio* fit *potestas* (v.12) in aliquo infirmitatem fidei trepidae inpediret, — quia per sui difficultatem aegerrime speretur quod et magis optatur et minus creditur, — *uerbum* Deus *caro factum est*, ut per Deum *uerbum carnem factum caro* proficeret in Deum *uerbum* (v.14)'.

Deux propositions finales encadrant le début du verset 14 augmenté du nom *Deus: uerbum* Deus *caro factum est* disent les finalités de l'Incarnation selon Hilaire. Si la seconde rappelle, à l'aide d'un chiasme et du verbe *proficere* cher à Hilaire, le lieu commun de l''admirable échange' qui s'opère dans l'Incarnation, la première est plus originale. E.P. Meijering la paraphrase en ces termes: 'L'Incarnation du Verbe est une adaptation à la faiblesse humaine qui pouvait difficilement admettre que les hommes ont la possibilité de devenir fils de Dieu'[17], mais les textes d'Athanase (*De Inc.* 8) et d'Irénée (*Adu. Haer.* 4,62,63) auxquels il renvoie ensuite ne nous paraissent rien dire qui soit de nature à faire comprendre la pensée d'Hilaire. Là encore, celle-ci se comprend mieux, si l'on veut bien voir dans la proposition introduite par *quia* dont le verbe est au subjonctif ('quia per sui difficultatem aegerrime speretur quod et magis optatur et minus creditur') non la pensée d'Hilaire, mais des paroles ou des pensées rapportées. Celles-ci sont l'expression d'un doute, d'une réticence, d'une ultime résistance de la part de celui qui veut bien convenir que rien n'est plus enviable ('quod et magis optatur') que la condition de 'fils de Dieu', mais qui ne se résout pas à 'croire' ('et minus creditur') que cette possibilité soit offerte à chacun ('unicuique'). L'Incarnation a précisément pour but de lever le doute et d'entraîner l'adhésion d'une foi encore fragile ('infirmitatem fidei trepidae'). L'attitude de l'incrédule ici évoquée paraîtra moins abstraite, si l'on relit dans l'*Ad Donatum* l'évocation par Cyprien de ses hésitations avant le baptême. Elles aussi tenaient à la 'difficulté' à croire aux 'promesses de salut de la miséricorde divine'; elles aussi ont été dissipées, la 'seconde naissance' du baptême ayant rendu 'facile ce qui précédemment semblait difficile, possible à pratiquer ce qui était estimé impossible'[18].

[16] Minucius Felix, *Octauius*, 11, 6 (CUF, p. 16): 'Nam quicquid agimus, ut alii fato, ita uos deo dicitis; sic sectae uestrae non spontaneos cupere sed electos. Igitur iniquum iudicem fingitis, qui sortem in hominibus puniat, non uoluntatem'.

[17] E.P. Meijering, *Hilary of Poitiers On the Trinity* (Philosophia Patrum 6; Leiden, 1982), p. 46.

[18] Cyprien, *A Donat*, 3 (SC 291, p. 80, l. 41-43): 'Difficile prorsus ac durum pro illis tunc moribus opinabar, quod in salutem mihi diuina indulgentia pollicebatur, ut quis renasci denuo posset. 4 (p. 84, l. 73-74): '... facultatem dare quod prius difficile uidebatur, geri posse quod inpossibile putabatur'.

L'"enseignement évangélique' donne à l'"esprit' la 'joie' (§12, l. 1-2):

'Hanc itaque diuini sacramenti doctrinam mens laeta suscepit'[19].

Une suite de *membra* constitués autour de participes apposés à *mens laeta* rappelle d'abord les promesses dont l'Incarnation est porteuse et les perspectives qu'elle ouvre à l'"esprit' (§12, l. 2-4):

'in *Deum* proficiens per *carnem* (v.14), et in nouam natiuitatem per fidem uocata, et ad caelestem regenerationem obtinendam *potestati* (v.12) suae permissa',

puis les certitudes qui se sont substituées aux insatisfactions de l'"âme' avant sa découverte du prologue johannique (§12, l. 4-7):

'curam in se parentis sui creatorisque cognoscens, non in nihilum redigendam se per eum existimans, per quem in hoc ipsum quod est ex nihilo substitisset';

le dernier membre participial, introduit par la formule de récapitulation *et haec omnia*, est plus amplement développé (§12, l. 17-16):

'et haec omnia ultra intellegentiae humanae metiens sensum, quia ratio communium opinionum consilii caelestis incapax hoc solum putet in natura rerum esse quod aut intra se intellegat aut praestare possit ex sese. Dei autem uirtutes secundum magnificentiam aeternae potestatis non sensu sed fidei infinitate pendebat: ut Deum *in principio apud Deum* (v.2) et *uerbum carnem factum habitasse in nobis* (v.14) non idcirco non crederet, quia non intellegeret, sed idcirco se meminisset intellegere posse, si crederet'.

Ces lignes expliquent la formule qui, dans le § 10, venait tout de suite après la citation de *Jn* 1,1-14: 'Proficit mens ultra naturalis sensus intellegentiam'. Or, tandis qu'il montre que l'enseignement découvert dans le texte de Jean, excédant les seules possibilités de l'intelligence, requiert, pour être compris, la foi, Hilaire ne peut contenir une ébauche de diatribe contre la raison humaine et les limites dans lesquelles elle se circonscrit: 'quia ratio … ex sese' (l. 8-11). Placée hors de ce contexte, débarrassée du jugement négatif d'Hilaire, une telle définition des ambitions de la raison pourrait fort bien s'entendre comme une profession de foi positiviste, et le païen Cécilius encore la ferait vraisemblablement sienne, lui qui demande à ses interlocuteurs chrétiens d'avoir la sagesse de 'cesser de scruter les espaces célestes … et de discuter les affaires divines' et leur propose pour modèle un 'Socrate, prince de la sagesse', à qui il prête cette déclaration: 'quod supra nos, nihil ad nos'[20].

Commentant au chapitre 6 de l'*In Matthaeum* les paroles du Christ: *Ne donnez pas aux chiens ce qui est saint et ne jetez pas vos perles devant le porcs,*

[19] On pourra rapprocher la 'joie' de l'"esprit' découvrant "l'enseignement du mystère divin' de la joie du sage stoïcien parvenu à la 'connaissance du vrai': Sénèque, *De uita beata*, 4, 5 (CUF, p. 6): '… ex cognitione ueri gaudium grande et immotum'.

[20] Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, 12, 7 - 13, 1 (CUF, p. 18): 'Proinde si quid sapientiae uobis aut uerecundiae est, desinite caeli plagas et mundi fata et secreta rimari … Quamquam si philosophandi libido est, Socraten, sapientiae principem, quisque uestrum tantus est, si potuerit, imitetur. Eius uiri, quotiens de caelestibus rogabatur, nota responsio est: "quod supra nos, nihil ad nos"'.

Hilaire avait donné cet avertissement: 'Nous ne sommes pas libres de livrer aux païens (les *chiens*) les mystères et la vertu des préceptes et des promesses de Dieu ni d'en discuter avec les hérétiques (les *porcs*) … Il ne convient pas que nous mettions à la portée de tout le monde l'incarnation du Verbe de Dieu, le mystère de sa passion, la vertu de sa résurrection. S'il nous manquait la formation d'une science parfaite, ils fouleraient et *piétineraient* notre ignorance; *se retournant* contre nous, ils *déchireraient* avec les pointes de leurs contradictions l'incompétence de notre foi'[21]. Alors qu'il expose au livre I du *De Trinitate* les 'leçons de la doctrine évangélique' contenues dans les versets 1-14 du premier chapitre de Jean, Hilaire, qui va bientôt déclarer que, pour ce qui le concerne, 'la plus grande récompense de l'usage de la parole, c'est de démontrer au monde qui l'ignore et à l'hérétique qui le nie que Dieu Père tout puissant est Père de Dieu unique engendré'[22], est assurément prêt à affronter les 'contradictions des païens et des hérétiques'. Nous considérons comme plus particulièrement destinées aux 'hérétiques' les mises au point sur la divinité du Verbe déduites des versets 1 et 14; aux 'païens', aux 'impies' sont adressées les précisions relatives au salut annoncé dans le prologue de Jean. Mais en réfutant ces derniers, Hilaire nous a aussi fait entendre leurs 'propos antichrétiens': matérialisme, déterminisme, scepticisme et rationalisme, tels pourraient être, en termes modernes, les articles de ce credo païen que nous pensons pouvoir lire en filigrane dans l'exposé par Hilaire des 'leçons de la doctrine évangélique'. Une telle profession de foi, qui reprend des thèses de la polémique antichrétienne de l'*Octavius*, émane-t-elle d'intellectuels contemporains? Depuis l'ouvrage de P. de Labriolle, on sait en effet que, sous l'Empire chrétien, le paganisme recruta parmi eux 'ses plus énergiques défenseurs'[23].

[21] Hilaire de Poitiers, *Sur Matthieu*, 6, 1 (SC 254, p. 170, l. 1-17): '*Nolite dare sanctum canibus neque miseritis margaritas uestras ante porcos*, et cetera. Praeceptis et promissis Dei nihil pretiosius *sanctiusque* est, quae sanctificatis nobis immortalitatis thesaurum largiantur. Horum igitur sacramenta atque uirtutes neque in gentes efferre neque cum haereticis conferre permittimur. *Canes* enim de oblatrandi aduersus Deum rabie gentes sunt nuncupatae. *Porcorum* uero haereticis est nomen … Ergo et concorporationem Verbi Dei et passionis mysterium et uirtutem resurrectionis non promiscue tractare nos conuenit … *ne* ignorantiam nostram, si perfectae scientiae desit instructio, proterant atque *conculcent* et infirmitatem in Deo passionis irrideant *conuersique* in nos contradictionum aculeis imperitiam nostram fidemque *disrumpant*'.

[22] Hilaire de Poitiers, *De Trinitate*, 1, 37 (CCL 62, p. 35, l. 3-7): 'Neque enim ullum aliud maius praemium hic ipse usus mihi a te concessus loquendi potest referre, quam ut praedicando te tibi seruiat, teque quod es, Patrem scilicet unigeniti Dei, aut ignoranti saeculo aut neganti heretico demonstret'.

[23] P. de Labriolle, *La réaction païenne* (Paris, 1934), pp. 340-341: 'On peut dire que tout au long du IVe s., et bien au-delà, le paganisme recrutera ses plus énergiques défenseurs dans la noblesse et dans l'enseignement … Quantité de philosophes, de sophistes, de grammairiens, de rhéteurs perpétuaient dans les écoles le culte de l'ancienne littérature et de la vieille religion'; p. 368: 'Le milieu des lettrés et des professeurs a peut-être été le plus imperméable de tous aux profondes influences chrétiennes'.

Paulinus von Nola und Rom

Beat NÄF, Zürich

Paulinus von Nola und Rom — zwei Namen, welche ein Thema mit vielen Facetten bezeichnen. Rom — die Erfahrung der Stadt, welche *urbs* schlechthin ist, — *Roma aeterna* und Romgedanke — politische Theologie — auf Rom bezogenes Geschichtsdenken — Rom als Inbegriff römischer Ordnung aber auch als christliches Zentrum, als Wallfahrtsort, Sitz des römischen Bischofs, Ort der Diskussionen über Fragen der Lehre und christlichen Lebensführung — die Angst vor dem Fall Roms — Rom und das kleine Nola, das Paulinus zufolge nach Rom das zweitbeste Ansehen erlost hat: *postque ipsam titulos Romam sortita secundos*[1]. Zahlreiche Aspekte umfasst zweitens die Persönlichkeit des Paulinus, eines Mannes aus einer vornehmen Familie von Bordeaux, den wir in der zweiten Hälfte seines Lebens als Priester, Mönch und Bischof in einem wesentlich von ihm gestalteten Wallfahrtszentrum und Kloster bei Neapel am Grab des heiligen Felix finden. Hier konzentriere ich mich auf die Frage nach der Veränderung des Rombildes in der Auffassung eines römischen Senators nach seiner *conversio*.

Auch wenn in spätrömischer Zeit die Vorstellung, Rom sei Bürgerort der Senatoren und diese würden dort ihre Sitze in der Curia einnehmen, nicht mehr streng gelten konnte, ja die Gesetze selbst von solcher Regelung teilweise abrückten, trennte man sich doch ungern von diesen traditionellen Gedanken[2].

[1] Paul. Nol. *carm.* 13, 28. Zitiert nach dem von W. von Hartel 1894 im CSEL, 29-30 hrsg. Text. Der Übersetzung ins Englische von P.G. Walsh 1966-75 (Ancient Christian Writers, 35-36. 40) mit vielen nützlichen Erläuterungen sind eine Reihe italienischer Übersetzungen ebenfalls mit zahlreichen wichtigen Hinweisen zur Seite getreten: 1990 der *Carmina* durch A. Ruggiero, 1989 des Briefwechsels mit Augustin durch T. Piscitelli Carpino (Strenae Nolanae, 2) sowie 1992 der Episteln durch G. Santaniello (Strenae Nolanae, 4-5).

In Fragen der Datierung der Werke des Paulinus scheint mir die P. Fabre bestätigende Arbeit von D.E. Trout überzeugend, *Secular Renunciation and Social Action: Paulinus of Nola and Late Roman Society* (Mikrofilm, Ann Arbor, 1989). S. auch D.E. Trout, 'The Dates of the Ordination of Paulinus of Bordeaux and of His Departure for Nola', in: *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 37 (1991), S. 237-260. Anders v.a. J. Desmulliez, in: *REA* 20 (1985), S. 35-64 und ihr folgend u.a. M.-Y. Perrin, '"Ad implendum caritatis ministerium". La place des courriers dans la correspondance de Paulin de Nole', in: *Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'École Française de Rome (Antiquité)* 104 (1992), S. 1025-1068.

[2] Zum spätrömischen Senat und *ordo senatorius* in letzter Zeit P. Garbarino, *Ricerche sulla procedura di ammissione al senato nel tardo impero Romano* (Milano, 1988); St. Giglio, *Il tardo impero d'Occidente e il suo senato* (Perugia, 1990); A. Chastagnol, *Le Sénat romain à l'époque impériale* (Paris, 1992); B. Näf, *Senatorisches Standesbewusstsein in spätrömischer Zeit* (Fribourg, 1995).

Der Lehrer und Förderer des Paulinus, Ausonius, bekannte sich gegen Ende seines Lebens als Bürger (*civis*) seiner Heimatstadt Bordeaux und Konsul in Bordeaux und Rom[3]. Stolz auf Herkunft und Heimat vertrugen und verbanden sich seit jeher mit dem Stolz auf senatorische Karriere und ihre Höhepunkte, die prestigeträchtigen höchsten senatorischen Ämter und Ehren in Rom. Paulinus selbst erinnerte Ausonius an eben diesen Sachverhalt, als Ausonius skandalisiert von der *conversio* seines Schützlings vergeblich versuchte, diesen aus der spanischen Abgeschiedenheit zurück zur Raison zu rufen. Es ist dies das früheste Zeugnis für das Romverständnis des Paulinus.

Quique superba potens contemnis moenia Romae / consul, harenosos non dedignare Vasatas?[4] So hält Paulinus Ausonius — ironisch — entgegen. Ausonius befolge selbst nicht, was er von Paulinus verlange und lebe nur in seiner Heimat und auf seinen Landgütern statt in Rom als senatorischer Amtsträger. Freilich ging es Paulinus hier im wesentlichen nur darum, Verständnis für die Wahl der von ihm gewählten neuen Lebensform zu finden. Wir haben es nicht mit einer wirklich ernst gemeinten Aufforderung zu tun, die gleichzeitig Beleg für eine noch immer in senatorischen Werten verwurzelte Überzeugung des Paulinus sein könnte.

Für uns von Bedeutung ist indes jedenfalls die Einschätzung Roms als die Stadt, in der allein die Würde eines Senators glänzt — als Konsul gar derjenigen des Kaisers gleich. In dem Moment, in dem Paulinus dies formulierte, zu Beginn des Sommers 393, wollte er freilich nicht mehr nach solch senatorischen Massstäben leben. Auch andere Angehörige der Oberschicht versuchte er von der Richtigkeit seiner Auffassungen zu überzeugen. So setzte er Ende 396, nun in Nola, viel daran, den jungen aufstrebenden afrikanischen Curialen Licentius von seinem Weg ins karriereträchtige Rom abzuhalten. Rom erscheint als mächtige Verführerin: *Nunc te sollicitat variis malesuada figuris / Heu! validos etiam vertere Roma potens*[5]. Rom ist der Ort, wo die *nobilitas* stolz in Erscheinung tritt — aber: was Rom verspricht, gehört zur unfreien Welt eines teuer zu bezahlenden Scheins. Das eitle Auftreten der Adligen, die Mühen der Ämter und des standesgemässen Lebens, die Verehrung falscher Götter — all dies bietet Rom konzentriert. Paulinus nimmt hier eine Tradition der Romkritik auf, wie wir sie bei Juvenal oder Ammiam verkörpert finden und stellt sie in den Dienst einer neuen christlichen Rhetorik, die zur *conversio* auffordert. Dies durchaus mit Erfolg, wie ein *carmen* des Licentius an Augustin andeutet, im dem dieses negative Rombild aufgenommen ist: *... Romulidum sedes et inania tecti / culmina, bacchatasque domus, vanosque tumultus ...*[6].

[3] Auson. *ordo urbium nobilium*, 167f. mit dem Kommentar von R.P.H. Green.

[4] Paul. Nol. *carm.* 10, 247-248.

[5] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 8, 3, v. 5-6.

[6] Aug. *epist.* 26, 6, v. 71-72 (CSEL 34 S. 92 G. mit Remi statt tecti). Vgl. C. Lepelley: *Les cités de l'Afrique romaine au Bas-Empire* (2 Bde., Paris, 1979-81), Bd. 1, 273-275; Bd. 2, 178-183. Recti bei D. Shanzer (Willis folgend), in: *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 37 (1991), S. 110-143.

Es ist anzunehmen, dass Paulinus, Suffektkonsul des Jahres 378 und Statthalter Campaniens 381 Rom als erfolgreicher junger Adliger besucht hat. Reue darüber empfand er sicher nicht. Und erst recht pflegte er nach seiner *conversio* regelmässig die Hauptstadt zu besuchen[7]. Rom sieht er fortan als christliches Reiseziel mit geradezu symbolischer Bedeutung[8].

Die Gründe für die Romreisen des Paulinus nach der *conversio* sind vielfältig. Zu nennen ist zunächst die Verehrung der Märtyrer- und der Apostelgräber. Das Fest der Translation von Petrus und Paulus am 29. Juni war denn auch der Anlass für die regelmässigen Besuche des Paulinus in Rom, ab den Jahren um 408 herum verlegte er seinen Aufenthalt auf die Osterzeit vor. Das Gebet an den *memoriae* der Heiligen verband sich mit der Pflege von Beziehungen, vor allem zu asketischen Kreisen[9], ausnahmsweise auch mit Audienzen beim römischen Bischof und schliesslich mit der Klärung verschiedener Probleme, die Paulinus damals beschäftigten, im wesentlichen vor allem Fragen, welche die Stellung des von ihm in Nola vertretenen Mönchtums betreffen.

Rom war ein Zentrum des Austausches über die neuen christlichen Lebensformen. Die Spannungen, welche unter den Vertretern verschiedener Auffassungen entstanden, schlagen sich auch in den Briefen des Paulinus nieder. Rom ist der Ort, an dem er nicht zur Ruhe kommen kann, an dem ihm jede Musse fehlt. Einerseits bezieht sich Paulinus hier auf den Ruf der übervölkerten Stadt, andererseits auf die Beschreibung seiner eigenen Geschäftigkeit im Empfang von Leuten[10]. Erst jeweils auf dem Weg zurück nach Nola kann er aufatmen. Er versucht denn auch, Gesprächspartner zu bewegen, ihn nach Nola zu begleiten und hofft beispielsweise, Rufin wolle sich doch nicht von der Weiterreise nach Nola wegen der Sündigkeit des Paulinus und durch die Nähe Nolas zum negativ gesehen Rom, *vicina filia Babylonis*, abhalten lassen[11]. In der Regel aber ist es doch eher die Entfernung von Rom, welche Nola auszeichnet, und die *humilitas* Nolas sowie deren und des Paulinus *longinquitas urbis*[12] sind dabei Glück und Stolz.

[7] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 3, 3; 5, 13-14; 17, 1; 18, 1; 20, 2; 45, 1.

[8] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 49, 11 (S. 399, 17-20), vom neuen Schiff des Apostels Paulus (nach dem Schiffbruch und im Vergleich mit der Geschichte vom Schiffbruch des Secundianus): ... in portum Romanum pervexit. in quibus similiter mystica argumenta formantur. nam mutata navis novata in Christo vita est, et portus salutis ecclesiae teste Graecia nomen est Romane virtutis.

[9] Paulinus hat mönchische Freunde in Rom, deren Gastfreundschaft auch wiederum von Reisenden nach Nola beansprucht wird. *Carm.* 24, 370-373 von Martinianus: Romamque festinat pedes; / illic amica tecta fratrum civium / optatus hospes invenit.

[10] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 45, 1 (S. 380, 1-3) an Augustin: Tantae enim illic turbae erant, ut non possem munus tuum diligenter inspicere et eo, ut cupiebam, perfrui, scilicet ut perlegerem iugiter, si legere coepissem. 17, 2 (S. 126, 7-10): ... innumeris frequentationibus occupati, quorum partim amicitia, partim religio contrahebat, vix ut vespera solveret coetus nosque laxaret, necessario distulimus officium inopia vacationis. Zum Begriff der Freundschaft bei Paulinus (und Sidonius Apollinaris) nun auch A. Swoboda, Posen 1995.

[11] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 47, 1 (S. 389, 9f.). Vgl. 46, 1 (S. 387, 13f.): vos in aestu sollicitudinis et incerto morarum Romam pati indicastis.

[12] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 5, 13 (S. 33, 7).

Paulinus stellt freilich fest, dass ihm die Romferne zum Nachteil wie zum Vorteil gereicht. Ein Schlag ins Gesicht ist die Weigerung des Papstes Siricius I., ihn zu sehen — *urbicae papae discretio* —, ein Stachel der Hass und die Ablehnung des römischen Klerus in der Zeit des Siricius: Die Zurückgezogenheit Nolas, die Freundlichkeit des Empfangs durch die Bischöfe Campaniens sowie das Interesse der Kirche Afrikas für Nola werden mit der feindlichen Stimmung in Rom kontrastiert[13].

Ganz anders kurz darauf die Situation unter Papst Anastasius I., der Paulinus 400 so wohlgesonnen empfing, als Paulinus *cum sollemni consuetudine*, wie er sagt, zum Apostelfest nach Rom kam: *tam blande quam honorifice excepit*[14].

Wenden wir uns weiteren Facetten der Beziehung des Paulinus zu Rom zu! Paulinus versuchte nicht nur, in der Kirche einen Platz für seine Ideen christlicher Lebensweise zu gewinnen, es ging ihm ebenso um die Anerkennung in der Gesellschaft. Obwohl er in seinen *carmina* immer wieder von den Armen spricht, erwartete er dabei doch die wesentlichen Anstösse von den Spitzen der römischen Aristokratie und vom Herrscher. Es trug ihm Bewunderung ein, wenn er in solchem Zusammenhang gar einen Panegyricus auf Theodosius verfasste[15]. Als Sulpicius Severus Lücken in seinem Geschichtsbild schliessen wollte, empfahl ihm Paulinus nicht nur Rufin von Aquileja, sondern schickte ihm neben einem Natalicium auch eben diesen Panegyricus[16]. Paulinus verstand sich nicht als Historiker[17], sein Anliegen war vielmehr das universale Bild der *civitatis Christi*, des himmlischen Jerusalems. Dies ist ein Gegenbild Roms wie eine Überhöhung Roms zu einem wahren Rom als christlichem Reich.

Am ehesten dürfte es sich bei jenem Natalicium, das Paulinus seinem Freund Severus geschickt hat, um das Carmen 19 (nat. 11) des Jahres 405 handeln, obwohl die Forschung dies anders darstellt. Hier wird gezeigt, wie Gott den Städten und Regionen des Imperium Romanum Märtyrer schickte und mit ihnen den rettenden Glauben und damit wiederum das Leben. Nola erhielt Felix, Rom die Apostel Petrus und Paulus. Die politische Theologie des Paulinus und seine Geschichtsphilosophie konzentrieren sich ganz auf diesen weltgeschichtlichen Vorgang. Rom behält in ihnen seine Bedeutung als christliches Reich, für dessen Wohlergehen die Märtyrer die wichtigsten Vermittler sind. Im schicksalsschweren Jahr 402 schrieb so Paulinus: '... *et tibi (sc. Felici) cum dominus Romani prospera regni / adnuerit* ...'[18]. Ähnlich sieht er 407

[13] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 5, 13-14.

[14] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 20, 2 (S. 145, 1f.).

[15] Dazu G. Guttilla, 'Il *panegyricus Theodosii* di S. Paolino di Nola', in: *Koinonia* 14, 2 (1990), S. 139-154.

[16] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 28, 6.

[17] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 28, 5 (S. 245, 23f.): ab historicis scriptoribus peregrinatus sum.

[18] Paul. Nol. *carm.* 26, 249f.

Felix zusammen mit den Apostelfürsten und Heiligen als Fürbitter römischer Ordnung. Ihnen ist die göttliche Verlängerung römischer Herrschaft zu verdanken, sie sorgen dafür dass die *Romana salus et publica vita* bleiben[19].

Über die Funktion der Herrscher innerhalb dieser Auffassungen lässt sich kaum etwas sagen, da uns der Panegyricus des Paulinus nicht erhalten ist. Im eben zitierten *Carmen* ist wenigstens kurz die Rede von Honorius — *annis tener idem fortis in armis*, der alles göttlicher *virtus* verdankt[20]. Viel mehr erfahren wir über die Rolle der Aristokratie. Paulinus widmet der römischen, und vor allem der stadtrömischen Aristokratie, höchste Aufmerksamkeit. Es sind der Wandel der Werte, die neue asketische Lebensweise, die Verwendung des Besitzes für christliche Aufgaben, die neue christliche Bildung und Rhetorik, die *vera nobilitas* Roms, die bekehrte *urbs*, welche Paulinus immer wieder darstellt. Neben Felix und den Aposteln sind seine Helden römischen Aristokratinnen und Aristokraten, welche seiner Auffassung nach vorbildhaft den neuen Weg beschreiten, so wie er selbst es getan hat. Pammachius, der römische Senator und Mönch, verehrt die Apostel und versorgt die Armen der Stadt auf geradezu unüberbietbare Weise. Rom jubelt — und mit Rom Paulinus: *Quam bono tunc urbs nostra tumultu fremebat...!*[21] Solche Taten der *veri nobiles*, so Paulinus in der Fortsetzung, würden die drohende Apokalypse aufhalten[22]. Freilich musste sich Paulinus zuweilen doch auch Rechenschaft ablegen, dass erstens Rom in einer schwierigen Situation war und zweitens die Aristokratie sich nicht durchweg so verhielt, wie er es sich wünschte. Sogar in der Familie der so vom christlich-asketischen Weg überzeugten Melania bestand bekanntlich keineswegs eine einheitliche Begeisterung für mönchisches Leben. Immerhin glaubte Paulinus, dass auch von Melania jene Kraft ausgehe, welche Rom von der *filia Babylonis* mindestens *in pluribus* zur *filia Sion* mache[23].

Das christliche Rom wird bei Paulinus immer wieder Nola gegenübergestellt. Sie beide sind *urbes* mit grossen christlichen Heiligen, deren Glanz in die ganze Welt strahlt. *Horum de numero procerum confessor in ista / urbe datus Felix longe lateque per orbem / nominis emicuit titulo*, schreibt Paulinus von Nola, und von Rom: *Inde Petrum et Paulum Romana fixit in urbe, / principibus quoniam medicis caput orbis egebat / multis insanum vitiis caecumque tenebris*[24]. Zweifellos empfindet Paulinus das Gefühl, mit Rom als Ort des Gebetes und der Heiligenverehrung in Konkurrenz zu stehen, auch wenn Rom primär Vorbild ist, dem Nola gleichkommen soll: *Sic, Nola, adsurgis imagine*

[19] Paul. Nol. *carm.* 21, 9. 28.
[20] Paul. Nol. *carm.* 21, 20-24.
[21] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 13, 14 (S. 95, 21f.).
[22] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 13, 15: Poteras, Roma, illas intentas in apocalypsi minas non timere, si talia semper ederent munera senatores tui. vere tunc tibi nobilis esset illa nobilitas...
[23] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 29, 13 (S. 261, 1).
[24] Paul. Nol. *carm.* 19, 10-12. 54-56.

Romae[25]. So hebt Paulinus immer wieder hervor, wie viele Pilger Nola besuchen. Wenn es stimmt, was Paulinus schreibt, so wäre Rom 397 anlässlich der Feierlichkeiten zum Todestag des Felix geradezu entvölkert gewesen[26]. Die via Appia wird zur Pilgerstrasse nach Nola.

Besonders stolz ist Paulinus freilich, wenn sie unter unter dem Tross einer so vornehmen Christin wie der älteren Melania ächzt, die 400 auf dem Weg von Jerusalem nach Rom Nola besuchte[27]. Wichtige Besuche verzeichnet Paulinus ausführlich in seinem Werk. Besonders glänzend erscheint das Jahr 407, in dem eine Gruppe römischer Aristokratinnen und Aristokraten in Nola weilt. Die Tatsache der stadtrömischen Herkunft bleibt für Paulinus allerdings nebensächlich, zentral ist hingegen die Zugehörigkeit zum vornehmsten und ältesten senatorischen Adel. Gerade diese Zugehörigkeit zu Rom wird nun freilich durch die neue christliche Lebensweise verwandelt und übertroffen: Turcius Apronianus ist *vetus senator curiae, Christo novus*[28]. Valerius Pinianus übertrifft als *Christianus consul* den ersten römischen Konsul, dessen Geschlecht er zugerechnet wird, durch sein Christentum, so dass er auf einer ganz neuen Stufe steht: *Sed quod ille gesserat / in urbe et una et parvula primis adhuc / Romae sub annis, hic modo in multis agit / diverso in orbe constitutis urbibus ...*[29].

Damit aber sind wir beim zentralen Punkt im Verhältnis des Paulinus zu Rom. Die *conversio* des römischen Senators ist verbunden mit einer innovativen Gestaltung sozialer Normen und Lebensweisen. Freilich ist die Vorstellung der Innovation und der bewussten, auf Veränderung gerichteten reformerischen Anstrengung der Spätantike fremd — 'modern' wäre man versucht zu sagen, wenn nicht gerade dieses Wort auf das ausgehende 5. Jahrhundert zurückgehen würde. Die nichtsdestotrotz innovative Bewegung bezog sich auf den traditionellen Rahmen kultureller und sozialer Formen und brachte das Neue mit dem Blick auf das Alte hervor. In der Auseinandersetzung des Paulinus mit dem alten Rom, das indes bereits vielfältige Züge eines neuen christlichen Roms in sich trägt, können wir eine kleine Spur in einem grossen Prozess verfolgen, in dem die senatorischen *conversi* eine wichtige Rolle spielten und der schliesslich eine neue Epoche heraufführte.

[25] Paul. Nol. *carm.* 14, 85. S. auch die Bemerkungen von B. Agosti, 'Appunti su Paolino da Nola: Il nome di S. Paolino e Nola "secunda Roma"', in: *Rendiconti dell'Istituto Lombardo. Classe di Lettere ...* 123 (1989), S. 279-289 (nicht überzeugend freilich die These, Paulinus habe auch den Namen Senator getragen). Das Bild einer urbs entstehe — so Paulinus — optisch durch die Kirchenbauten (*carm.* 18, 177-180). Obwohl Nola historisch gesehen als urbs bezeichnet werden kann, handelt es sich um eine neue durch den Märtyrer und neue Bürger ausgezeichnete Stadt (165-169).
[26] Paul. Nol. *carm.* 14, 65-69 und schon 44. 53ff. *Carm.* 13, 25, 25 a. 396: Urbes innumeras una miramur in urbe. Weitere Stellen: *Carm.* 18, 181 a. 400; 19, 305-306 a. 405; 26, 384-387 a. 402; 27, 380-381 a. 403.
[27] Paul. Nol. *epist.* 29, 12 (S. 259, 7-9).
[28] Paul. Nol. *carm.* 21, 215.
[29] Paul. Nol. *carm.* 21, 210ff., zit. 257-260.

L'Essor donné à la Notion classique de 'Progrès' par Hilaire de Poitiers, dans le *De Trinitate*

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Comme on le voit chez Cicéron dans le *De officiis* (*Off.* 1,150) — mais aussi d'une manière générale —, le mot latin *profectus* est employé par les auteurs classiques (Pline l'Ancien, Sénèque le Rhéteur, Quintilien) au sens commun d'avancement, d'accroissement, de progrès. *Profectus* est l'équivalent de la *procopè* grecque, qui a la même signification, au sens naturel comme au sens moral[1].

Mais chez Cicéron et Virgile, comme l'a fait remarquer Jean Doignon[2], 'l'idée de gloire a vocation à croître'. Nos deux auteurs l'expriment 'sous des formes métaphoriques'. Dans le *Pro Milone*, par exemple, la mort de Clodius est présentée comme ayant ravi à Milon cette gloire, à lui réservée, dont chaque jour il accroissait l'éclat (*augebatur*) en réprimant les fureurs de Clodius (Cic., *Mil.* 13,34). Dans la *République*, le même Cicéron interpelle Scipion en ces termes:

'Tu perçois certainement de combien d'étroites limites ta gloire se revêt tandis qu'elle aspire à s'élargir (*dilatari*)'[3].

Le chant 10 de l'*Enéide* nous a laissé cette formule bien virgilienne:

'*Famam extendere factis, hoc uirtutis opus*'
(L'extension de la renommée par actions d'éclat, c'est l'œuvre de la vertu)
(*Aen.* 10,468-469)

Si nous nous tournons maintenant vers les premiers Pères, nous voyons Tertullien affirmer dans le *De anima*, — en s'appuyant sur les données de l'anthropologie stoïcienne —, que

'Toutes les facultés naturelles de l'âme sont en elles-mêmes comme inhérentes à sa substance, **croissant et se développant** (*procedere et proficere*) avec elle dès l'origine de son existence' (*an.* 20)[4].

[1] Cf. Polybe, *Frag.* 2,37,10; 2,13,1; 8,15,6. *Stoïcorum Veterum Fragm.* 3,31, pour le sens de progrès dans le bien.

[2] J. Doignon, 'L'ambiguité de la notion classique de "progrès" appliquée au règne du Christ dans la théologie latine du IVème s.', *RSPT* T. 77, n° 4 (oct. 1993), p. 587.

[3] '*Cernis profecto quantis in angustiis uestra se gloria dilatari uelit*' (*rep.* 6,20,22).

[4] '*Omnia naturalia animae ut substantiua eius, ipsi inesse, et cum ipsa procedere et proficere ex quo ipsa censetur*' (*De An.* 20, CCSL 2,811).

Cyprien, le disciple du 'Maître' de Carthage, oppose volontiers *deficere* à *proficere*, et associe, dans ses Lettres, *regressus* et *profectus* (*Epist.* 34,2; 67,7; 74,10). Mais c'est chez Marius Victorinus que l'on trouve cette connexion entre le progrès et la gloire, à la manière des auteurs classiques. D'une paraphrase de Ph 1,25, il tire la formule *profectum ad gloriam (fidei)*: la présence maintenue de Paul parmi les Philippiens doit contribuer au progrès en gloire de ceux-ci, quant à leur foi[5].

Dans son *De Trinitate*, Hilaire reprend à son compte l'héritage classique et celui des premiers Pères, mais en donnant à la notion de '**progrès**' — et tout spécialement à celle de **progrès en gloire attribué au Christ** —, un essor à la fois original et cohérent avec l'ensemble de sa théologie trinitaire[6]. A partir de fondements solides, posés d'emblée au Livre I et constamment réaffirmés au fil de ses relectures scripturaires, Hilaire déploie avec audace des expressions majeures empruntées à la terminologie du *profectus ad claritatem/gloriam* appliquée au Fils dans l'assomption de la chair, ce langage emprunté et traditionnel lui étant apparu le plus apte à rendre compte de ce qu'il appelle 'l'économie des mystères' (*sacramentorum dispensatio*[7]: *trin.* IX,15,1).

I. Les fondements

A. *Le 'progrès' (profectus) est constitutif de la 'génération' (natiuitas)*

Si le Fils peut progresser en quelque chose, affirme Hilaire, ce ne peut être en 'divinité'. 'Dieu de Dieu', il n'a pas à progresser vers l'être-Dieu puisqu'il l'est:

'Du fait de sa perfection, il ne manque rien à la perfection de Dieu … Il ne peut pas progresser de telle sorte qu'il pourrait être, à un moment donné, davantage' (*trin.* XI,44).

Cependant, c'est le caractère propre de sa 'génération' (*natiuitas*), qui le porte à progresser, selon sa 'nature' (*natura*). Autrement dit, la *natiuitas* ou génération éternelle du Fils en Dieu établit une compatibilité de nature, pour ce même Fils, à progresser:

[5] '… *ut … profectum habeatis ad gloriam fidei*' (*Ph* 1,25). Voir J. Doignon, art. cit. p. 587.

[6] Dans l'ensemble du *De Trin.*, nous avons relevé 44 emplois de *profectus* se rapportant au Christ et à son mystère humano-divin sur un total de 48 emplois du terme. *Proficio* compte 58 emplois théologiques sur un total de 67 emplois. *Incrementum* (accroissement, croissance) ne compte que 15 emplois non spécifiquement théologiques. L'étude du vocabulaire du 'progrès' (*proficio/profectus*), nous a conduit à d'autres conclusions que celles de J. Doignon (art. cit. p. 591), qui voit dans l'usage par le pictave de la notion de 'progrès en gloire attribué au Règne du Christ', une certaine 'ambiguité', le portant à 'biaiser' et à opérer certaines 'retouches' au Livre XI du *De Trin.*.

[7] Hilaire a privilégie *dispensatio* (100 emplois dont 83 'théologiques') par rapport à *dispositio* (un seul emploi), à l'inverse de Tertullien qui utilise ce dernier vocable pour désigner le dessein de Dieu et le plan de salut dans le Christ (voir J. Moingt, 'Théologie trinitaire de Tertullien', T. IV, p. 69 et 70-74; R. Braun, *Deus christianorum*, p. 550: *dispositio* comme transposition latine de *oikonomia*).

'En Dieu, l'effet naturel de la génération (*natiuitatis natura*), mystère de foi qui apporte le salut (*salutaris fidei sacramentum*) consiste en ceci: ne pas diviser cette unité qu'Ils sont (le Père et le Fils), ne pas enlever la nature (divine) à l'être-engendré (*nec natiuitati adimere naturam*), confesser le caractère véritable du Dieu vivant issu du Dieu vivant (*ex uiuente Deo uiuentis Dei ueritatem confiteri*)'. '... Et si un vivant est né d'un vivant, c'est le fait de sa génération (*natiuitas*); par elle, un être **progresse** sans qu'il y ait nouveauté de nature' (*trin.* VII,27).

L'axiome de Tertullien cité plus haut ('Toutes les facultés naturelles de l'âme sont en elles-mêmes comme inhérentes à sa substance, croissant et se développant avec elle dès l'origine de son existence') est appliqué ici par Hilaire à la génération éternelle du Fils en Dieu. Il lui permet de fonder qu'il appartient à l'Etre-filial (*natiuitas*)[8] de s'accroître, en quelque sorte, sans changer de 'nature'. C'est un préalable fondamental à l'usage du vocabulaire du 'progrès': dans l'engendrement éternel du Fils, '**il y a progrès de la génération sans qu'il y ait nouveauté de nature**' (*trin.* VII,27)[9]. Le *profectus* s'oppose ici à la *nouitas* si chère aux ariens[10].

De plus, la 'nature' (*natura*) du Fils éternel l'exempte de toute '*demutatio*' (changement, dépréciation) dans l'assomption même de la chair:

'... De peur que le Verbe fait chair ne soit autre chose que Dieu le Verbe ou ne soit pas la chair de notre corps, il "a habité parmi nous" (Jn 1,14); ainsi, puisqu'il habiterait, il continuerait d'être Dieu ... il ne deviendrait pas autre chose que Dieu chair de notre chair; non qu'il serait dépouillé de ses biens à lui pour avoir daigné assumer la chair' ... (*trin.* I,11).

Ni l'assomption de la chair, ni l'assujettissement du Fils au Père 'ne profite en rien à la thèse de l'infériorité (du Fils) dans la divinité' (*trin.* I,33), comme le veut la thèse arienne.

B. *Entre 'naissance' et 'progrès', pas d'intervalle de temps*

Autre point fondamental: le Verbe/Fils qui 'était la vie' (Jn 1,4), n'a pas été fait tel après être né. En lui, en effet,

'ce qui est inné (sa *natura*) n'est pas une chose, et ce qu'il a reçu une fois né (la chair) une autre. Il n'y a pas d'intervalle de temps entre naissance et progrès'[11].

Le *profectus* est donc bien inhérent à la Personne du Fils, constitutif — au sens de Tertullien — de l'être-Fils. L'assomption de la chair — 'ce qu'il a reçu' —

[8] Le terme de '*natiuitas*' est chez Hilaire extrêmement concret. Il désigne souvent l'Engendré lui-même, par ex. III,3,11; VII,20,20; 21,25; IX,40,21; 61,26; XI,18,13; XII,12,1 ...

[9] '*habet natiuitatis profectum sine nouitate naturae*'.

[10] Cf. *trin.* V,25; 27: *rationem nouitatis ratio ueritatis inducit*; VII,14 (à propos de l'*Ep. ad Alex.* d'Arius citée en *trin.* IV,12-13).

[11] '*Non habet inter se tempus et natiuitas et profectus*' (*Trin.* II,20,10).

ne contredit pas l'unité de sujet qui est le Christ 'en qui se trouve *corporaliter — ex solido, i.e.* sans faille[12] —, la plénitude de la divinité' (Col 2,9).

C. *'L'anéantissement' lui-même (evacuatio) est considéré comme profectus*

Comme pierre d'angle des fondements, Hilaire établit, à partir de l'exégèse de Ph 2,6-11, la permanence de la *natura* (divine) du Fils dans la 'forme de l'esclave' (*forma serui*) assumée par le Verbe fait chair. Non seulement 'l'anéantissement (*euacuatio*) de la forme de Dieu (*forma Dei*) n'est pas suppression de la nature' (*trin.* XI,14,15), mais encore '**l'anéantissement (*euacuatio*) est un progrès (*profectus*)**, progrès qui aboutit à la forme d'esclave'. Il y a changement d'allure (*habitus*) sans qu'il y ait changement de nature (*natura*)[13].

Donc, ce qui manque cependant au Monogène dans la chair assumée[14], à l'*homo natus* 'qu'il est en plus d'être Dieu', c'est la plénitude de gloire qui, certes, du fait de sa *natura*, lui est propre, mais dont il s'est librement dépouillé dans son *euacuatio* de la *forma Dei* et sa réception de la *forma serui*. Cette plénitude de gloire sera réalisée dans la *subiectio corporis* (*trin.* XI,49). Son assujettissement final (*subiectio*) a donc pour motif de faire en sorte que 'Dieu soit tout en tous' (1 Co 15,28), c'est à dire que le corps assumé du Fils Mongène soit, non pas détruit, mais transformé, 'changé par une glorification' (*ex clarificatione mutato*), 'en s'ajoutant une humanité en tant qu'il est Dieu, plutôt qu'en perdant sa divinité du fait qu'il est homme' (*trin.* XI,40)[15].

II. Les thèmes majeurs d'Hilaire

Ces trois fondements relatifs à la *notiuitas*, à la *natura*, et à l'*euacuatio* (anéantissement considéré comme progrès pour 'ce qu'il — le Christ — a reçu') étant posés, Hilaire se trouve d'autant plus libre dans l'expression du 'mystère de l'économie' (*sacramentum dispensationis*), pour laquelle la notion de 'progrès en gloire' va lui être utile.

[12] C'est l'interprétation proposée par J. Doignon dans un article récent: 'Un terme difficile de Col. 2,9 éclairé par Hilaire de Poitiers: *corporaliter*', *Rev.Ben.*, T. 105, n° 1-2 (1995), pp. 5-8.

[13] Voir P. Galtier, 'La *forma Dei* et la *forma serui* selon St. Hilaire de P.', *Rec. Sc. Rel.*, T. 48 (1960), pp. 101-118: 'Quand le Xt est rentré dans la gloire, la *forma serui* a été comme absorbée dans la *forma Dei*. Son union persistante avec celui qui n'avait jamais cessé d'être Dieu lui a valu de recevoir, elle aussi, le nom qui est au-dessus de tout nom et d'être comprise dans la parole de St. Paul adaptée par Hilaire: totus Deus' (p. 118).

[14] ... bien que 'jamais ne lui manque ce qui est à lui' (*et suorum ipse egens numquam est*) (*trin.* XI,48).

[15] '*adquirens sibi Deo potius hominem, quam Deum per hominem amittens*'.

A. *La levée de l'accroc à l'unité (offensio unitatis)*

Puisqu'il y a eu anéantissement (*euacuatio*) de la *forma Dei* selon l'**économie**[16], le motif ne peut être que celui-ci: **'faire progresser la *forma serui* qu'il (le Fils de Dieu) a prise'** (*trin.* IX,14). Mais cet 'anéantissement' a pour conséquence, selon Hilaire, d'avoir causé dans l'unité de la Personne du Christ — son unité de sujet — une '*offensio*', c'est à dire un 'accroc', une verrue, un cal (en anglais = a wart), cela de par son libre assujettissement dans la *forma serui*. Cette *offensio* appelait un *profectus*, et ne pouvait être levée que par la glorification de la *forma serui*. Hilaire s'en explique en IX,38:

'La nouveauté de l'économie avait infligé un accroc à l'unité (*offensio unitatis*), et il ne pouvait désormais y avoir d'unité parfaite telle qu'elle existait auparavant (avant que le Verbe ne prit chair) si la chair assumée n'était glorifiée auprès du Père'.

C'est donc dans la *forma Dei* que la *forma serui* sera glorifiée[17].

Dans sa prière au Père (Jn 17,4-6), le Christ réclame 'pour ce qu'il a pris' — à savoir la chair —, 'un progrès dans cette gloire dont il ne s'est pourtant pas déssaisi' (*trin.* III,16). Ce qu'il a pris est donc vraiment devenu sien. C'est bien lui, dans le 'mystère de l'économie', qui eut à **'progresser en gloire'**, dans sa chair d'homme assumée.

B. *Le double mouvement d'assujettissement (subiectio)*

Relisant l'Ecriture, Hilaire en vient à distinguer un double mouvement de *subiecto*, de la part du Christ:

— celle qui se réalise dans l'abaissement de l'Incarnation et qui provoque, non pas un changement (*demutatio*) au niveau de la 'nature' (divine), mais un 'accroc' (*offensio*) au niveau de l'unité de gloire du Christ;
— celle qui, dans la Résurrection, portera le Christ ressuscité dans sa chair d'homme à se soumettre au 'Père de la gloire', afin que celui-là — le Christ — devînt 'Dieu tout en tous' (1 Co 15,28), ce qu'il ne pouvait pas être auparavant dans son humanité non encore glorifiée.

Le vocabulaire du 'progrès' (*profectus*) fournit à Hilaire le moyen jugé le plus adapté pour rendre compte de ce 'mystère de l'***oïkonomia***'.

C. *'La divinité paternelle intégrée intégrée au corps assumé', et le 'totus Deus'*

Hilaire se montre encore plus audacieux quant au devenir en gloire du Christ, à partir de son exégèse de 1 Co 15,28 et de Jn 13,31-32:

[16] 'L'économie' (*oïkonomia, dispensatio*), pour Tertullien comme pour Hilaire c'est 'l'administration ou "dispensation" du plan de Dieu et de sa "monarchie", conçue comme la manifestation historique de sa pluralité cachée'. C'est à la fois et conjointement le plan créateur et le plan rédempteur de Dieu: son dessein d'amour sur l'homme dans le Christ. (Voir J. Moingt, op. cit. T. IV, pp. 133 et 69-74). Cf. supra, note 8.

[17] '*serui forma glorificanda in Dei forma*' (*trin.* IX,39).

'Conformément à l'économie, le Médiateur entre Dieu et les hommes (1 Tim 2,5) était fait de Dieu et d'homme (*ex Deo et homine*); en vertu de l'économie, il a en lui les propriétés de la chair (*habens in se ex dispensatione quod carnis est*); en vertu de l'assujettissement, il va recevoir intégralement les propriétés de Dieu (*adepturus in omnibus ex subiectione quod Dei est*), de telle sorte qu'il ne soit plus Dieu partiellement, mais totalement Dieu (*ne ex parte Deus sit sed Deus totus*)'[18].

(*trin.* XI,40)

Alors, 'l'être (la 'nature') de la divinité paternelle est intégrée à l'être (la nature) du corps assumé' (*trin.* XI,40)[19]. En s'appuyant sur Jn 13,32, Hilaire constate que 'glorifié dans le Christ, Dieu — le Père — l'a, pour cette raison, glorifé en lui-même'. Il en déduit: **'c'est par un accroissement de la gloire de Dieu en lui-même** — dans le Christ — **que cela s'est produit'**[20]. Régnant déjà dans une gloire qui provient de la gloire de Dieu, il — le Christ — passe désormais lui-même en la gloire de Dieu'. Et Hilaire de conclure:

'...Afin que Dieu soit tout en tous (1 Co 15,28), le Christ devra donc désormais demeurer tout entier en Dieu au sortir de l'économie par laquelle il est homme'.

(*trin.* XI,42)

Il y aura donc eu **promotion à une gloire plus complète** (*gloriae plenioris profectus* en XI,42) par accroissement de la gloire déjà octroyée au corps, lorsque 'Dieu l'honorera en lui-même' (Jn 13,32).

III. Ce 'mystère de l'économie' est pour nous

Faisant l'exégèse du Ps 44,8[21], Hilaire reprécise que le Christ n'est pas promu Dieu-Monogène par une onction, mais qu'il est engendré comme tel (*Deus natus est*; cf. XI,19) Puis il ajoute:

(Lorsque le Christ) 'reçoit une onction ..., le progrès que représente cette onction n'a pas trait à ce qui n'a pas besoin d'accroissement (sa divinité), mais bien à **ce qui, croissant en vertu d'un mystère, a besoin du progrès de cette onction** (son corps d'homme, la chair assumée) (*trin.* XI,19).

[18] En *Tri.* XI,42, Hilaire emploiera une autre formulation, en distinguant toujours les deux temps: économie d'abaissement (cf. Ph. 2,6), et économie d'assujettissement (cf. 1 Co 15,28).

[19] '*...naturae adsumpti corporis nostri natura paternae diuinitatis inuecta*'.

[20] '*per incrementum glorificati in eo Dei glorificauit eum in se Deus*' (*Trin.* XI,42,19-20).

[21] '*Dilexisti iustitiam et odisti iniquitatem; propterea unxit te Deus, Deus tuus, oleo exultationis prae consortes tuos*' (Tu as aimé la justice et haï l'impiété, c'est pourquoi Dieu, ton Dieu t'a oint d'une huile d'allégresse plus que tes compagnons) (Ps 44,8). Voir J. Doignon, 'L'Incarnation: la vraie visée du Ps 44,8 sur l'onction du Christ, chez Hilaire de Poitiers', *RThL* 23 (1992), p. 175 en particulier: 'La cause de l'onction du Christ: la promotion de la chair assumée'.

En effet,

'Il fallait à l'homme que nous sommes la sanctification conférée par l'onction **pour qu'elle se révèle comme étant Christ**' (*ibidem*).

Dans ce 'mystère de l'économie' qui est à la fois 'économie d'assujettissement' (*dispensatio subiectionis*) et 'économie de gloire' (*dispensatio gloriae*: cf. XI,41-44), 'le Dieu-Monogène', sans changer de *natura*, 'récupère sa gloire' (*repetitae gloriae significatio*) afin qu'il soit 'Dieu-tout-en-tous' (1 Co 15,28; cf. *trin.* XI,48,4). Et cela est un 'progrès' dans l'assomption de notre être (de notre nature):

'Après le mystère de l'économie, Dieu se révèle être tout en tous. C'est **pour nous**, par conséquent qu'est le gain (*lucra*), **pour nous** qu'est le progrès (*profectus*); ... autrement dit, **c'est nous qui allons être rendus conformes à la gloire du corps de Dieu**' (XI,49).

L'homme s'accomplit alors comme image de Dieu, étant 'devenu conforme à la gloire du corps de Dieu'[22].

Conclusion

Au terme de ce parcours lexicographique centré sur le vocabulaire du progrès en gloire attribué au Christ, il nous semble pouvoir affirmer qu'Hilaire fait preuve d'une admirable cohérence doublée d'une libre audace. Enraciné dans la tradition apostolique et nicéenne qui lui fait poser, à partir de l'Ecriture, la *natiuitas* du Fils comme prémisse à tout discours, Hilaire rend magistralement compte du 'mystère de l'économie' au cœur duquel se trouve insérée la notion de 'progrès en gloire'. Nous l'avons souligné, le *profectus gloriae* est étroitement lié à la *natiuitas*. Il s'insère, d'autre part, au sein même de l'économie d'assujettissement et de l'économie de gloire pour que soit parfaitement réalisée la conformité de l'homme à l'image de Dieu (cf. XI,49: *consummatur itaque homo imago Dei*), dans une 'conformité à la gloire du corps de Dieu' (*ibidem*).

Nous touchons là à 'la pointe de la conception hilarienne de la divinisation de l'homme'[23]. L'homme véritable, c'est l'homme glorifié, de cette gloire qui appartient au 'corps de Dieu' — comme le dit audacieusement Hilaire —, et que le Christ lui-même, en tant qu'homme, s'est acquise progressivement jusqu'à devenir 'Dieu-tout-en-tous' (1 Co 15,28).

[22] '... *conformis effectus gloriae corporis Dei in imaginem creatoris excedit (homo)*' (*trin.* XI,49).

[23] Voir M.J. Rondeau, 'Remarques sur l'anthropologie de saint Hilaire', *Studia Patristica* 6 (TU 81; Berlin 1962), p. 210. Pour G. Pelland, la *traditio regni* de 1 Co 15,28 va également dans le sens de 'la restauration admirable de l'homme dans le Christ'. Cf. 'Le thème biblique du Règne chez Hilaire de Poitiers', *Gregorianum* 60 (1979), p. 652.

La notion classique de l'extension de la gloire et son vocabulaire, ont simplement fourni à Hilaire le moyen, jugé le plus obvie après avoir été porté à son essor majeur, de rendre compte de l'anthropologie et de l'eschatologie chrétiennes.

History, Biography, and the Exemplary Life of Paulinus of Nola

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Few late-antique lives have been asked to bear as much ideological freight as the life of Paulinus of Nola. Paulinus' contemporaries, enthralled or scandalized by his mid-life ascetic conversion, immediately held him up either as an *exemplum virtutis* or a social saboteur. In similar fashion, more recent observers have employed his biography to delineate both the virtues and the shortcomings, the achievements and the failures, of his tumultuous age. On the one hand, the remarkable appeal of Paulinus' conversion story, unfolding in this age so delicately poised on the cusp of classical antiquity and the Christian middle ages, has ensured that everyone concerned with the history of the later Roman empire knows something of his life; on the other hand, the polemical and analytical forces inspired from the beginning by Paulinus' story have often driven the discomforting contradictions and idiosyncracies of his life into the shade cast by loftier didactic and schematic structures. As a result the search for the historical Paulinus is, if not intractable, at least more difficult.

The manipulation of Paulinus' image began immediately in the months following his spectacular renunciation of the world in late 394 and apparently continued with unabated zeal throughout his life[1]. Such ascetically-minded contemporaries as Ambrose, Augustine, and Suplicius Severus, indebted to a deeply rooted tradition of ethical exhortation through the medium of biographical models[2], quickly initiated an interpretation of Paulinus' life that others would find irresistibly compelling. These earliest witnesses to Paulinus' rejection of his secular past and his extensive patrimony harnessed the edifying power of his 'biography' by collapsing Paulinus' life into one exemplary moment of radical conversion. They concentrated his life-story into the singular, spiritually charged act that transformed a wealthy *vir clarissimus* into an earnest servant

[1] On chronology see P. Fabre, *Essai sur la chronologie de l'œuvre de saint Paulin de Nole* (Paris, 1948) and D. Trout, 'The dates of the ordination of Paulinus of Bordeaux and of his departure for Nola', *REAug* 37 (1991), pp. 237-60. Paulinus himself would speak of his action as 'secular renunciation'; see, e.g., *ep* 25*.1. Paulinus' letters and poems were edited by G. de Hartel, CSEL 29 and 30 (1894). This paper presents ideas discussed more fully in the first chapter of my forthcoming, *Paulinus of Nola: Claims on the Late Roman World*.

[2] See, for example, P. Brown's succinct introductory remarks to 'The Saint as Exemplar in Late Antiquity', *Representations* 2 (1983), pp. 1-6.

of God[3]; and, having assimilated Paulinus and his tale to scriptural prototypes, they offered the resultant product to contemporaries in defense or affirmation of the divisive ascetic values then gaining their precarious foothold within the households of the western Christian élite.

Thus Ambrose, anticipating a hostile reaction from some of Rome's nobles (Christian as well as pagan we might suspect), immediately linked Paulinus' provocative conversion to David's exuberant dance before the ark and Isaiah's scandalous nakedness before the people. Like David and Isaiah, Ambrose declared, Paulinus was not ashamed to lift up his works 'so that they might shine before his Father'[4]. In Paulinus' act, as in Isaiah's, God had expressed his will not by words but by *exemplum*[5]. So, too, in North Africa Augustine quickly capitalized upon the didactic potential of Paulinus' tale by distilling it and assimilating it to a well-worn scriptural metaphor. 'Go to Campania', Augustine wrote to the ambitious Licentius in 396, 'learn about Paulinus ... how without delay he shook off the great pride of this world from a neck so much more noble for being more humble so that he might submit to the yoke of Christ'[6]. If both Augustine's own teaching and various gospel injunctions had failed to persuade Licentius to abandon his lingering desires for marriage and a public career and to don the 'easy' yoke of Christ[7], Augustine still hoped the example of Paulinus would succeed. After all, Paulinus had already tasted and rejected the fruits still tempting Licentius; and, as Augustine knew, could appeal to Licentius in the poetic medium that the latter so favored[8]. Finally, within a year of Augustine's letter to Licentius, Sulpicius Severus also turned to the example of Paulinus to lend prestige to the sometimes embattled ascetic vocation. Into his *Vita Martini* Severus deftly inserted an image of Paulinus, stripped down and projected through the stringent counsel of Jesus to the rich young man of Matthew's gospel. Paulinus, Martin was made to proclaim, almost alone in his time had fulfilled the evangelic teaching, having thrown away his great wealth and followed Christ. Now Paulinus, Severus' ascetic hero continued, 'should be followed and imitated by us. The present age is fortunate in an example (*documentum*) of such great faith and virtue'[9].

[3] Amb. *ep*. 6.27.1 (CSEL 28)/*ep*. 58.1 (PL 16): 'quo inpensius deo serviat'.

[4] Amb. *ep*. 6.27 with 2 Sam 6.14-23 and Is 20. *Ep*. 6.27.8: 'ut "lucerent coram patre suo, qui in caelis est" [Matt 5.16]'.

[5] *Ep*. 6.27.11 'Potuit quidem hoc et sermone exprimere, sed exemplo acerbare maluit'. Cf. Is 20.2.

[6] Aug. *ep*. 26.5 (CSEL 34): 'Vade in Campaniam, disce Paulinum ... quam grandem faustum saeculi huius tanto generosiore quanto humiliore cervice incunctanter excusserit, ut eam subderet Christi iugo'.

[7] Matt 11.28-30 cited by Augustine just prior to his summons to Campania.

[8] See Licentius' poem appended to Augustine's *ep*. 26, with D. Shanzer, '"*Arcanum Varronis iter*": Licentius' Verse Epistle to Augustine', *REAug* 37 (1991), pp. 110-43.

[9] Sev. *V. Mar*. 25.4-5 (SC 133): 'illum nobis sequendum, illum clamabat imitandum; beatumque esse praesens saeculum tantae fidei virtutisque documento' (5).

Paulinus' conversion had clearly laid claim to the contemporary imagination and ascetically-inclined contemporaries in turn laid claim to his story. Ironically, however, the very act that so forcefully thrust Paulinus into the late-fourth-century field of vision, by its nature also ensured that Paulinus' biography was distilled, if not distorted, into a concentrated, irreducible exemplar of the committed Christian life. Articulating Paulinus' tale through striking scriptural images, Ambrose, Augustine, and Severus drained off the irrelevant, particularizing details of his biography. Their intention was not to leave posterity a faithful report but to brand a potentially renegade act, and the values it instantiated, with the marks of legitimacy. Moreover, as holy scripture was enlisted to validate Paulinus' actions, so in turn Paulinus' social prominence lent credibility and clarity to troublesome gospel precepts. The deeds of the saints, Augustine had recently declared, are sometimes the keys to scriptural understanding[10].

Under the intense pressure exerted by such contemporary *testimonia*, the life of Paulinus of Nola soon effaced the life of Paulinus of Bordeaux. To be sure, the bold outline of Paulinus' earlier life — wealth, nobility, and a senatorial *cursus* — was never dismissed by contemporary or later writers, for it provided the necessary foil to Paulinus' ascetic commitment; but Paulinus' advocates largely reduced his first four decades to a caricature intended to heighten the contrast between the old and the new. Paulinus himself was evidently a willing accomplice in this assassination of the persona he had ostensibly repudiated. The formal autobiographical reflections of his letters and poems, as we might expect, are frustratingly vague and refract his past through the prism of the post-conversion present[11]. It is, therefore, perhaps no accident, that Paulinus, as far as we know, attracted no biographer at the end of his life to recount his story from the beginning[12]. Uranius, a presbyter at Nola, who might have done for bishop Paulinus what others did for Martin, Ambrose, and Augustine, contented himself with an account of Paulinus' last days and a eulogy of his virtues, introduced by the succinct remark: 'Saint Paulinus was born at Bordeaux, a city of the Gauls, but died gloriously and was buried in Campania near the blessed confessor Felix'[13]. In a later *praeteritio*, Uranius, in requisite fashion, recalled the nobility of Paulinus' family and the former opulence of his riches, but these Aquitanian marks of esteem had already yielded place to more noble

[10] Aug. *De mendacio* 15.30 (CSEL 41): 'ita pleraque in verbis intellegere non valentes in factis sanctorum colligimus quemadmodum oporteat accipi, quod facile in aliam partem, nisi exemplo revocaretur'.

[11] See especially *ep.* 5.4 and *carm.* 21.344-459.

[12] Although Uranius wrote his account of Paulinus' last days for a certain Pacatus whose intent, according to Uranius, was to 'illustrate' Paulinus' life in verse. See Uranius, *De obitu S. Paulini* 1 (PL 53.859-60): 'Nunc autem veniamus ad ea, quae tibi, qui vitam eius versibus illustrare disponis, dicendi materiam subministrent'.

[13] *De obitu* 2: 'Igitur S. Paulinus episcopus Burdegala oppido Galliarum oriundus fuit, sed in Campania ad beatissimum Felicem confessorem glorioso fine defunctus atque sepultus est'.

virtues: *pietas, misericordia, humilitas*, and *benignitas*[14]. Surely by the time of Paulinus' death on 22 June 431, few people alive could have recalled the distant days of Constantius II, during whose reign Paulinus had been born nearly eighty years before, or even the Rome of Gratian, where Paulinus had once been adorned with the bejeweled and embroidered *trabea* of a suffect consul[15]. Time and the exigencies of literary representation had conspired to erase or reconfigure the past.

This legacy of sources, distorted by the gravitational pull of the conversion event that dominates the temporal center of Paulinus' life and further marked by the psychological strains of his own letters and poems, has encouraged many modern observers to continue to see his life as paradigmatic. During the last one-hundred and fifty years not only has Paulinus been repeatedly asked, as he was during his own lifetime, to stand as an exemplar of Christian piety, but he has also been employed to illustrate various, sometimes contradictory, forces deemed endemic to his age. Thus Paulinus' premier nineteenth-century biographer, Adolf Buse, hoped to edify his contemporaries by confronting them with the 'unreserved love, the unselfish devotion, the lofty mind of Paulinus'[16]. French scholars, at the turn of the century, echoed this sentiment, emphasizing Paulinus' tolerance and humanity, his simple and trusting heart, but they also saw Paulinus as 'one of us'[17]. His intimate association with Nola not withstanding, Paulinus, along with Martin and Sulpicius Severus, was for Gaston Boissier the 'ideal of a French saint'[18]; while André Baudrillart sensed that Paulinus, equally a 'French saint', had been given to his own age to be 'the model of the perfect Christian'[19]. So closely allied to the discourse and modes of representation initiated by Paulinus' own contemporaries, such character assessments have not lacked more recent advocates[20]. Nor have Italian scholars withdrawn their claims to a life that could be, as Serafino Prete demonstrated, sensitively portrayed as representative of that spirit of humanism 'always operating in history'[21].

In Britain, however, a 1959 article by Arnaldo Momigliano inspired a rather different assessment of the exemplary value of Paulinus' biography. When Momigliano, rejuvenating Gibbon, argued that Christianity had inadvertently prepared the way for the western empire's collapse both by diverting men of

[14] *De obitu* 9.

[15] Ausonius, *ep.* 21.60-61; 24.56-57, ed. R.P.H. Green, *The Works of Ausonius* (Oxford, 1991).

[16] A. Buse, *Paulin, Bischof von Nola, und seine Zeit (350-450)* (Regensburg, 1856), vol. 1, p. ix.

[17] G. Boissier, *La fin du paganisme*, ed. 3 (Paris, 1898), vol. 2, p. 49.

[18] Boissier, *La fin du paganisme*, vol. 2, p. 59.

[19] A. Baudrillart, *Saint Paulin: Évêque de Nole (353-431)* (Paris, 1905), pp. i-vii.

[20] E.g., N. Chadwick, *Poetry and Letters in Early Christian Gaul* (London, 1955), p. 72ff.; A. Mencucci, *San Paolino: Vescovo di Nola*, ed. 2 (Siena, 1989).

[21] S. Prete, *Paolino di Nola e l'umanisimo cristiano* (Bologna, 1964), quote p. x.

talent from public service and by promoting an attitude of civic ambivalence, several scholars quickly pointed to the life of Paulinus. P.G. Walsh, then engaged in the translation of Paulinus' letters and poems, recognized Paulinus as a striking illustration of Momigliano's thesis[22], but the fullest case was laid out by W.H.C. Frend. Although sensitive to the contradictions in Paulinus' thought, Frend found Paulinus 'truly representative of the deeper psychological causes that led to the fall of the Roman Empire in the West'[23].

In a most curious way, still others have championed the illustrative power of Paulinus' biography by asserting his mediocrity. Paulinus' exemplary status was seemingly assured precisely because he was not extraordinary in an age of so many extraordinary figures. He did not possess the qualities of temperament, erudition, or genius that elevated the likes of Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine above their times, and was, therefore, a more reliable guide to the spirit of his age. A fundamental study of Paulinus' monasticism embarked from this principle[24], while even Pierre Fabre claimed Paulinus' self-confessed *mediocritas* as partial justification for his seminal study: to render the soul of Paulinus was also, for Fabre, to reveal the soul of his age[25].

It is the nature of biography to depict the subject through the eye of the beholder. What surprises about Paulinus, then, should not be the variety of modern images, but the persistence of the impulse to see his life as profoundly representative, whether of timeless spiritual perfection or of the history of a very specific era. In part, both tendencies spring from the literary transfiguration so quickly worked by Paulinus' influential contemporaries; in part, both are reinforced by certain features of Paulinus' own autobiographical representations. But it also appears that the very notion of *radical* conversion, canonized by the earliest *testimonia*, now sustains much of the ideological freight so long carried by Paulinus' biography: a life sundered into two discrete halves seems both an ideal reflection and a further demonstration of the opposing religious, social, or political forces deemed determinant in the Christianizing Theodosian Age. Biography, like historiography, depends upon schematization, but in this case the cost may be too great. Privileging Paulinus' conversion and asserting his typicality has sometimes meant resurrecting Paulinus of Bordeaux only as he serves to heighten the contrast with Paulinus of Nola or glossing over the inconsistencies and ambiguities that signal individuality.

[22] P.G. Walsh, 'Paulinus of Nola and the Conflict of Ideologies in the Fourth Century', *Kyriakon: Festschrift Johannes Quasten* (Münster, 1970), pp. 565-71.

[23] W.H.C. Frend, 'Paulinus of Nola and the Last Century of the Western Empire', *JRS* 59 (1969), pp. 1-11, quote 11. See also Frend, 'The Two Worlds of Paulinus of Nola', *Latin Literature of the Fourth Century*, ed. J.W. Binns (London and Boston, 1974), pp. 100-33.

[24] J.T. Lienhard, *Paulinus of Nola and Early Western Monasticism* (Köln-Bonn, 1977), p. 5.

[25] P. Fabre, *Saint Paulin de Nole et l'amitié chrétienne* (Paris, 1949), pp. 3-6.

It is possible, as some have realized, to envision a rather less tidy 'biography' of Paulinus[26]. Running beneath the surface of Paulinus' later letters and poems are innumerable currents of thought that connect the social and intellectual world of Nola with that known earlier by Paulinus of Bordeaux. It was not only as a monk, priest, and bishop, but also as a former governor of Campania, that Paulinus dispensed patronage and wielded authority at Nola, or that he funded a program of public works and staged annual *spectacula* at the tomb of St. Felix. Similarly it was with the self-confidence and insight of a former great land owner, as well as with the assurance of one convinced of the intercessory power of the poor, that Paulinus strove to extend the influence of both Christ and Felix among the *rustici* of Campania[27]. A biography that acknowledges the immense historical and biographical importance of Paulinus' worldly renunciation without disregarding the various cultural and polemical concerns that have shaped representation of that conversion event may be less schematically compelling but more historically sound.

[26] See, for example, J. Fontaine, 'Valeurs antiques et valeurs chrétiennes dans la spiritualité des grands propriétaires terriens à la fin du IVe siècle occidental', *Epektasis: Mélanges patristiques offerts au Cardinal Jean Daniélou*, ed. J. Fontaine and C. Kannengiesser (Paris, 1972), esp. pp. 579-587; P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, 1981) esp. pp. 53-68; and Y.-M. Duval, 'Les premiers rapports de Paulin de Nole avec Jérôme: Moine et philosophe? poète ou exégète?' *Studi tardoantichi* 7 (1989), pp. 177-216.

[27] D. Trout, 'Christianizing the Nolan Countryside: Animal Sacrifice at the Tomb of St. Felix', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3 (1995), pp. 281-298.

Jean Cassien et le Symbole de Foi (*De Incarnatione Domini* VI)

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Si le *De Incarnatione Domini* de Jean Cassien est cité aujourd'hui encore, cela tient au symbole d'Antioche qui nous est connu par son intermédiaire[1]. Eusèbe de Dorylée le cite également, mais de manière partielle, dans sa *Contestatio* contre Nestorius. Comme il a dû envoyer son texte à Rome, Cassien a pu s'en inspirer[2]. Mais, l'Abbé de St. Victor n'entendait pas faire œuvre d'historien des idées. D'ailleurs, l'omission du troisième article, relatif à la rémission des péchés, à la résurrection des morts et à la vie éternelle est là pour en témoigner[3]. Après avoir réfuté Nestorius par les différents témoins de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testament au cours des cinq premiers livres du *De Incarnatione*, il fait appel, au livre VI, au témoignage de la Tradition, telle que Nestorius l'a reçue et acceptée, dans la *redditio symboli*, lors de son baptême à Antioche[4].

Cassien ne précise pas plus l'histoire que l'origine[5] du symbole d'Antioche, mais la simplicité[6] de celui-ci le distingue des autres symboles orientaux. La mention de l'*homoousios* manifeste qu'il a été élaboré après le concile de Nicée. Il a également été composé après le troisième concile d'Antioche de 341[7].

[1] H. Denzinger, *Kompendium der Glaubenbekenntnisse und kirchlichen Lehrentscheidungen*, hrsg. von P. Hünermann (37. Auflage, Freiburg, 1991), pp. 42-43. Voir aussi A. Hahn, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregelns* (Breslau, 1897), pp. 142-143; C.P. Caspari, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Taufsymbols und der Glaubensregel* (Christiani, 1865-76), t. I, p. 73; J. de Ghellinck, *Patristique et Moyen Age.* (Etudes d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale), t. I (Paris, 1949), p. 77; P. Smulders, 'Some riddles in the Apostles' creed', *Bijdragen* 31 (1970), p. 251.

[2] L. Abramowski, 'Was hat das Nicaeno-Constantinopolitaneum (C) mit dem Konzil von Konstantinopel 381 zu tun?' *Theologie und Philosophie* 67 (1992), p. 507.

[3] H. Denzinger, *op. cit.*, p. 43. Cet article est cité par Jean Chrysostome, *Homélie 40 sur I Co 15, 29, PG* 61, col. 348-349.

[4] Cf. C. Eichenseer, *Das Symbolum Apostolicum beim heiligen Augustinus* (St. Ottilien, 1960), pp. 136-146. La *redditio symboli* ne nous est connue comme telle qu'à partir du IV° siècle, par le témoignage de S. Augustin, *Confessions* VIII, 2,5.

[5] Cette origine est d'ailleurs difficile à déterminer, cf. G. Bardy, *Paul de Samosate* (Paris, 1923), p. 58, n. 1.

[6] A. Hahn, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-143, n. 402.

[7] Y avait été promulgué 'un symbole de foi que la tradition faisait remonter à l'évêque martyr Lucien', A. de Halleux, 'La réception du Symbole œcuménique de Nicée à Chalcédoine', *Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses* 61 (1985), p. 13.

Il date certainement du synode d'Antioche de 379[8] et a été rédigé en grande partie par l'évêque Mélèce[9] à partir de 'la formule romaine complétée et modifiée sur quelques points'[10].

Cassien devait le savoir, mais ne l'indique pas, il souligne seulement l'importance de ce symbole baptismal. En fait, sa perspective est autre: il retient principalement la fonction de témoignage de ce symbole baptismal et, à la suite de Jean Chrysostome[11], deux de ses composantes: la foi et l'autorité. Ainsi écrit-il, au début du livre VI du *De Incarnatione* (3, 1, CSEL XVII, p. 327): '*Puisqu'à l'hérétique qui nie Dieu, nous avons déjà, à mon sens, largement répondu avec tous les écrits précédents sous le couvert des témoignages divins, arrivons maintenant à la foi du symbole d'Antioche et à son autorité. Puisque c'est en celui-ci que l'hérétique a été baptisé et qu'il est rené, il faut le convaincre d'erreur sur ses propres déclarations, l'écraser pour ainsi dire, avec ses propres armes. Il est en effet dans l'ordre que, déjà vaincu par les témoignages sacrés, il le soit encore, pour ainsi dire, par lui-même comme témoin*'. Puis, Cassien cite le texte du symbole d'Antioche et rappelle son étymologie: en grec *symbolos*, en latin *collatio*[12].

Or, ce dernier terme n'est pas sans évoquer le titre de son principal ouvrage: les *Collationes*, où il rapporte, non pas les témoignages issus de la confession de foi, mais les paroles de vie des Pères du désert. Ces témoignages des moines d'Egypte, Cassien les a rassemblés dans ses vingt-quatre *Collationes*, un peu comme '*les apôtres du Seigneur ont assemblé sous l'unité de la foi tous les éléments de la loi catholique*' (*DI* VI, 3, 3, p. 328).

Cependant, il y a davantage dans le symbole baptismal, car il est le *Verbum breviatum*, '*la parole abrégée qu'a faite le Seigneur, rassemblant en peu de mots la foi de ses deux testaments et enfermant en de brèves paroles le sens de toutes les Ecritures*' (*DI* VI, 3, 4, p. 328). Sans reprendre, comme Rufin d'Aquilée (qu'il a peut-être rencontré, en 380-381, à son arrivée au désert d'Egypte), la légende des douze apôtres[13] qui auraient rédigé le symbole au lendemain de la Pentecôte, Cassien suit, pourtant, pas à pas, son aîné dans l'interprétation qu'il donne du symbole tant sur le plan lexical[14] que sémantique. Ainsi fait-il ressortir l'autorité du symbole qui n'est autre que le résumé de

[8] B. Dupuy, 'Les symboles de l'Eglise indivise', *Istina* 40 (1995), p. 211.

[9] A. Hahn, *op. cit.*, p. 141; G. Bardy, 'Le concile d'Antioche (379)', *Revue bénédictine* 45 (1933), p. 202; R. Staats, 'Die römische Tradition im Symbol von 381 und seine Entstehung auf der Synode von Antiochien 379', *Vigiliae christianae* 44 (1990), pp. 214-221.

[10] F. Kattenbusch, *Das apostolische Symbol* (Leipzig, 1894), t. II, p. 199.

[11] *Catéchèse baptismale* I, 19-20.

[12] Cassien reprend ici l'explication de Rufin d'Aquilée, *Expositio Symboli*, éd. par M. Simonetti, *CCL* XX, p. 134; C. Eichenseer, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33; 48.

[13] *Expositio symboli*, p. 134. Cette légende remonte au *De principiis* d'Origène et à l'*Explanatio Symboli* d'Ambroise, *PL* 17, col. 1155 D-1158 C.

[14] Rufin, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-135; J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (London, 1950), pp. 52-61.

l'Ecriture[15], ce *Verbum breviatum* (*DI* VI, 3), cette Parole abrégée, dont parlait S. Paul et, à sa suite Origène[16], Parole donnée par Dieu lui-même par l'intermédiaire des apôtres. Sans doute Cassien propose-t-il une interprétation littéraliste de *Romains* 9, 28, mais il souligne par là que le symbole n'est pas pour lui une grille de lecture de la Bible, mais le canon de la vérité et le *compendium* de l'Ecriture. A la limite, il s'inscrirait presque dans le cadre de la Révélation, dont il constitue 'un très riche raccourci' (*DI* VI, 4, 1) et d'où il tire son autorité.

Aussi, en refusant le symbole, Nestorius se détache de l'Eglise et se renie lui-même[17]. Cassien va à l'extrême, lorsqu'il écrit: '*En perdant la foi du symbole, tu as perdu tout ce que tu as été*' (*DI* VI, 4, 2, p. 331), mais il définit le symbole comme la condition d'identité du chrétien[18] et cherche à ramener Nestorius à cette foi qu'il dit avoir été laissée pour compte. En définissant le symbole en termes de profession de foi, Cassien reprend une conception ancienne du symbole[19] et se rapproche à nouveau de Rufin[20], il montre, alors, que la foi a une expression simple (*DI* VI, 4, 4).

En même temps, il se situe au cœur du débat entre Cyrille et Nestorius, 'débat qui porte sur l'interprétation exacte du Symbole de Nicée'[21]. Pourtant, Cassien se réfère au symbole d'Antioche et non à celui de Nicée. Ainsi entend-il rejoindre Nestorius sur son propre terrain[22]. Et, lorsqu'il évoque à plusieurs reprises (*DI* VI, 6...), le symbole 'de toutes les églises', il confère à ce symbole une dimension universelle[23], analogue au Symbole de Nicée. De plus, il procède de manière analogue à Cyrille, qui, dans la *Lettre aux moines*, dont il a dû disposer[24], part de l'Ecriture et du symbole pour affirmer la divinité du Christ[25]. A

[15] Cassien dit (*DI* VI, 8, 2, p. 334) que '*l'Ecriture elle-même parle dans le symbole, et que le symbole lui-même montre qu'il en découle*'.

[16] *Commentaire de l'Epître aux Romains* I, VII, 19, *PG* 14, col. 1154 A.

[17] S. Irénée avait été le premier à donner cette interprétation (*Adversus Haereses* III, 24).

[18] S. Irénée l'avait déjà défini en ces termes dans la *Démonstration de la prédication apostolique*.

[19] P. Smulders, 'The *Sitz im Leben* of the old roman creed', *Studia Patristica* XIII (Berlin, 1975), p. 418.

[20] *Op. cit.*, pp. 135-137.

[21] B. Sesboüé, *Le Dieu du salut* (Paris, 1994), p. 379; A. de Halleux, *art. cit.*, p. 27.

[22] A. de Halleux, *art. cit.*, p. 28.

[23] Cassien insiste sur cette notion d'*universitas*. De plus, le symbole d'Antioche pourrait avoir une portée universelle s'il a été élaboré, comme il le semble, à partir de celui de Nicée (A. de Halleux, *art. cit.*, p. 10), à moins qu'inversement le symbole de Nicée vienne de celui d'Antioche, ce qui donnerait plus de poids à ce dernier, R. Staats, *art. cit.*, p. 216; 218.

[24] Il a dû en avoir connaissance par l'intermédiaire des moines d'Egypte, cf. F. Gori, *Arnobio il Giovane. Disputa tra Arnobio e Serapione* (Turin, 1993), pp. 20-25.

[25] Il cherche à montrer 'comment d'une part le mystère de l'économie relative au Christ nous a été proclamé par la divine Ecriture et ce que d'autre part ont prononcé les Pères quand ils publiaient la définition de la foi sans tache, le Saint Esprit les instruisant de la vérité', trad. A.J. Festugière, in: *Ephèse et Chalcédoine* (Paris, 1982), p. 30.

la différence de Cyrille, toutefois, Cassien commente longuement le symbole. Mais, dans sa *Seconde lettre à Nestorius*, Cyrille propose un commentaire beaucoup plus substantiel[26]. Cependant, Nestorius n'est pas d'accord avec son interprétation qu'il trouve trop superficielle[27].

En revanche, Nestorius ne répond pas à Cassien, mais l'argumentation de ce dernier n'appelait pas de réponse. Pour la développer, Cassien a recours, de manière assez inattendue[28], à la prosopopée des Lois, telle qu'elle apparaît à la fin du *Criton* (51b-54d). Alors que Criton propose à Socrate de s'évader afin d'éviter une mort injuste, ce dernier imagine un dialogue avec les lois d'Athènes. Celles-ci lui rappellent alors: 'C'est nous qui t'avons fait naître, qui t'avons nourri et instruit; nous t'avons fait part comme aux autres citoyens de tous les biens dont nous disposions, et nous ne laissons pas de proclamer, par la liberté que nous laissons à tout Athénien qui veut en profiter, que, lorsqu'il aura été inscrit parmi les citoyens et qu'il aura pris connaissance des mœurs politiques et de nous, les lois, il aura le droit, si nous lui déplaisons, de s'en aller où il voudra en emportant ses biens avec lui' (*Criton* 52 a). Si, au contraire, il reste, il s'engage à suivre les lois. Sans reprendre la figure de la prosopopée, Cassien applique le mode d'argumentation platonicien au symbole et dit à Nestorius: '*Puisque tu es né dans une ville catholique, que tu as été instruit dans la foi catholique, que tu as été régénéré par le baptême catholique, puis-je agir avec toi, comme si tu étais un arien ou un sabellien*'? (*DI* VI, 5, 3, p. 330). L'enjeu est différent. Il n'en va pas pour Nestorius de la citoyenneté athénienne, mais de son indentité de chrétien. D'ailleurs, le terme de renaissance se substitue à ceux de possession et de liberté.

Mais, l'argument d'autorité est identique. A partir du moment où Nestorius a accepté, non pas les lois athéniennes, mais la foi du symbole, il s'est engagé à '*garder l'enseignement de ses pères, la foi de l'Eglise, la vérité du symbole, le salut de son baptême*' (*DI* VI, 5, 5, p. 330)[29], sinon il perd son identité et se retranche de la communion de foi de l'Eglise, tout comme le citoyen, qui enfreignait les lois, devait quitter Athènes et perdait sa nature (*Criton* 53e-54d). A la suite de Platon, Cassien souligne le caractère irréversible de l'engagement pris, non plus par rapport aux lois, mais par rapport au symbole qui, de ce fait, est plus qu'une règle de vérité[30] et devient un élément juridique, le

[26] Il y recherche 'ce que signifie le fait que le Verbe né de Dieu a pris chair et est devenu un homme', *ibid.*, p. 49.

[27] *Réponse de Nestorius*, *ibid.*, p. 53.

[28] Cassien n'est guère mentionné parmi les Pères qui ont 'christianisé' Platon. Or, sa culture classique se manifeste dans cette transposition qu'il propose de la prosopopée des Lois.

[29] A sa manière, Cassien définit le baptême comme *sacramentum et exemplum*, à la suite de Tertullien (cf. D. Michaelides, *Sacramentum chez Tertullien* (Paris, 1970), pp. 73-135) plutôt que de S. Augustin.

[30] Cassien ne reprend pas la perspective de S. Irénée, qui avait codifié cette notion, mais il tend, pourtant, à faire du symbole une règle de vérité, ce qui le rapproche de Tertullien qui employait souvent les termes de *regula fidei* ou de *regula veritatis*, R. Braun, *Deus christianorum. Recherches sur le vocabulaire doctrinal de Tertullien* (Paris, 1977), pp. 447-454.

sacramentum fidei[31], le 'sceau de la foi', tel que Tertullien l'avait défini[32] et que Jean Chrysostome le reprend[33]. Sur ce plan, Cassien va plus loin que Cyrille dans l'accusation portée à l'encontre de Nestorius. Il ne lui reproche pas seulement de méconnaître la divinité du Christ, mais de perdre lui-même son identité dans le même temps. On comprend aussi pourquoi, à la différence de Cyrille, de Nestorius, de Théodose d'Ancyre..., il se réfère au symbole baptismal d'Antioche, par lequel Nestorius s'est engagé par serment 'dans l'armée du Dieu vivant'[34], plus qu'au symbole conciliaire de Nicée qui objective la foi de l'Eglise. Si Cassien ne reprend pas l'image du tessère brisé et à reconstituer[35] pour définir le symbole, il n'en garde pas moins l'idée d'alliance et même de pacte[36], voire de serment militaire[37] à réactualiser toujours et par lequel le chrétien acquiert son identité. Ainsi Nestorius est-il passé du stade de simple chrétien à celui de diacre, puis de prêtre, en professant toujours le symbole d'Antioche (*DI* VI, 11).

Mais, cette profession de foi n'est pas formelle et, si elle ne constitue pas un exposé dogmatique, elle n'en est pas moins à elle seule un abrégé de christologie (*DI* VI, 19, 3)[38]. Peut-être n'est-ce pas un hasard si, après avoir présenté les cinq pains d'orge que sont les cinq premiers livres du *De Incarnatione*, Cassien s'attache désormais au premier des deux poissons, auxquels il compare les deux derniers livres (*DI* VI, 2, 3), le poisson étant à l'époque le symbole du Christ[39], en l'occurrence ici de sa divinité.

D'ailleurs, tout au long du livre VI, Cassien s'attache essentiellement à commenter ce passage du *Credo*: '*Jésus-Christ, Fils unique de Dieu et premier-né de la création toute entière, né de lui avant tous les siècles et non pas créé, consubstantiel au Père (...), est venu à cause de nous et il est né de la Vierge Marie*'. Compte tenu de sa visée polémique, on comprend que Cassien retienne surtout

[31] F.J. Dölger, '*Sacramentum militiae*. Das Kennmal des Soldaten', *AC* 2 (1930), pp. 268-280; L. Abramowski, 'Tertullian: *sacramento ampliat(i)o, fides integra, metus integer*', *Vigiliae christianae* 31 (1977), pp. 191-195.

[32] *De Anima* I, 4; *Adversus Marcionem* I, 28; *De pudicitia* XVIII, 17... Voir aussi *De baptismo* XIII, 1... Cf. D. Michaelides, *op. cit.*, pp. 181-191; R. Braun, *op. cit.*, pp. 435-443.

[33] *Catéchèse baptismale* I, 19 sq.

[34] Tertullien, *Aux martyrs* 3, 1. Jean Chrysostome reprend également cette idée, que Cassien a dû lui emprunter: *Catéchèse baptismale* I, 20, SC 50, pp. 118-119.

[35] J.N.D. Kelly, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55; E. Ortigues, *Le Discours et le Symbole* (Paris, 1962), pp. 60-61; C. Eichenseer, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-21.

[36] C'est là une conception habituelle du symbole que l'on trouve chez Nicétas de Rémésiana, Pierre Chrysoslogue, Eucher de Lyon (que Cassien a dû rencontrer à Lérins)..., cf. C. Eichenseer, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-35.

[37] Cf. D. Michaelides, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-71; R. Braun, *op. cit.*, pp. 439-440. Comme Tertullien, Cassien emploie le vocabulaire militaire dans cette partie de son traité.

[38] P. Smulders, 'The *Sitz im Leben*', pp. 418-421.

[39] Le symbole du poisson est directement lié au baptême, comme cela ressort du *Traité du baptême* de Tertullien. Cf. F.J. Dölger, *Der heilige Fisch in den antiken Religionen und im Christentum* (Münster, 1922); *Der Fisch- Symbol in frühchristlicher Zeit* (Münster, 1928).

les articles qu'il peut opposer à Nestorius et qui ont trait à la divinité du Christ, à son Incarnation et qui amènent à la reconnaissance du terme de *Théotokos*. Il est, toutefois, étonnant qu'il ne s'attache pas à réfléchir sur la toute-puissance de Dieu, la création, le motif de l'Incarnation, le salut, la résurrection, comme l'avait fait son prédécesseur Rufin[40]. En fait, il importe surtout à Cassien de montrer, par l'intermédiaire du symbole et d'un florilège patristique[41], que le Christ est Dieu[42] et que Marie est *Théotokos* et, pour y parvenir, il procède par affirmations plutôt que par démonstrations.

Il reprend, tout d'abord, une version abrégée de l'exposé de Rufin[43] sur la divinité du Christ, puis il a recours à une tautologie en fait de preuve (*DI* VI, 6) pour expliquer que le Christ est Dieu. Fortement marqué par Jean Chrysostome[44], d'une part, et par la perspective alexandrine[45], d'autre part, il se contente de répéter inlassablement que le Christ est Dieu, qu'il n'est pas une statue et qu'il est indivisible.

Il tient également compte de l'élaboration christologique antérieure, en reprenant 'le thème anti-arien d'origine apollinariste'[46], d'après lequel: '*selon la divinité, le Christ a été consubstantiel au Père, et selon la chair, il a été consubstantiel à la mère*' (*DI* VI, 13). Dans le même temps, il inaugure 'l'histoire de la double consubstantialité exprimée comme formule explicitement antithétique'[47], telle qu'elle sera reprise ensuite par Léon le Grand[48].

De plus, il va assez loin dans l'investigation et anticipe le développement christologique ultérieur. Ainsi esquisse-t-il, au chapitre 20 du livre VI, la notion d'union hypostatique, mais, faute d'un vocabulaire conceptuel adéquat, il ne peut la définir et distinguer les deux natures dans l'unique personne du Christ. De même, il a l'idée de la communication des idiomes, mais l'exprime maladroitement, quand il écrit: '*Le Christ "concorpore" Fils de Dieu et Fils de l'homme et unit l'homme à Dieu si bien qu'au point de vue du temps pas plus que durant la passion, on ne peut les diviser, puisqu'il enseigne que le*

[40] *Op. cit.*, pp. 4-17.

[41] *DI* VII, 24-31.

[42] 'Il n'y a qu'une alternative: ou reconnaître le Christ Fils de Dieu, ou renoncer au symbole', C. Brand, *Le 'De Incarnatione Domini'. Contribution à la Christologie en Occident à la veille du concile d'Ephèse* (Strasbourg, dact., 1967), p. 207.

[43] *Op. cit.*, ch. 6-8.

[44] Non seulement par ses deux *Homélies sur le Symbole*, si tant est qu'elles sont authentiques (cf. P. Caspari, *op. cit.* t. II, pp. 225-234), mais par toute sa christologie (cf. M.-A. Vannier, 'L'influence de Jean Chrysostome sur l'argumentation scripturaire du *De Incarnatione* de Jean Cassien', *Revue des sciences religieuses* 69 (1995), pp. 453-462).

[45] A. Grillmeier, *Le Christ dans la tradition chrétienne*. (De l'âge apostolique à Chalcédoine) (Paris, 1973), p. 276.

[46] B. Studer, '*Consubstantialis Patri - Consubstantialis Matri*. Une antithèse christologique chez Léon le Grand', in: *Dominus Salvator. Studien zur Christologie und Exegese der Kirchenväter* (Rome, 1992), p. 45.

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 51.

[48] *Ibid.*, pp. 31-41.

même Seigneur Jésus-Christ est Dieu de toute éternité et qu'il est homme en ce qu'il subissait la passion' (*DI* VI, 22, 5, p. 349). Ne disposant pas du vocabulaire technique de la christologie, Cassien ne peut développer davantage sa réflexion, mais il propose une certain nombre de formules qui seront reprises, de manière plus technique, par le concile de Chalcédoine.

En se référant au symbole d'Antioche, comme à un argument *ad hominem*, Cassien opère un tournant dans son argumentation: après l'autorité de l'Ecriture, il oppose à Nestorius celle de la Tradition représentée par le symbole de foi et le florilège patristique qui clôt l'ouvrage. Il durcit, alors, sa réfutation pour prendre l'attitude d'un juge[49] qui récuse celui qui s'éloigne de la foi qu'il a professée dans le symbole et qui trahit, par le fait même, le *sacramentum fidei* qu'il a reçu.

[49] A. Grillmeier, *op. cit.*, p. 455.

The Legacy of Caesarius of Arles in Baudonivia's Biography of Radegund

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In the early decades following Radegund's death in 587, the life of this Thuringian princess, queen of the Franks, and foundress of Holy Cross monastery at Poitiers was celebrated by two biographies, the first written by the poet turned bishop, Venantius Fortunatus, and the second by a nun of Holy Cross, Baudonivia[1].

Both of the biographies reflect the legacy of Caesarius of Arles, as they portray Radegund's attention to the needs of the poor and the sick, her lifelong preparation for the last day, and the gift of divine grace that enabled her to persevere in the good[2]. It is specifically with regard to the imagery by which Baudonivia portrayed Radegund that I wish to note an additional element of the Caesarian influence. The dominant image, to which all others are subordinate, is that of mother. As Baudonivia was writing for the community of Holy Cross[3], it was to Radegund's maternal care of the nuns that she gave greatest attention.

The mother that Baudonivia described was one who had operated in the absence of a male, either husband for herself or father for her daughters. In order to follow Christ, she had abandoned her husband and king, Clothar[4]. More important, because she had incurred, for reasons never explained, the hostility of Maroveus, the local bishop[5], there was no spiritual father to advise Radegund or to provide pastoral care for her nuns.

[1] *Vita Radegundis* 1 by Venatius Fortunatus and *Vita Radegundis* 2 by Baudonivia can be found in *Venantius Fortunatus*, ed. B. Krusch, *MGH, SRM* 2.2 (Hanover, 1888), pp. 358-395.

[2] For Gallic conciliar legislation regarding charity, see Walter Ullmann, 'Public Welfare and Social Legislation in the Early Medieval Councils', *Studies in Church History* 7 (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 1-39. For the relationship of this legislation to the teaching of Caesarius, see Kathleen Mitchell, 'Saints and Public Christianity in the *Historiae* of Gregory of Tours', *Religion, Culture, and Society in the Early Middle Ages. Studies in Honor of Richard E. Sullivan*, ed. Thomas F.X. Noble and John J. Contreni (Kalamazoo, 1987), p. 85. For evidence of Caesarius's views regarding grace and perseverance, see *Serm.* 45.5 in G. Morin (ed.), *Sancti Caesarii episcopi Arelatensis Opera omnia nunc primum in unum collecta*, 2 vols. (Maredsous, 1937-1942). Reprint of *Sermones* in CCSL 103-104 (Turnhout, 1953). English trans. M.M. Mueller, *Caesarius of Arles. Sermons* (Fathers of the Church 31, 47, 66; Washington, D.C., 1956-1973). See also 'Concile d'Orange, 3 juillet 529, '*Les canons des conciles mérovingiens (VIe-VIIe)*, Vol. 1, ed. J. Gaudemet and B. Basdevant (SC 353; Paris, 1989) canon 10.

[3] *Vita Radegundis* 2, *Praef.*

[4] *Vita Radegundis* 1.12; 2.3,4.

[5] Gregory of Tours, *Historiae* 9.40, ed. B. Krusch and W. Levison, 2d ed., *MGH SRM* 1.1. English trans. L. Thorpe, *Gregory of Tours, The History of the Franks* (New York, 1974).

The absence of a male did not at all diminish Radegund's confidence in the durability of the familial ties that she had established with the congregation of Holy Cross. To the contrary, the saint assured her 'daughters' of the strength of their remarkably constituted bond. She herself had chosen them, gathered them, and nurtured them. Guided by her, this family could expect to remain intact through all eternity[6].

In rearing her daughters Mother Radegund had one object in mind: to prepare them to be worthy brides of Christ[7]. At least since the time when she, as a child, had been captured by the Franks, Radegund had prepared herself for that same union[8]. Years of ascetic practice, eager attention to the teaching of 'God's servants'[9], as well as a foretaste through visions of the eternal embraces of Christ[10] had provided her with an experiential base for instructing her daughters in the bliss that lay before them and the means by which they might attain that bliss.

Yet Radegund, whose training had been primarily solitary, must have found herself ill-prepared to be the mother of an ever-increasing number of daughters, approximately two hundred by the time of her death[11]. A monastic rule, suitable for women, was needed for the governance of the community.

One prominent feature of the rule that was chosen, the *Rule for Nuns* developed by Caesarius, was the relative autonomy that it offered a community of women. They were not to be directly subject to the control of a bishop[12]. That provision was not insignificant in view of Radegund's less than cordial relationship with Maroveus[13].

With some adaptation the *Rule for Nuns* was accepted at Poitiers[14], and the two biographies make clear that the *Rule* did govern the common life of the community, including Radegund's own activities. According to Fortunatus Radegund eagerly embraced the meanest household tasks, behavior which was

[6] *Vita Radegundis* 2.8.
[7] *Vita Radegundis* 2.5.
[8] For Fortunatus's account of her early religious commitment, see *Vita Radegundis* 1.2,3.
[9] *Vita Radegundis* 1.8,18; 2.9.
[10] *Vita Radegundis* 2.3,4,5,20.
[11] Gregory of Tours, *In Gloria confessorum* 104, ed. B. Krusch and W. Levison, 2d ed. MGH SRM 1.2, 294-370. English trans. Raymond van Dam, *Gregory of Tours: Glory of the Confessors* (Translated Texts for Historians, Latin Series 4; Liverpool, 1988). Gertrude Gillette, 'Radegund's Monastery of Poitiers: The Rule and its Observance', *Studia Patristica* 25 (Leuven, 1993), p. 384.
[12] Caesarius, *Regula virginum* 64 in *Césaire d'Arles. Œuvres Monastique*, Vol. 1, *Œuvres pour les moniales*, ed. and trans. A. de Vogüé and J. Courreau (SC 345; Paris, 1988), pp. 35-273. M.C. McCarthy, *The Rule for Nuns of St. Caesarius of Arles: A Translation with a Critical Introduction* (Washington, D.C., 1960), pp. 66-67. W.E. Klingshirn, 'Caesarius's Monastery for Women in Arles and the Composition and Function of the "Vita Caesarii"', *Revue Bénédictine* 100 (1990), pp. 456-464, 475-476.
[13] *Vita Radegundis* 2.16,23; *Historiae* 9.18.
[14] Gillette, 381-387.

enjoined on all the nuns by the *Rule*[15]. Baudonovia's account leaves no doubt that Radegund devoted herself to the study of Scripture, a practice to which the *Rule* gave considerable attention[16].

Yet if Caesarius's *Rule for Nuns* provided a structure for community life and even for Radegund's own long-standing ascetic habits, it is not clear that it was on the basis of the *Rule* that Radegund developed her own characteristic style of mothering. For one thing, the *Rule* assumed that it was the abbess who was to function as mother to the community[17], and Radegund had been careful to insure that it was not she but the younger Agnes who held the position of abbess[18]. Moreover, the role of mother-abbess, according to Caesarius's *Rule*, was heavily weighted toward the administrative. She was responsible for both the spiritual welfare of the nuns and the temporal affairs of the monastery[19]; yet a large portion of the specific references to the abbess referred to temporal rather than to explicitly spiritual matters. Of course, in performing such tasks as responding to correspondence[20], ensuring adequate nutrition[21], and overseeing the presence of necessary outsiders, such as carpenters, in the cloister[22], the abbess would inevitably have been protecting the community from unprofitable distraction.

When we consider Baudonivia's portrait of Radegund, we find no suggestion that the latter was usurping in any way the temporal authority of the abbess. Nor does the biography suggest that Radegund intruded upon the abbess's spiritual responsibilities either, which included such matters as administering discipline[23], making regulations for fasting[24], and providing suitable guidance to those who sought her counsel[25]. In fact, Baudonivia stated explicitly that Radegund submitted to the authority of the abbess[26].

Nevertheless, Radegund did possess considerable spiritual authority, which she exercised on behalf of the nuns of Holy Cross[27]. It would seem to have been on the basis of her spiritual authority that the members of the convent considered her to be their mother, a very particular kind of mother.

[15] *Vita Radegundis* 1.23,24; cf., *Regula virginum* 14,29,57.
[16] *Vita Radegundis* 2.8,9; cf., *Regula virginum* 18,19,20,22; for liturgical instructions, see *Regula virginum* 66,68,69.
[17] *Regula virginum* 18,27.
[18] *Historiae* 9.42.
[19] *Regula virginum* 27.
[20] *Regula virginum* 27.
[21] *Regula virginum* 27,30.
[22] *Regula virginum* 36.
[23] *Regula virginum* 24,34,35.
[24] *Regula virginum* 67.
[25] *Regula virginum* 61.
[26] *Vita Radegundis* 2.5.
[27] Examples from the *Vita* include her teaching and preaching (2.8,9,19), her procurement of the relic of the cross (2.16), and her miracles which would have enhanced the prestige of the monastery (2.17,24,25,26,27).

A look at the imagery and allusions that Baudonivia employed is instructive. As Baudonivia repeatedly stressed that Radegund had immersed herself in the study of Scripture and urged her spiritual daughters to do the same, it might be expected that Baudonivia would have drawn upon maternal, or simply feminine, imagery from Scripture in her portrayal of Radegund. Such imagery might be expected to reveal the community's perception of divinely sanctioned qualities of spiritual motherhood that had been realized in Radegund. Yet of the two explicit comparisons to females, only one was biblical. Similar to the woman who had wiped Jesus' feet with her hair, Radegund had washed and kissed the feet of all, refraining from wiping them with her hair only because such an act was not allowed[28]. The other woman to whom Baudonivia compared Radegund was St. Helena. Like the mother of Constantine, who had found the cross for the East, Radegund had secured a portion of the sacred wood for Gaul and for her daughters[29].

The most frequent comparisons, explicit or implied, to a biblical figure were not to a woman at all but to a male, Christ. Like Christ, Radegund had healed the sick, calmed the storm, raised the dead, even stepped down from the Frankish throne in imitation of the humility of the one who had descended to earth from his heavenly throne[30]. Of course, as all Christians are to be conformed to the image of Christ, and as Christ is believed to work miracles through the mediation of his saints, perhaps these analogies are not especially notable. On the other hand, it is possible that Baudonivia came to think of Radegund in Christ-like terminology as a result of Radegund's own view of herself. In his *History of the Franks*, Gregory of Tours included a copy of a letter sent by Radegund to Gallic bishops. As the dying Christ had entrusted his mother to the care of John, Radegund, in the event of her death, entrusted the convent and its abbess to the care of the bishops[31]. Radegund had not hesitated to draw a parallel between her action and that of Christ.

Christ was not the only male whose life Baudonivia found reflected in the life of Mother Radegund. As others have noted, Baudonivia employed excerpts from the biography of Caesarius in her own biography of Radegund[32]. With little alteration passages that had originally been used to describe Caesarius's virtues, his study of Scripture, the grief evoked by his death, and the veneration in which he continued to be held were transformed into descriptions of Radegund[33].

[28] *Vita Radegundis* 2.10; Lk. 7:36-50; cf., Jn. 11:2.
[29] *Vita Radegundis* 2.16.
[30] *Vita Radegundis* 2.11,14,15,17,18.
[31] *Historiae* 9.42.
[32] E.g., Klingshirn, 'Caesarius's Monastery', 478.
[33] For the biography of Caesarius, see Cyprianus of Toulon *et al.*, *Vita Caesarii*, ed. G. Morin, 2, pp. 293-349. English trans. W.E. Klingshirn, *The Life, Testament, and Letters of Caesarius of Arles* (Translated Texts for Historians 19; Liverpool, 1994). For examples of Baudonivia's use of passages from the *Vita Caesarii* in her *Vita Radegundis*, compare *Vita Caesarii* 1.45 and *Vita Radegundis* 2.8; *Vita Caesarii* 1.46 *and Vita Radegundis* 2.9; *Vita Caesarii* 1.53 and *Vita Radegundis* 2.9; *Vita Caesarii* 2.32 and *Vita Radegundis* 2.19; *Vita Caesarii* 2.35 and *Vita Radegundis* 2.19; *Vita Caesarii* 2.49 and *Vita Radegundis* 2.22; *Vita Caesarii* 2.50 and *Vita Radegundis* 2.23.

None of these descriptions was gender-specific. Each could be made applicable to male or female saint. It does not appear to have been the case that Baudonivia was seeking to masculinize or neuter her subject. It was Fortunatus who had characterized Radegund by the gender-neutral vocation of martyr. Baudonivia's Mother Radegund was a woman through and through.

Yet Radegund's maternal solicitude had a distinctive form that could not be adequately captured by feminine imagery, either scriptural or otherwise. For example, we learn from Baudonivia that Radegund regularly preached to her daughters[34], that she instructed them in the interpretation of Scripture[35], that she spoke of herself as having responsibility for 'the care of souls'[36], and that she prepared those under her care for the last judgment[37].

What is puzzling is Baudonivia's source for this form of mothering. Caesarius's *Rule for Nuns* had not assigned these responsibilities to the abbess or to any member of the convent nor had Caesarius's Letter 21 to Caesaria the Elder, his sister and abbess of the monastery of St. John in Arles. In that letter Caesarius had offered guidance for the maintenance of the spiritual life. He had given particular attention to the study of Scripture, spiritual reading, and prayer; however, he had not charged his sister to instruct the nuns in the Scriptures. Instead, he had focused upon how the individual soul might progress[38].

In much the same way, Caesarius's *Rule* had offered as the pattern for the nuns' lives the image of the wise virgins with their lamps burning (Matt. 25:1-13)[39]. It was a pattern for individual readiness. In contrast, Radegund had assumed the task of instructing the nuns so that they might be wise, ready for the bridegroom. Her action more nearly paralleled that of Caesarius, the zealous bishop, than of a soul in pursuit only of her own salvation.

Baudonivia's Radegund would seem to have taken her cues for maternal care from Caesarius, but not from Caesarius's instruction for nuns but from his instruction for bishops. The encyclical letter that Caesarius had sent to the bishops of Gaul, often referred to as Sermon 1, was a prolonged exhortation to bishops to instruct the souls under their care in the promises and threats of the gospel. The bishop was to be as the watchman of Ezekiel 3.19,18: 'If you warn the wicked of his wickedness, you have saved your life.... But if you do

[34] *Vita Radegundis* 2.8,9.
[35] *Vita Radegundis* 2.9.
[36] *Vita Radegundis* 2.14.
[37] *Vita Radegundis* 2.8.
[38] Caesarius, *Ep.* 21, ed. Morin, 2.134-144. English trans. Klingshirn, *The Life, Testament, and Letters of Caesarius of Arles*, pp. 129-139.
[39] *Regula virginum* 1; McCarthy, pp. 49-60.

not warn him, the same one will die in his wickedness, but I will require his blood at your hand'[40].

In this letter as in Caesarius's sermons, the awful day of judgment described in Matthew 25 cast its shadow over life. On the last day the good were to be rewarded and the sinner punished, and the bishop who did not continually announce this news would himself be held accountable for the sins of his people[41].

Caesarius had imposed this burden of ceaseless preaching on bishops, presbyters and deacons[42]. Radegund, in her own ceaseless instruction to her daughters, would seem to have felt herself to be accountable in the same way that Caesarius had warned that bishop, presbyter, and deacon would be held accountable. She, of course, was neither bishop nor presbyter. She may, however, have been a deaconess. According to Fortunatus's acount, when Radegund fled her husband Clothar, she browbeat Bishop Médard into consecrating her a deaconess[43]. It may have been her diaconal status that provided her with the sense of responsibility or the excuse to instruct others in the faith.

Neither Radegund nor Baudonivia, of course, may have known of this particular letter of Caesarius. The letter received wide distribution, as did Caesarius's sermons, and, as Radegund over the decades had frequent and interested contact with clergy, it is not at all beyond imagining that she knew of the responsibility laid on the watchman, even if she did not know of the particular letter.

Radegund, in her turn at watch, would seem to have been not only as vigilant as Caesarius but perhaps even somewhat more confident of her effectiveness in the post. In his encyclical Caesarius had encouraged the bishops that if they were faithful in their task, when they came to the judgment, they might be able to say: 'Behold, Lord, I and the children whom you have given me'[44]. More boldly, Radegund had assured her daughters that she was preparing them so that on the last day they could proclaim: 'Give, Lord, what you have promised, because we have done what you have commanded'[45].

The Radegund whom Baudonivia remembered and recounted to her audience was a woman, who, lacking the assistance of a man in the task of rearing her daughters, took on the role of both mother and father in preparing them to leave their parental home and join their bridegroom in the nuptial embrace.

[40] *Serm.* 1.3,4. Translation adapted from Mueller.
[41] *Serm.* 1.5.
[42] *Serm.* 1.12,13,15.
[43] *Vita Radegundis* 1.12; Suzanne Fonay Wemple, *Women in Frankish Society: Marriage and the Cloister 500-900* (Philadelphia, 1981), p. 142.
[44] *Serm.* 1.19; cf., Isa. 8:18. Translation adapted from Mueller.
[45] *Vita Radegundis* 2.8.

XVII. ORIENTALIA

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Original Sin and Sexism: St. Ephrem's Attitude towards Eve

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1. Introduction[1]

St. Ephrem the Syrian (d. 373 A.D.) lived during a time when male gender ideology dominated theological reflection, be it Jewish or Christian theology. Yet he was known as a Christian leader who ignored traditional preconceptions about gender and who did a great deal to promote the role of women in worship[2]. The present paper is an effort to determine Ephrem's attitude towards Eve and to relate his disposition to views and traditions which were popular in his time. In connection with his treatment of Eve, he himself has been accused of 'a negative attitude towards women'[3]. Is there a meaningful difference between his attitude and that of Jewish and Patristic exegesis which often held Eve (and woman in general) responsible for the Fall?[4] If so, what are the reasons for this deviation?[5]

[1] Abbreviations: *CGen = Commentary on Genesis, CH = Contra Haereses, Eccl = De Ecclesia, HFid = De Fide, Nat = De Nativitate, Parad = De Paradiso, Sog = Carmina Sogyata, Virg = De Virginitate*. The texts used are those published by E. Beck in the series *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* (CSCO).

[2] Cf. Brock's quotations from Jacob of Serugh in his (Brock's) introduction to Ephrem's Hymns on Paradise, *Saint Ephrem, Hymns on Paradise, introduction and translation by Sebastian Brock* (New York, 1990), pp. 22-25. Cf. also the role Ephrem affords to women in his commentary on Exodus in contradistinction to the treatment by Philo and Josephus as pointed out by A. Salvesen, 'Themes in Ephrem's Exodus commentary', *The Harp* vol. IV, no. 1,2,3 (July 1991), pp. 21-34.

[3] S. Hidal, *Interpretation Syriaca. Die Kommentare des hl. Ephräm des Syrers zu Genesis und Exodus* (Lund, 1974), p. 87.

[4] Since Ephrem was acquainted with Jewish exegesis, and often reflected other Jewish traditions in his exegesis, he can be expected to have known also these ideas. The Wisdom of Ben Sira, for instance, (ca. 180 B.C.), propagated the idea that 'through a woman sin began and because of her each of us must die' (Ecclesiasticus 25:24).

[5] In tackling this issue, it must be kept in mind that the biblical description of the Fall is itself regarded by some as slanted by gender ideology. The presentation and symbolism of the biblical story of the Fall are assumed to reflect the attitudes and ideology of the male dominated society of its author and transmitters. Cf. J.C. Exum, *Fragmented women. Feminist (Sub)versions of biblical narratives* (Sheffield, 1993), p. 10. While it must be conceded that Genesis 3 reflects an early socio-economic reality and relationship between the sexes that differ from the present, this does not imply that the biblical text deliberately promotes male dominion or female subordination. For a discussion, cf. N. Aschkenasy, *Eve's journey. Feminine images in Hebraic literary tradition* (Philadelphia, 1986), pp. 9-11. In comparison with the Midrashic retelling and Patristic exegesis of this story, the original version seems patently nonsexist and egalitarian in its focus on the equal culpability and responsibility of man and woman. Compare, for instance, the biblical text with Genesis Rabbah 17:8.

With regard to the contemporary Jewish and Patristic exegesis, it seems safe to assume that Ephrem was aware of the androcentric and misogynic interpretations of Genesis 3. Although he probably was not conversant in Greek or Latin, he was neither totally isolated from the exegetical traditions in these languages[6]. Numerous motifs from the exegesis of Genesis 1-11 found in Jewish and ante-Nicene Patristic literature are also present or hinted at in the work of Ephrem[7].

II. Ephrem's view of Eve/Women and the Origin of Sin

At first glance, Ephrem seems to echo the views of certain Jewish and Christian writings which regarded Eve as the cause of all evil[8]. It seems that he saw Eve as the one who was responsible for the fall of Adam and for causing man to be mortal[9]. Ephrem variously calls Eve 'the cause of all evil'[10], 'the cause of guilts'[11], 'the fount of cunning'[12], the one through whom 'the whole world grew dark'[13]. If they are considered in isolation, these quotations certainly seem to imply close proximity to the attitude expressed by Ben Sira in his statement that 'the beginning of sin was from a woman, and because of her we all die'[14] or the remark in I Timothy 2:14 that not Adam, but Eve, was led astray.

[6] Cf. C. McCarthy, *Saint Ephrem's commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron. An English translation of Chester Beatty Syriac MS 709 with introduction and notes* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 15-16. Cf. also S.P. Brock, *The luminous eye: the spiritual world vision of Saint Ephrem* (Kalamazoo, 1992), p. 143.

[7] E.g. Adam as both male and female, the clothing imagery surrounding the 'robe of glory', the concept of Paradise as a mountain, etc. For contacts between Ephrem and Jewish exegesis, consult D. Gerson, 'Die Commentarien des Ephräm Syrus im Verhältnis zur jüdischen Exegese', *Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 17 (1868), pp. 15-33, 64-72, 98-109, 141-149; N. Sed, 'Les hymnes sur le Paradis de Saint Ephrem et les traditions juives', *Le Muséon* 81 (1968), pp. 455-501 and R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom, a study in early Syriac tradition* (Cambridge, 1975, pp. 301-10). T. Kronholm has explored numerous points of contact relating to Gen 1-11 in his *Motifs from Genesis 1-11 in the genuine hymns of Ephrem the Syrian with particular reference to the influence of Jewish exegetical tradition* (Lund, 1978).

[8] The agency of woman in the cause of evil is a theme developed by rabbinic and apocalyptic literature in the second century before Christ. This theme had a profound influence on the New Testament and Patristic theology alike. Cf. B.P. Prusak, 'Woman: seductive siren and source of sin? Pseudepigraphal myth and Christian origins', in R.R. Ruether (ed.), *Religion and sexism. Images of woman in the Jewish and Christian traditions* (New York, 1974), pp. 89-116.

[9] *Sog.* I,24.25.

[10] *Eccl* XXXVII,3.

[11] *Eccl* XLV,2.

[12] *Eccl* XLVIII,1.

[13] *Eccl* XXXVII,6.

[14] Ecclesiasticus 25:24. Ben Sira continues by urging his readers to maintain strict control over a wife.

And yet, to interpret these quotations as proof of misogyny or even of a negative view of Eve (and thus of woman) on the part of Ephrem, would certainly be wrong. Such an allegation can only be made if the nature of Ephrem's poetic style, with its carefully balanced sets of polarities, and the polemic context of his hymns, are ignored. This is illustrated by the assertion that one can prove, by using a different set of selective quotations from Ephrem, that Adam, and not Eve, bears the prime responsibility for the Fall. For instance, it is said that it was Adam who caused death to enter into creation[15], that it was he who trampled down the boundary in Paradise (the commandment of God)[16], that the earth became desolate through his doing[17], that he was the cause of all suffering and guilt[18] and that it was he who opened the gate to Gehenna[19].

III. The Role of Polarities and Polemics in Ephrem's view of Eve

Ephrem had an acute awareness of the coherence of all God's dealings with creation. This awareness is expressed in his work through numerous polarities that witness to the balance between the Old Testament and the New and between human action and divine reaction. The Fall is balanced by redemption[20]. Consequently, Adam is the antitype of Christ and Eve of Mary[21]. Cognizance of the particular polarity (and its function) is necessary to be able to understand Ephrem's pronouncements on Eve.

Eve and Mary form such a polarity. Thus Eve was cast down, Mary was elevated[22]; through Eve man acquired the garment covered with stains, through Mary he regained the glorious robe[23]; Eve was clothed with the leaves of shame, Mary put on the robe of glory which suffices for all[24]; Eve was the 'blind, left eye', 'the cause of all evil' through whom 'the whole world grew dark', Mary in contrast is 'the right, luminous eye', the 'ground of light' which illuminates the inhabitants of the world anew[25]. As Eve was the mother that brought death to her children, so Mary is the second, life-giving mother of mankind[26]. In this way, every remark on Eve that can be understood in a negative way, is rectified through a positive reference to Mary.

[15] *Nat* I,62.

[16] *Parad* IV,1.

[17] *Nat* XVII,12.

[18] *Nat* X,1.

[19] *Nat* XII,1.

[20] S.P. Brock, *The luminous eye*, p. 32.

[21] Cf. the very useful summary made by T. Kronholm, *Motifs from Genesis 1-11*, pp. 105-107.

[22] *Nat* II,7.

[23] *Parad* IV,5.

[24] *Nat* XVII,4.

[25] *Eccl* XXXVII,1-6.

[26] *Eccl* XLVII,1.

In this regard it should be noted that both Eve and Mary are considered representatives of woman: through Eve, the mother of women, the dishonour of women increased; through Mary, the sister of women, their praise has increased[27]. The guilt of Eve is thus counterbalanced by the acquittal through Mary: 'Adam put the blame on the woman that came forth from him, but today she (Eve) requited his blame by bearing him the saviour'[28]. It is clear from this stanza that Eve's error was redeemed through Mary and that woman was therefore acquitted.

Eve and Adam also form a polarity, and one that enhances the feeling that Ephrem viewed Eve in a more positive light than the Jewish sources reflected in his exegesis. The most obvious way in which Adam and Eve form a polarity is of course in terms of sex. But this polarity in fact constitutes a merism (set of inclusive opposites), since Ephrem understood Adam as initially having been created hermaphrodite, male and female being united in the body of Adam[29]. This view is in agreement with certain Jewish traditions[30], but in contrast to those sources, Ephrem deduces from this unity that man and woman are evenly accountable for the Fall[31]. Their co-responsibility is clear from the stanza quoted above where the reciprocal unity is used to disarm the animosity between the sexes: 'Adam put the blame on the woman that came forth from him, but today she requited his blame by giving birth to the saviour'[32]. This co-responsibility of Adam and Eve is interpreted by Ephrem as relevant for the relationship between the sexes in his own time: in *CH* VIII,6 the relationship is expressed through referring to man as 'the head' and woman as 'the rib'. Ephrem urges man, who, he says, is often adulterous despite his face being unveiled, to live a chaste life since he will be judged by God through 'the rib', that is, woman, who is often chaste despite her face being veiled.

This focus on the unity of man and woman also separates Ephrem from some prominent patristic theologians who, it seems, often quoted the first part of Genesis 1:27 (God created man in his image) without alluding to the second part (he created them male and female). This is interpreted by some as an indication of 'virginal feminism', the acceptance in patristic thought of the fourth century of women only in their new role as 'virgins'[33].

[27] *Nat* XXII,23.

[28] *Nat* I,14; cf. also *Sog* I,26.

[29] T. Kronholm, *Motifs from Genesis 1-11*, p. 81.

[30] Cf. T. Kronholm, *Motifs from Genesis 1-11*, p. 81, n. 106. It is possibly of Amoraic origin and certainly under Greek Platonist influence. Gregory of Nyssa knew the same tradition. Cf. Murray, *Symbols*, pp. 302-3.

[31] Cf. *CH* VIII,5, also T. Kronholm, *ibid.*, p. 82.

[32] *Nat* I,14. The polarities are explicated further in the following two stanzas. Man gave birth to woman, woman gave birth to the redeemer.

[33] Cf. R.R. Ruether, 'Misogynism and virginal feminism in the fathers of the Church', in R.R. Ruether (ed.), *Religion and sexism, images of woman in the Jewish and Christian traditions* (New York, 1974), pp. 150-183.

Another theme which Ephrem has in common with rabbinic exegesis is that of the simple-mindedness of Eve. Generally speaking, the image of Eve in the rabbinic tales is that of a silly and childish female[34]. According to Ephrem, however, Adam suffered from the same defect[35]. Jewish midrashic traditions in contrast made Adam full-grown[36]. Although Satan employed the serpent to deceive Eve and then used Eve to deceive Adam, the similar simple-mindedness of Adam and Eve[37] in believing the seducer is used by Ephrem to point to their common guilt: 'they believed the false one' and they 'listened to the deceiver'[38].

That Ephrem did not regard Eve as inferior to Adam is illustrated also by his treatment of the description of the punishment in Genesis 3. According to him, God provided numerous opportunities for Adam to admit his guilt and thus to cancel the effect of his transgression. This is particularly the reason why the serpent is punished first, then Eve and finally Adam[39]. The Midrash Rabbah, in contrast, interpreted the sequence of curses as simply that honour is conferred in order from the greatest to the smallest; degradation from the smallest to the greatest[40]. In this instance, Ephrem's view is predetermined by his polemics againt Bardaisan and Mani, since he is endeavouring to emphasize the freedom of human will[41].

A prominent element of Jewish haggadic and apocalyptic speculation on the Fall, which became part of the Christian (Patristic) exegesis of Genesis 3, is that of the seduction of Eve as a sexual sin[42]. It is true that Ephrem speaks of the seduction of Eve in sexual overtones, comparing her to the wife of Potiphar[43] and Delilah[44], and also comparing her to 'a harlot'[45], whilst the serpent is said to have 'ejected venom' into her ears[46]. But one should be rather careful in suggesting that the fall of Eve is understood by Ephrem as a sexual seduction[47].

[34] Cf. N. Aschkenasy, *Eve's journey, feminine images in Hebraic literary tradition* (Philadelphia, 1986), p. 43.

[35] Theophilus, Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria have the same view, but use it to imply that Adam and Eve had no carnal knowledge. Cf. Murray, *Symbols*, pp. 304-5.

[36] Cf. Murray, *Symbols*, p. 306.

[37] Cf. *Nat* XXVI,8; *Virg* XII,12; *Eccl* XXXV,1-5; *Eccl* XLVI,7; *Virg* XIV,14.

[38] *Eccl* XLVIII,9, cf. T. Kronholm, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

[39] *CGen* 2:23, 39:22-25.

[40] Midrash Rabbah XX,3. Aphrahat similarly regards Eve as inferior in comparison to Adam. Cf. his *Demonstrations* XVIII, 8-9.

[41] Cf. S. Hidal, *Interpretation Syriaca*, pp. 83-86.

[42] Cf. B.P. Prusak, 'Woman: seductive siren and course of sin?', R.R. Ruether (ed.), *Religion and sexism, images of woman in the Jewish and Christian traditions* (New York, 1974), pp. 89-117. The role played by women in the mythical story of sexual union between them and the watchers in Genesis 6 was changed to that of being the seducers; this idea was then transferred to the interpretation of Genesis 3.

[43] *Eccl* XLVII,2.

[44] *Parad* XIII,12.

[45] *Eccl* XLVII,3.

[46] *Nat* XXI,15.

[47] *Contra* Kronholm, *op. cit.*, p. 100, n.35.

It should be pointed out that Eve's 'lust' was for the fruit, not for sexual union[48] and that the points of comparison with Potiphar's wife and Delilah does not concern sexual desire. Since the 'poison' of death was conceived through Eve's ear, and life similarly entered through the ear of Mary[49], the imagery should be termed 'conceptual' rather than 'sexual'. Sex is only involved after the fall in that child-bearing became necessary.

It would have been very difficult for Ephrem to make use of the tradition of the Fall as a sexual sin in the light of another polarity in which Eve is involved, namely that between *God and creation*. The exegesis of Genesis 6 in rabbinic and apocalyptic literature proved decisive for the interpretation of Genesis 3. Since the womenfolk spoken of in Genesis 6 were increasingly presented as being guilty of seducing the 'watchers', as the 'sons of God' in the text were understood to be, the sexual overtones of this episode were transferred to the interpretation of Genesis 3. Eve was eventually presented as being seduced by Satan and of becoming guilty of a sexual sin, which in turn led to the propagation of the fallen state[50]. Ephrem could in no way associate himself with such an interpretation since he could not accept that angels ('watchers') were created with a sexual desire[51]. It is Ephrem's realization of the great distinction between God and man that guides his interpretation in this instance. If spiritual beings could procreate in human form, the birth of Christ from a human would not have been unique, he argues[52]. His exegesis of Genesis 3 is therefore guided by his anti-Arian polemics in which he continually strives to preserve the uniqueness of God.

Between *Eve and the serpent* there also exists a polarity precluding sexual union of any kind, since man was endowed with a pre-eminent position of glory and honour among all the creatures[53]. This was of course also true of Eve, since the serpent was unable to look at the splendour of Eve, the subject of his temptation[54].

IV. Conclusion

Was Ephrem sexist in his outlook, or was he inclined towards feminism? The correct answer is probably that neither was the case. His presentation of the roles played by Adam and Eve seems to be much less tainted by gender ideology than the contemporary exegesis in Judaism and Christianity. But this

[48] *Eccl* LXVII,2.
[49] *Eccl* XLIX,7.
[50] Cf. B.P. Prusak, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-117.
[51] Cf. *HFid* XLVI,8; *Eccl* XXVII,6.
[52] *CH* XIX,1-7.
[53] Cf. *CNis* XLIII,19; XLIV,1.
[54] *CGen* 35,23-27.

presentation was greatly influenced by his polemics against the heresies of his time. His emphasis on the essential difference between God and man, the freedom of man to determine his own destiny, the unity of the sexes and the coherence of God's dealings with man led him to present Eve in a more balanced way.

On the one hand Ephrem accepted the socially determined gender roles and notions of the world he was living in. This included the tendency to afford greater respect to men and women who took the vow of virginity, a view which can today be regarded as 'nonsexual monism'[55], and thus inherently sexist. On the other hand, it is possible to detect in his writings a critical stance towards sexism. He seems critical of the tradition found in I Timothy which regarded Eve as being responsible for the Fall[56]. While accepting the notion that women should be veiled because of the transgression of Eve, he points out that the veiled faces of women are often without blemish, while the unveiled faces of men are often tainted. According to him, the difference in sex simply teaches that man carries a greater responsibility than woman[57]. Likewise, the sentiment of I Corinthians 14:34 that women should keep quiet in worship seems to be reiterated by him, but this idea is immediately neutralized by focussing upon the role of women in singing praise to God during worship[58].

[55] Cf. R.R. Ruether, 'Misogynism and virginal feminism in the fathers of the church' (*op. cit.*), pp. 150-183.
[56] Cf. his comments on the remark that 'Adam himself did not sin, but Eve transgressed the commandment' (I Tim 2:14). In his *Commentary on Genesis*, Section II,27, Ephrem responds to Adam's accusing Eve that it was she who gave the fruit to him: 'But if he gave you a wife, Adam, He gave her as a helper and not as a harmer, as someone who receives instructions, rather than as one who give orders'. The translation is that made by Brock in *Saint Ephrem, Hymns on Paradise* (1990), p. 218. Note, in contrast, the attitude of Ambrose in his treatise *On Paradise* IV,24 and XII,56. Translation consulted in E.A. Clark, *Women in the early church* (Collegeville, 1983), pp. 29-30; 41, or that of Tertullian in his treatise *On the dress of women* I,1,2 (*ibid.*, 39).
[57] *CH* VIII,6-7.
[58] 'The mouth of Eve was sealed with a beneficial silence, but it also serves once again to sing the praises of her Creator' (*Parad* VI,8).

The transmission of Ephrem's *madrashe* in the Syriac liturgical tradition

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Since the year when the Twelfth International Conference on Patristic Studies meets happens to be the fortieth anniversary of the publication of the first of the late Dom Edmund Beck's splendid edition of Ephrem's *madrashe* in the *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*[1], it is perhaps not inappropriate to mark this occasion by offering the preliminary findings of a study of the transmission of these *madrashe* as a whole, paying particular attention here to what is left of them in festal hymnaries of the Syriac Churches today.

The sources for our knowledge of the transmission of Ephrem's *madrashe* down to the present day are essentially fivefold:

1. Early manuscripts

A glance at any of Beck's introductions to his editions will indicate that he made use of two different types of manuscripts, firstly those of the fifth and sixth centuries, where the *madrashe* cycles are normally preserved complete; and secondly, liturgical manuscripts of the ninth to thirteenth centuries, which preserve selections only. The latter category are discussed below, under (4). The early manuscripts, all now in either the Vatican or the British Library, comprise the following, using Beck's sigla:

A = Add. 12176, of 5th/6th century	*de Fide, c.Haereses, Carmina Nisibena.*
B = Vat. Syr.111, of AD 522	*de Ecclesia, de Virginitate, de Fide, c.Haereses, de Paradiso.*
B = Add. 14627, of 6th/7th century	*de Ieiunio, de Azymis, de Crucifixione, de Resurrectione.*

[1] *H. de Fide*, in CSCO 154-5 = Scr.Syri 73-4. Beck's subsequent editions of Ephrem's *madrashe* appeared in CSCO as follows: *c.Haereses* in CSCO 169-70 = Scr.Syri 76-7; *de Paradiso* and *c. Julianum* in CSCO 174-5 = Scr.Syri 78-9; *de Nativitate* and *de Epiphania* in CSCO 186-7 = Scr.Syri 82-3; *de Ecclesia* in CSCO 198-9 = Scr.Syri 84-5; *Carmina Nisibena* in CSCO 218-9, 240-1 = Scr.Syri 92-3, 102-3; *de Virginitate* in CSCO 223-4 = Scr.Syri 94-5; *de Ieiunio* in CSCO 246-7 = Scr.Syri 106-7; *de Azymis, de Crucifixione, de Resurrectione* in CSCO 248-9 = Scr.Syri 108-9; *de Abraham Qidunaya* and *de Juliano Saba* in CSCO 322-3 = Scr.Syri140-1.

(Unfortunately Beck employed the siglum B for two different manuscripts; Add.14627 will be referred to below as Bbis).

C = Vat. Syr.113, of AD 552	*de Fide.*
D = Add. 14571, of AD 519	*de Nativitate* (16), *de Ieiunio, de Azymis* (2), *de Crucifixione*, and small groups from *de Ecclesia, C. Nisibena, de Fide*; then *de Paradiso* and *c. Julianum.*
F = Add.14574, of 5th/6th century[2]	*de Ecclesia, c.Haereses.*
G = Vat. Syr.112, of AD 551	*de Paradiso, de Nativitate* (18).
R = Add.14572, of 6th century	*C. Nisibena.*
U = Add.14635, of 6th century	*de Ecclesia.*

Several of these old manuscripts have suffered damage over the course of the centuries (B is one of those which fell into the Nile while being transported from the Syrian Monastery in the Nitrian Desert to the Vatican Library); this means that in several places where the entire tradition hangs on the witness of a single manuscript we have incomplete texts. Thus *C.Nisibena* 22-4, and much of 25 and the beginning of 26 are lost; most of *de Azymis* 6-11 are missing; much of *de Virginitate* 23-30 and 38-40 is badly damaged, and there are many gaps in *de Ecclesia.*

2. Philoxenus's Florilegium[3]

At the end of his Discourses against Habbib Philoxenus provided a Florilegium consisting of 227 short quotations arranged in five sections. The work is an early one and can be dated c.482/4. The excerpts in the Florilegium all derive from Greek patristic writers, with one exception, Ephrem. Ephrem, with 105 excerpts, is in fact better represented than any other writer. In a minority of cases Philoxenus has given an indication of the source of his quotation, and, as far as the *madrashe* are concerned, we have the following:

33 'From the volume (*penqita*) against the Jews and Doctrines'. The quotation remains unidentified.
73 'From the *madrashe* of the Church'. The quotation can be identified as *de Ecclesia* 9:8.
75 'From the *madrashe* of the Nativity'. The quotation represents *de Nativitate* 11:6.
207 'From the *madrashe* of the Church'. The quotation is from de *Virginitate* 26:3 (see below).

[2] Fragments (from the Syrian Monastery in the Nitrian Desert) containing parts of *Eccl.* 37-8, now in the New York Public Library (21.148.11) may well belong to this manuscript. (At 37:6, line 3, the fragment reads ܕܐܪܟ instead of ܕܐܪܟ).

[3] The Florilegium is edited by F. Graffin in *Patrologia Orientalis* 41,1 (1982); see also his study 'Le florilège patristique de Philoxène de Mabboug', in *[1] Symposium Syriacum* (OCA 197; 1974), pp. 267-90.

219 'From the volume of martyrs of Nisibis'. Unidentified.
223 'From the *madrashe* on Julian Saba'. The quotation represents *de Juliano Saba* 19:15.
224 'From the *qala* (melody) of *Kallat Malka* (the King's Bride)'[4]. Unidentified.

Philoxenus provides the earliest datable indication that Ephrem's *madrashe* circulated in cycles whose titles correspond fairly closely with those of the early manuscripts and familiar today from Beck's editions. The correspondence is not, however, complete, for it appears, not only from the evidence of Philoxenus, but also from that of the Sinai Index (= (3) below) and some quotations from Ephrem in other dogmatic florilegia, that two cycles of *madrashe* under the title On the Church were circulating in the fifth and sixth century, one of which corresponded to our *de Ecclesia*, and the other to our *de Virginitate*[5]. The presence of the three unidentified excerpts suggests that the cycles that have come down to us do not represent the full extent of Ephrem's *madrashe* collections, something that will become even clearer when we consider the Sinai Index. In fact, a considerable number of the other excerpts, for which no specific source is given, remain unidentified[6], and it is likely that these too derive from lost *madrashe* cycles.

3. Sinai Index of *qale*

Sinai Syr. 10 contains an elaborate index to the *qale* (melodies) of Ephrem's *madrashe* in the course of which a considerable amount of information about the way in which the *madrashe* were transmitted is given. The text, which was edited[7] and studied[8] by A. de Halleux, probably goes back to the sixth century, although the manuscript itself belongs to a few centuries later. In this notice the anonymous author seeks to classify the 45 *qale* employed in the course of nine volumes (*penqyata*) of Ephrem's *madrashe*[9]; besides quoting a considerable

[4] *Kallat malka* is the *qala* for several surviving *madrashe* (e.g. *de Virginitate* 1-3), but it was also the title for an entire (lost) volume in the Sinai Index, and it will presumably be from this volume that the excerpt comes. The name of the *qala* derives from the first words of a *madrasha* printed in T. Lamy, *Sancti Ephraem Syri Hymni et Sermones*, III (Malines, 1889), col. 959.

[5] Thus the florilegium Add.12155 f.75v quotes *de Virginatate* 1:1 as belonging to 'the *madrashe* of the Church'.

[6] A few of the excerpts left unidentified by Graffin can in fact be identified; thus no. 147 = *de Ecclesia* 13:23; 200 = *Sermo de Fide* III, 349-52 (but the last two lines of the excerpt remain unidentified); 204 = *Sermo* I.iii.345-8; 214 = *de Ieiunio* 5:6 (mid verse).

[7] 'Une clé pour les hymnes d'Ephrem dans le ms. Sinai syr. 10', *Le Muséon* 85 (1972), pp. 171-99.

[8] 'La transmission des hymnes d'Ephrem d'après les ms. Sinai syr. 10, f.165v-178r', in *[I] Symposium Syriacum* (OCA 197; 1974), pp. 21-63.

[9] A classification of Ephrem's metres and their *qale* is given in my 'Materials for the study of the writings of St Ephrem', due to appear one day in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* (the text was submitted in 1978). Classifications of the *qale* for *madrashe* found in the liturgical tradition can be found in M.Breydy, *Kult, Dichtung und Musik im Wochenbrevier der Syro-Maroniten*, III

number of opening verses from *madrashe*[10], the author also provides the number of *madrashe* in each *penqita*. For our present purpose, the following information concerning the nine volumes can be summarized:

I. Volume (*penqita*) of the Nativity (59 *madrashe*)
specified: *Nat.* 5, 26, 22, 24, 25; *Epiph.* 8, 9.
II. Volume of the Fast (67)
specified: *Ieiun.* 1; *Azym.* 3; *Nat.*2; two unknown; Lamy IV.746.
III. Volume of Nisibis (77)
specified: *Nis.*4, 35, 52, 69, 71.
IV. Volume of 'the King's Bride', against the Jews (66)
specified: Lamy III, 959; unknown.
V. Volume of the Church (52)
specified: *Eccl.*1,2; Lamy III.695; *Eccl.*7. 13. 15. 23. 26. 46.
VI. Volume of the Church (52)
specified: *Virg.* 8, 31, 39, 42.
VII. Volume of Faith (87)
specified: *Fid.*1, 10, 66, 80.
VIII. Volume against Erroneous Doctrines and Paradise (56 + 15)
specified: *Haer.* 17, 25, 56; *Par.* 1.
IX. Volume of the Confessors and Departed (67)
specified: two unknown; *Jul.Saba* 18; Editio Romana VI,276.
'Total: 618 *madrashe*' (in fact 598!).

The following points should be noted:
— The size of Volume I is much larger than any of the surviving collections of *de Nativitate* (the separation into *de Nativitate* and *de Epiphania* is certainly secondary, and several of the present *de Epiphania* cannot, on internal grounds, be by Ephrem).
— Volume II is again much larger than *de Ieiunio* and the Paschal cycles. The presence of *de Nativitate* 2 is puzzling[11].
— Volume III corresponds in the number of *madrashe* exactly to the *Carmina Nisibena*.
— Volume IV perhaps represents two different elements, listed separately by Philoxenus. This cycle is evidently very largely lost.
— Both volumes V and VI bear the title 'of the Church', but on the basis of the texts quoted the former evidently corresponds to our *de Ecclesia*, while the latter

Rishaiqole (Kobayath, Lebanon, 1979), and in L. Hage (ed.), *Les strophes syriaques et leurs metres poétiques du patriarche maronite Etienne Douayhi* (Bibliothèque de l'Université Saint Esprit, Kaslik, 13; 1986), with English translation *The Syriac Model Strophes and the Poetic Meters, by the Maronite Patriarch Stephen Douayhi* (Bibliothèque de l'Université Saint Esprit, Kaslik, 14; 1987).

[10] These allow some gaps to be filled in where Beck's early witness is defective (notably for *Virg.* 39:1-2 (see Appendix, (1)), and at the same time provide early testimony of attribution to Ephrem for some *madrashe* derived from FM which were printed by Lamy (see below).

[11] For this, see de Halleux, 'La transmission', p. 40.

to our *de Virginitate*. This is a feature which we have already encountered in connection with Philoxenus' Florilegium.

— Volume VII corresponds in the number of *madrashe* exactly to our *de Fide*.
— Volume VIII corresponds exactly to our *c.Haereses* and *de Paradiso*.
— Volume IX will be another cycle which is now evidently largely lost.

If one compares the contents of these nine volumes with the contents of the surviving early manuscripts, one finds that there are four exact matches:

Bbis = vol. II; C = vol. VII; R = vol. III; and U = vol. V.

A, B, D, F, G, however, are all considerably bigger. Thus A corresponds to vols.VII, VIII and III; B to vols. V-VIII; D has elements from I, II, V, III, VII, VIII; F corresponds to V and VIII; and G to VIII (in part) and I.

From all this, it is clear that, although some cycles seem to have been very stable in size, the way in which they were collected into volumes could vary considerably. The evidence of both Philoxenus's Florilegium and the Sinai Index indicates that certain cycles current in the fifth and sixth century are either lost, or only come down to us in a very depleted form. Furthermore, as we have seen from (1) above, even in some of the cycles that do come down to us in early manuscripts, there are quite a number of serious gaps, due to damage in the surviving manuscripts. Can any of these losses be remedied from the mediaeval liturgical manuscripts? Some provisional answers to this question will emerge in the course of the following sections (4) and (5).

4. Medieval liturgical manuscripts

Beck made use of a number of early Syrian Orthodox liturgical manuscripts dating from the eighth/ninth to the thirteenth century[12]; using his sigla, these are:

E = Add.17141, of 8th/9th century
H = Add.14501, of 11th century
J = Add.14506, of 9th, and 9th/10th century
K = Add.14509, of 11th century
L = Add.17245, of 13th century
M = Add.14515, of AD 893
N = Add.14520, of 8th/9th century
O = Add.12146, of AD 1007
P = Add.14512, of 10th century
V = Vat. syr.93, of 9th century.

[12] Beck also uses three manuscripts containing dogmatic florilegia which provide some citations from Ephrem (his S = Add.17214, of 7th century; T = Add.17191, of 9th/10th century; and Add. 12155 of 8th century). Several further early florilegia with citations from Ephrem survive; I hope to discuss these on a future occasion.

Reference to Beck's apparatus will immediately highlight the fact that these manuscripts never provide the complete text of any *madrasha*, but simply give a few stanzas at a time, not necessarily in their correct sequence. Thus, by way of example, E provides excerpts from *c.Haereses* in two different places in the course of its contents, and the following is typical of the pattern of stanzas that it provides: *c.Haereses* 11:1-3; 12:1-11; 13:1-8, 10-12; 14:2-8, 10-15; 17:1-5, 7, 10 etc..

The process of selection can in fact be taken back to the sixth century, and to Beck's manuscript D, where, for example we find, beside some complete cycles, several where only a small number of *madrashe* are given; thus from the cycle *de Fide* D provides only *de Fide* 10-12 (following *C. Nisibena* 39), 14, 21, and 23 (followed by *de Ecclesia* 29 — its second occurrence in this manuscript!). In contrast, however, to the practice of the mediaeval liturgical manuscripts D gives the text of a *madrasha* in its entirety, and not just select stanzas.

Even though the liturgical collections (mostly festal hymnaries) provide us only with excerpted stanzas, their importance can be seen, for example, from Beck's edition of *de Virginitate* where his base manuscript (B) is often defective, and so has to be filled out with the help of the mediaeval manuscripts E J K L O and P.

Beck only made a rather limited use of these liturgical manuscripts, and a wider use of them would undoubtedly prove worthwhile, as will become apparent from (5) below, where the witness of their printed descendants is discussed. Before turning to the relevant printed liturgical books, however, two basic caveats need to be mentioned.

Attributions in the mediaeval liturgical manuscripts must be regarded with considerable scepticism. Not surprisingly, many *madrashe* which on internal grounds cannot possibly be by Ephrem nonetheless get attributed to him. More unexpected, however, is the fact that on occasion genuine material by Ephrem can lurk under another poet's name; thus, for example, in Add.14520 (Beck's N) *C. Nisibena* 43 is to be found (f.42r) attributed to Jacob of Serugh!

Secondly, isolated stanzas from genuine *madrashe* by Ephrem can be found incorporated into later hymns, providing them with a new context that is very different from that of the original *madrasha*. An interesting example of this is provided in the tenth-century Add.14611, ff.67v-68r, entitled '*Soghitha* of the holy Mar Ephrem, to the qala "Paradise"'. What we have here is an eight-stanza poem where the first two and last three stanzas are by a later unknown author who, for his verses 3-5, reuses stanzas from Ephrem's cycle *de Paradiso*. The resulting hymn reads:

1. Blessed is the person who has carried, as keys upon his shoulders,
the toil of his (ascetic) conduct, and the course of his service,
and has fearlessly attained to the very gates of Paradise
which have recognized him there and allowed him to enter:
(thus) he has mingled with the choir of the upright and just,
and rejoiced in that glory that (belongs) to the angels and spiritual beings.

2. Believe this firmly, O discerning (reader), without any hesitation,
that the day is awaiting us when we shall call to mind and groan
as we blame ourselves and feel revulsion for our actions
as we repent of all that we have listened to
and so been neglectful in our conduct, and we (find ourselves) cast into torment,
having gained remorse and suffering that has no end.

3. (= *de Par.*6:16) There, manifest and fair to the eyes of the mind
are the coveted banquets of the just who summon us
to be their companions and brothers, their fellow members.
Let us not be deprived, my brethren, of their company;
let us be their kindred, or failing that, their neighbours,
and if not in their own dwelling, at least round about their bowers.

4. (= *de Par.*7:23) They know no worry, for they have no suffering;
they have no fear, for no snare awaits them;
they have no adversary, for they have passed through the contest.
(a line and a half have evidently been inadvertently omitted here)[13]
For their warfare is over, and they have taken up their crowns;
they have found rest in their (new) abodes, and rejoiced in their inheritance.

5. (= *de Par.*7:24) I saw that place, my brethren, and I sat down and wept
for myself and for those like me, at how my days had reached their fill,
dissipated one by one and faded out, stolen away without my noticing;
remorse seizes hold of me because I have lost
crown, name and glory, robe and bridal chamber of light.
How blessed is that person who of that heavenly table is held worthy!

6. That day will take place on which everyone is contrite,
feeling revulsion for himself and blaming his conduct
as he weeps tears of suffering — all to no profit,
for he that does not repent here (on earth)
will find his repentance there all to no profit,
for it is a place that does not accept that the wicked should repent there.

7. Prayer and supplication, weeping and groans
that do not come at their proper time will never be accepted,
for there is a time for everything, as it is written (Eccles.3:1).
Alas for him who (only) weeps yonder
— weeping that is to no profit, tears that are useless.
Grant me, Lord, to repent here and be accepted.

8. Quaking and terror grip hold of many
as they are on the point of departing to meet (their) God
when He is revealed at the end, in order to judge creation;
there all flesh stands in fright.
Blessed is the person whose face is not covered with shame at that time,
and who is to be seen (standing) without fear before the throne of the Judge.

[13] The omission has been partially remedied by the addition of 'and rejoiced in their inheritance' at the end.

By being placed in a new moralizing context, with its warnings about the Last Judgement, the genuine stanzas of Ephrem are given quite different associations from those of their original context.

5. The printed festal hymnaries

Madrashe, quite often specifically attributed to Ephrem, feature in a number of different printed liturgical books of the various Syriac Churches, but nowhere more so than in the festal hymnaries covering the entire liturgical year. For these we have in the West Syriac liturgical tradition two main printed editions in current use, the seven volume Syrian Catholic edition of the *Fenqitho* (< *Penqita* < Greek πινακίδιον), printed at the Dominican Press in Mosul (1886-1896), and the three-volume Syrian Orthodox edition of the same work, printed at Pampakuda in Kerala (1962-1963). The former is cited here as FM and the latter as FP. In the *Fenqitho madrashe* regularly feature in the Night Office (*Lilyo*) for Sundays and feasts. In FP the number of stanzas given is normally much less than what is to be found in FM; nevertheless, although FM and FP represent the same liturgical book, there is remarkably little overlap as far as the choice of *madrashe* is concerned, and so FP provides excerpts from a great many *madrashe* that are not represented in FM.

The corresponding liturgical books in the East Syriac tradition are the three-volume editions of the *Ḥudra* edited by P. Bedjan (*Breviarium iuxta ritum syrorum orientalium id est Chaldaeorum*; Rome, 1886-7, repr. 1938; Chaldean) and by T. Darmo (*Ḥudra*; Trichur, Kerala, 1960-1962; Church of the East). The former is cited here as BC and the latter as H. Use of *madrashe* is much more sparse in the East Syriac *Ḥudra*, and the number of stanzas given is normally only three (though sometimes these in fact represent six stanzas in Beck's editions). In general H contains more than BC, although there is a great deal of material which they have in common.

In these liturgical books by far the most extensive collection of *madrashe* is provided in FM, where some 500 *madrashe* are to be found in the course of the seven volumes; furthermore, nearly half of these are specifically attributed to Ephrem. On the surface, this would seem to offer a very significant source of knowledge for Ephrem's *madrashe*, and already shortly after the publication of FM T.J. Lamy did indeed make use of some of this material in volumes III and IV of his *Sancti Ephraem Syri Hymni et Sermones* (Malines, 1889, 1902); furthermore, some of these *madrashe* taken by Lamy from FM already feature in the Sinai Index (see table to (3), above). In more recent years both J. Slim[14]

[14] 'Hymne I de s.Ephrem sur la Resurrection', *L'Orient Syrien* 12 (1967), pp. 505-14. Slim in fact located it through Lamy's reprinting of the text in FM among the *Hymni Dispersi* (all from FM) in his vol. IV (cols 745-50).

and (especially) J. Gribomont[15] have drawn attention to the possibility of recovering lost Ephremic texts in FM; in particular, they were able to restore from *madrashe* in FM the text of a number of stanzas which were incomplete in Beck's edition due to damage in his sixth-century manuscript(s) (see (2) and (3) in Appendix). Gribomont went on to suggest that several of the *madrashe de Azymis* which are lost in Beck's manuscript B could in fact be recovered from FM. As will become clear from the discussion below, these two aspects, the recovery of the full text of single stanzas, and the recovery of complete lost *madrashe*, need to be kept separate; in particular, before one considers the possibility that entire *madrashe* that are lost in the sixth-century manuscripts might be recovered from FM (or from the medieval liturgical manuscripts to which its text goes back), it is essential to learn what happens in FM (and the other printed liturgical texts) to those of Ephrem's *madrashe* which we do have preserved in early manuscripts.

Gribomont already made an excellent start in identifying genuine Ephremic material in FM for the Paschal season, concentrating on the cycle *de Azymis*. Much more such material can be found among the *madrashe* for the season of the Nativity, and it is mainly from this period of the liturgical year that the following examples, designed to illustrate the fate of genuine Ephremic material in the liturgical tradition, are taken.

(a) The opening stanza (FM II, p.476) of one of the *madrashe* for *Lilyo* at the Nativity identifies it as *de Nativitate* 5 in Beck's edition, but what is given is not the whole of the *madrasha* but a mosaic of stanzas derived from four different *madrashe* from this cycle; thus we have the sequence *Nat.*5:1-3; 7:8; 5:4,7; 7:5; 5:12,19; 6:8-10; 5:13,6; 7:2-4; 8:10; 5:8. This happens to be a particularly dramatic case, but it is by no means unusual to find such a mosaic of stanzas taken from different *madrashe* in the same cycle.

(b) Another *madrasha* for the Nativity (FM II, p. 479) is one of those which do not bear any attribution to Ephrem; nevertheless its opening stanza identifies it as *de Nativitate* 1:1. This time it turns out that all the stanzas are from the same *de Nativitate* 1, but there are many gaps (*Nat.*1 happens to be a very long *madrasha*): thus what we have in FM is stanzas 1-3, 6-7, 10, 14, 61, 90 and 94. A different selection of stanzas from *Nat.*1 is to be found later on in FM II, this time not in a *madrasha*, but in a *ba'ota/bo'uto* ending *Lilyo* for the days after the Nativity (FM II, p.571, with stanzas 62, 82, 69, 77, 83, 84a, 85b).

(c) A further *madrasha* (FM II, p.480) for *Lilyo* of the Nativity that is anonymous in FM also turns out to contain some genuine Ephrem, namely *de Nativitate* 2:1,4 and 8. Between *Nat.*2:4 and 8, however, we find an extra stanza of unknown origin; and again, following *Nat.*2:8, there are two further

[15] 'La tradition liturgique des hymnes pascales de s. Ephrem', *Parole de l'Orient* 4 (1973), pp. 191-246.

otherwise unknown stanzas. This intrusion into genuine Ephremic material of stanzas of later unknown origin is in fact rather common in FM.

(d) In the examples cited so far the *madrashe* in FM have opened with the first stanza of one of Ephrem's *madrashe*, rendering their identification relatively simple. In quite a number of cases, however, the opening stanza in FM is not the opening stanza in the *madrasha* by Ephrem from which it draws. Thus a *madrasha* at *Lilyo* for Palm Sunday (FM IV, p. 801) opens with *de Resurrectione* 2:2 (the remaining three stanzas correspond to stanzas 7, 3 and 8 of *Res.*2).

(e) Genuine Ephrem stanzas may be hidden away in *madrashe* the rest of which are probably of later date. Thus *de Resurrectione* 1:1 (already identified by J. Slim) features as stanza 9 in a *madrasha* for the Ascension (FM VI, p. 163); similarly *de Ecclesia* 20:11-12 feature as stanzas 4 and 5 of a *madrasha* for the Nativity of John the Baptist (FM II, pp. 209). We have already observed a similar case in the *soghitha* attributed to Ephrem in Add.14611[16].

(f) Isolated stanzas from two different cycles of Ephrem's *madrashe* may be found brought together in a *madrasha* in FM. Thus a *madrasha* for *Lilyo* on the Third Sunday after the Resurrection (FM VI, p.107) opens with *de Fide* 36:1, while stanza 3 is derived from *de Resurrectione* 1:7 (the remaining nine stanzas are of unknown origin).

A number of different lessons can be learnt from these six examples taken from FM (similar ones can equally be found in FP)[17], in particular the following.

First and foremost, one cannot hope for the preservation in FM (or FP, BC and H) of complete lost *madrashe* by Ephrem, even if we could identify them as such, e.g. by means of an incipit for a lost *madrasha* given in Philoxenus's Florilegium or in the Sinai Index.

Secondly, the attributions in FM are totally unreliable: not only do many *madrashe* which on internal grounds cannot possibly be by Ephrem get attributed to him, but conversely, some genuine Ephrem material may feature as anonymous.

Thirdly, the selection of stanzas in the liturgical books may not begin at the beginning of one of Ephrem's genuine *madrashe*; furthermore, the genuine stanzas will often be drastically reordered and/or interspersed with stanzas of a very different origin.

[16] A similar fate met an anonymous *madrasha* preserved in a sixth-century manuscript and published in *Oriens Christianus* 64 (1980), pp. 48-64: the eleventh stanza resurfaces as the first stanza of a *madrasha* for the Resurrection in FP III, p. 80, while stanza 12 turns up in the course of a *madrasha* for the Fifth Sunday after the Feast of the Cross in FM VII, p. 275 (also in Lamy, IV, cols 759-67, stanza 11; this *madrasha* in Lamy's edition is in fact a combination of three different *madrashe* in FM VII!).

[17] From the fate of alphabetic acrostics in FP, where only alternate stanzas are given, it is evident that this edition must have used, among its sources, a manuscript designed for one half only of a choir.

Fourthly, the search for genuine Ephremic material should not be confined just to the *madrashe* in FM (and FP), for it may also feature elsewhere, in particular in the *ba'awata*.

From all this it can readily be seen that the evidence of FM and the other printed liturgical books (and likewise, the manuscript tradition upon which they are based) needs to be handled with considerable care. Furthermore, the initial identification of what genuine Ephremic material is preserved in these books is far from a straightforward task. Not surprisingly, those that have been identified so far derive largely from Ephrem's Nativity and Paschal cycles, but the liturgical use of stanzas from his *madrashe* is by no means just confined to these cycles. What is needed before a complete inventory of genuine Ephrem stanzas preserved in these liturgical books can be made is a systematic search which can be best undertaken *qala* by *qala*. To date I have only had the opportunity to investigate the situation for a small number of *qale*, but among them is the *qala* entitled *Pardaysa* which happens to be used frequently both by Ephrem and in FM and FP; the results of this preliminary examination are not without interest, though whether they are typical or not remains to be seen: in *madrashe* by Ephrem preserved in the early manuscripts there are some 330 stanzas using this metre; of these, only 33 feature scattered here and there in FM and FP (it should also be noted that, out of several hundred stanzas in the metre in FM and FP, they only have 25 stanzas in common, of which only a couple are derived from Ephrem).

Provided, however, these caveats are kept in mind, the witness of the liturgical books is nonetheless important and of value. As was mentioned earlier, Slim and Gribomont were able to restore, with the help of FM, material lost through damage in the early manuscripts. There is certainly more that could be done along these lines[18], as the following two examples show.

Several stanzas in *de Ecclesia* 21 are badly damaged and have text missing in Beck's edition, based on the single surviving early manuscript (B). A systematic search through *madrashe* in FM and FP using the same metre (*qala: Pardaysa*) locates the use of stanzas 4 and 5 in a *madrasha* for *Lilyo* on the First Sunday after Pentecost (FM VI, pp.267-8), and of stanza 5 in a *madrasha* for *Lilyo* on the Commemoration of St Thomas (FM VI, pp.638-9). Both these *madrashe* in FM in fact nicely illustrate several of the features to which attention was drawn above (a) — (f); thus the first consists of eight stanzas, of which the first and fourth are otherwise unknown, while the second is *Nat.*3:21, the third is a variation on *Fid.*46:12, the fifth and sixth are *Fid.*40:2-3, and the seventh and eighth are *Eccl.*21:5 and 4. That for the commemoration of St Thomas

[18] For a different (and in my view questionable) approach, see M. Breydy, 'Une nouvelle méthode pour constater l'originalité des hymnes syriaques. Compléments au sujet des différentes versions d'Ephrem', in M. Macuch, C. Müller-Kessler and B.G. Fragner (eds), *Studia Semitica necnon Iranica R. Macuch...Dedicata* (Wiesbaden, 1989), pp. 33-51.

contains six stanzas of which the first two are otherwise unknown, the third is *Par.*6:19, the fourth *Fid.*47:11, the fifth *Fid.*48:10, and the sixth *Eccl.*21:5. With the help of these two *madrashe* in FM it is possible to restore the lost last line of *Eccl.*21:4, and the missing parts of 21:5 (though some textual problems remain, for which see the Appendix, (4)).

As a second example I take an instance from the East Syriac *Ḥudra*[19], where among the more restricted number of *madrashe* preserved several can identified as deriving from Ephrem's genuine works. The first of the three stanzas of the *madrasha* sung on the Sixth Sunday of Lent (*Ḥudra* II, p.381) can be identified as *de Ecclesia* 6:1-2, and the following two stanzas correspond to *Eccl.*6:3-4 and 5,7. The inclusion of stanza 5 is fortunate, since this is badly damaged in Beck's manuscript B, and so, thanks to H, we are able now to read it in its complete form (see Appendix, (5)).

The liturgical tradition of *madrashe* is not only to be found of use where the early manuscripts are defective, for on occasion they may provide a reading that is superior to the text found in the early manuscripts. Several examples could be cited from Beck's editions, and further use of this resource would undoubtedly throw up more examples. Here, by way of illustration, I cite a single case: the anonymous *madrasha* for *Lilyo* of the Saturday of the Week of Rest (FM V, p.454) in fact proves to consist of *de Azymis* 16:1, 4, an unknown stanza, 7, 8, and another unknown stanza. *Az.* 16:7 in Beck's edition (based solely on B here) reads 'The fragrance of His living (being) flew (ܐܙܠ) in Sheol', whereas the text in FM speaks much more appropriately of this fragrance as having 'wafted' (ܐܫܕ) in Sheol.

* *
*

It will be apparent from what has been said above that we can only hope to recover lost Ephremic material with a high degree of certainty when this concerns single stanzas for which part of the text is preserved in the early manuscripts so that the stanza in question can be identified as genuinely from Ephrem. This is not to deny that many other stanzas in FM, FP, BC and H, may not also be taken from *madrashe* genuinely by Ephrem, but which have otherwise been lost; for these, however, the criteria for identifying them as genuine Ephrem will solely be stylistic, and so necessarily of a much more subjective character. Quite a number of such stanzas which have an 'Ephremic ring' about them can be found in the liturgical books and Gribomont has conveniently collected those which could be lost stanzas from the cycle *de Azymis* (though our experience

[19] For the identification of material from among the *madrashe* in BC, H.Hussman, 'Madrasche und Seblatha: Repertorienuntersuchungen zu den Hymnen Ephräms des Syrers', *Acta Musicologica* 48 (1976), pp. 132-3.

of what has happened to Ephrem's *madrashe* that we know from early manuscripts should warn us that these will not represent complete *madrashe*, and that the stanzas are quite likely to be in a different sequence from that of the lost original). By way of conclusion I give a translation of a *madrasha* in the *Ḥudra* (II, pp. 476-7 = BC II, p. 351) which likewise gives the impression of preserving genuine Ephremic material. Here, although the content would suit *de Azymis*, the *qala* (*Pardaysa*) is not one used in that cycle, and so, if the stanzas are genuinely Ephrem's, they must derive from a different cycle of *madrashe*. The fact that the second and third stanzas are also preserved in the West Syriac liturgical tradition (FM VI, p. 374, featuring as stanzas 1-2) certainly supports the idea that this is from an early *madrasha*, whether or not it is genuinely by Ephrem.

1. In the symbol of the Lamb was hidden the symbol of our salvation,
and in the blood of animals was marked out the dissolution of our wickedness.
And if a silent (animal) brought forgiveness to those endowed with speech,
how much more shall the Living Blood sanctify us
and wipe out, through His Passion, the bill of our debts,
we thereby receiving, through His renewal, liberation from death.

2. Through the sacrifice of the silent (lamb) was depicted the image of the Living One,
and in the slaughter of the dumb (creature) is the resemblance of the Eloquent One
whose blood is living blood, giving freedom to creation:
it is like a herald in all things
of the sacrifice of the Eloquent One who brings forgiveness of debts
and clothes mortal beings in garments of forgiveness.

3. Along the path of the symbol of the lamb did the True Lamb travel,
and it arrived at the sacrifice, confirming the image,
so as to give liberation of Life to the race of mortal beings,
to repay, by means of His death, the debt
which his companions had incurred at the transgression of the commandment,
showing ingratitude to the Creator with regard to keeping His commandments.

* *
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From this discussion, it should have become evident that the witness of the medieval liturgical tradition and of the dependent printed liturgical books is important but at the same time limited. While there is certainly ample room for further exploration and exploitation of this resource, one thing is absolutely evident: without the fifth- and sixth-century manuscripts we would not be able to read any of Ephrem's wonderful poems in their complete form, for all that we would have would be excerpts which often give the stanzas in the wrong sequence, and intermingled with stanzas by later authors. This situation in fact also applies to a great deal of other early Syriac literature, whether to original

authors such as Aphrahat, or to early translations of Greek patristic writings, the vast majority of which only come down to us today in very early manuscripts. That these early manuscripts have survived at all is due to their having been preserved over the centuries in the dry Egyptian climate of the Nitrian Desert, where they were housed in the library of the Monastery of the Syrians there prior to the acquisition of large numbers of them by the Vatican Library in the eighteenth and the British Museum in the nineteenth century[20]. The man who was chiefly responsible for building up this remarkable library was the abbot Moses of Nisibis[21], who returned from tax business in Baghdad in 932, laden with manuscripts that were already several centuries old (among which we know to have been Vatican syr. 112 and 113, Beck's G and C); accordingly, by way of conclusion, we can echo the words of the scribe from that monastery who, at the end of a manuscript[22] he copied in 933/4, informs us that it was written 'in the days of our pride and the adornment of the entire holy Church, Mar Moses, abbot of this monastery'.

[20] For the significance of these acquisitions for the history of Syriac studies in Europe see my 'The development of Syriac studies', in K.J. Cathcart (ed.), *The Edward Hincks Bicentenary Lectures* (Dublin, 1994), pp. 94-113, esp. 98-104.

[21] On him see especially J. Leroy, 'Moise de Nisibe', *[1] Symposium Syriacum* (OCA 197, 1974), pp. 457-70.

[22] Now British Library Add.14525.

APPENDIX

Texts of supplements from the printed liturgical texts to damaged stanzas in Beck's editions.

In the following texts the words underlined are supplied from the printed liturgical texts.

(1) *de Virginitate* 39:2 = Sinai Index, ed. de Halleux, pp. 182-3.

ܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܠܡ̈ܐ ܕܟܠܗ̇ ܕܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ
ܡܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ ܕܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ ܕܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ
ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ ܕܥܠ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ
ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ
ܕܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ

(2) *de Resurrectione* 1:1 = FM VI, pp. 163.

ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ 1
ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ
ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ
ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ
ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ

(3) *de Azymis* 9:4-5 = FM V, pp. 127-8.

ܕܒ̈ܪ̈ܝ ܕܒ̈ܪ̈ܝ ܕܒ̈ܪ̈ܝ 4
ܕܒ̈ܪ̈ܝ ܕܒ̈ܪ̈ܝ ܕܒ̈ܪ̈ܝ
ܕܒ̈ܪ̈ܝ ܕܒ̈ܪ̈ܝ ܕܒ̈ܪ̈ܝ 5
ܕܒ̈ܪ̈ܝ ܕܒ̈ܪ̈ܝ ܕܒ̈ܪ̈ܝ

(4) *de Ecclesia* 21:4-5 = FM VI, pp. 268 and 639 (stanza 5 only).

ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ 4 (last line
ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ 5
ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ
ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ
ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ
ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ
ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ

[1,2] — transposed in FM VI 639.
[3] — ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ FM VI 268, 639; there is a metrical problem with both readings.
[4] — om. FM VI 268, 639.
[5] — = FM VI 268, 639; ܡܢ Beck.
[6] — ܟܠ FM VI 268, 639.
[7] — ܠܗ FM VI 268, 639.

(5) de Ecclesia 6:5 = H II, p. 381.

ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ
ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܫܒ̈ܚ̈ܐ ܕܐܬ̈ܝ ܠܗ.

The Two Georgian Translations of the Homilies of St. Gregory Nazianzen

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St. Gregory of Nazianzus is one of the most widely translated authors in the Georgian tradition. The translation of Gregory's works covers the period from the 5th to the 13th centuries. The process of translation implies further development in understanding of his terminology. The Georgian corpus of St. Gregory's works is evidence of this long process. The fact that every translation is a sort of exegetical work, makes clear the importance of the rich and very varied terminological material of ancient Georgian translations in the study and scientific analysis of St. Gregory's theology.

The Georgian translators of St. Gregory's works were outstanding theologians themselves, the best-known of whom are St. Euthymius the Athonite (10th-11th century) and St. Ephrem the Mtsire (second half of the 11th century). These two, Euthymius and Ephrem, have rendered into Georgian the well-known collection of St. Gregory's 16 festive or heortological homilies.

Two Georgian translations (Euthymian and Ephremian) of the aforementioned heortological homilies have an exceptional value for the student of christian spirituality. Undoubtedly, these translations deserve a special terminological-doctrinal investigation.

What is, in fact, the exceptional theological value of the Euthymian translation? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to take into consideration the most perceptible specificity of the original Greek text, which consists (according to a very exact definition of Ephrem the Mtsire) in 'the secrecy of theological words' ('ღმრთისმეტყუელებისა სიტყუათა მიფარულებაჲ'), that is to say 'the secret character of theological terminology'.

Euthymius provides the kind of translation which transmits the hidden thoughts of the original text in a special way. The translation makes it clear that the main characteristic of Euthymius' theological perception is 'terminological clarity', in contrast to the 'secrecy of terms' of the Greek text. Here is one example: In homily XXIX St. Gregory tries to express the ineffable reality and reveals a deep learning about the hypostatic existence of the consubstantial trinity: μονὰς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς εἰς δυάδα κινηθεῖσα μέχρι τριάδος ἔστη. The literal translation is: 'The Monad that in the beginning has been moving towards the dyad, stepped up to the trinity'. In the Euthymian translation we read: 'The one-hypostasity in the beginning advancing towards the two-hypostasity, was perfected in the three-hypostasity' / 'ერთგუამოვნება, პირველითგან ორგუამოვნებად წარმატებითი, სამგუამოვნებად სრულ-იქმნა'.

This is, on the one hand, a commendable translation and on the other hand a deep commentary on the original, where the hidden meaning of the Greek text is interpreted with a principle of 'terminological clarity'.

The publication of such an exegetical translation will be an important event from the standpoint of terminological theology. If the sermons of St. Gregory Nazianzen are eternal examples of theological secrecy of expression, the Euthymian translation of them undoubtedly will remain one of the most bold efforts of theological clarity of exegesis.

The second Georgian translation of these festive homilies by St. Ephrem the Mtsire is of great importance in the history of interpretation. The Ephremian collection of these homilies is a first realization of the new methodology of interpretation formed and formulated by this Georgian theologian. Ephrem suggested the method of the exact terminological coincidence between the original and translated texts.

The comparative study of the earlier and later translations by Ephrem Mtsire makes it clear that the new Georgian theological terminology, in other words, the new terminological consciousness, was achieved in the latest period of his life. It became possible only after Ephrem had explored the previous tradition and particularly the terminological achievements of St. Euthymius the Athonite.

The new achievement of Ephrem the Mtsire is undoubtedly the result of his terminological consciousness. Ephrem speaks about it in a special commentary where he gives an exact evaluation of the former tradition of interpretation. First of all, he emphasises the theological activity of Euthymius the Athonite. Also, he gives a high evaluation of the hidden theological terminology of St. Gregory Nazianzen. Ephrem tried to preserve the quality of the original text in his translation.

The Ephremian translation of the sixteen festive homilies is the most obvious line of demarcation between old and new in the history of ancient Georgian ecclestiatical terminology. This translation brings to an end the former tradition and it lays a solid foundation of the whole future theological activity in Georgia. This activity was revealed in such impressive works as, for example: (i) A 'dogmaticon' ('dogmatic collection') composed by one of the most outstanding Georgian theologians, Arseni Ikalthoeli (Ephrem's pupil, 11th-12th century); (ii) The new text of the Bible with vast commentaries translated in the eminent Georgian theological centre Gelati (For this reason this new translation is called the Gelati Bible); (iii) Besides the Bible the whole theological production of Gelati monastery; (iv) The translations and very complex scolions (commentaries) of the best-known Georgian theological philosopher Ioanne Petrizi (12th-13th century) and others.

Moreover, the Ephremian translation of St. Gregory's festive sermons has its own theological value that consists in the following: The principle of an

adequate translation of St. Gregory's 'secret' terms obliged the translator in the first place to penetrate inside of these 'secrecies' and grasp in genuine meaning of Greek terms in order to establish their exact Georgian terminological correspondence. So, if we take into consideration that a term, in the christian sense, is not a dry, abstract concept, but a living datum, particularly an imprint of a spiritual perception, it will be clear that the translation of Ephrem the Mtsire reveals itself as an important product of the deepest theological search and an animate stamp of the comprehension of the original text. The detailed study of the Ephremian text seams to be very important for those who study the history of patristic thought. The method of exact correspondence of the translation to the original text inevitably brings about the stylistic artificiality and linguistic difficulties of this translation. The artificiality and linguistic difficulties of the translation in this case is a logical and positive result of the new methodology of interpretation. The Georgian translation of Ephrem the Mtsire definitely emphasises in its form (and not only in its contents) what is essential in the original text. As it is well known, the Greek text of these sermons of St. Gregory is very difficult in its essence and may be comprehended only by few persons who are advanced in theological thought. On the other hand according to its form the text is written with a panegyric style (that is more or less understandable and natural for a Greek audience or reader) and it is destined for a liturgical office, i.e. for a wide circle of believers. The Georgian translation, in contrast to the original text, is very heavy not only in its content but also in its form, because of Ephrem's new principles of interpretation. Consequently, this translation is divorced from simple readers not only in its substance but also in its form. In other worlds the Ephremian translation is destined only for 'few intellectuals' as it is expressed by Ephrem himself ('იშჳთ ვიეთთჳსმე გულისჳმისმყოფელთათჳს'). Undoubtedly, the Ephremian translation is a speculative book in its content as well as in its form (and not a properly liturgic text).

So, the two Georgian translations of St. Gregory's 16 festive homilies are the examples of two kinds of perception of the Greek text. If the first translation of Euthymius is designated by Ephrem as 'milk destined for babes' and as 'wine diluted with water', the second (literal) translation of Ephrem himself appears as the most solid nutriment of spiritually advanced persons.

Chrysostom's Exegetical Homilies on the New Testament in Syriac Translation

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Introduction

Two years ago at a conference in Münster, Bart Ehrman made some remarks about the significance of patristic citations for New Testament Textual Criticism[1]. He pointed out that a full analysis of Chrysostom's works may be the most pressing *desideratum*. After all, there are so many chrysostomic texts that it boggles the imagination, even if we limit ourselves only to those liable to be authentic; and for many of them the number of Greek manuscripts appear virtually innumerable. 'C'est une vraie calamité ou une vraie bénédiction', said E. Amand de Mendieta, depending on your point of view[2]. Yet it is not only the forgotten souls plying the backwaters of New Testament textual criticism who want to get a better understanding of the most primitive shape of Chrysostom's texts. Everyone has their own reasons, but all share two serious problems: the quality of existing Greek editions (often poor), and the state of the Greek manuscript tradition. The Greek tradition for these texts effectively begins in the 11th century, sometimes the 10th, long after the Golden Mouth had fallen silent.

The Syriac Tradition

Chrysostom's exegetical homilies — or commentaries — on the New Testament, in Greek, fare better than many of the texts: Field's editions are good[3],

[1] Bart D. Ehrman, 'The Use and Significance of Patristic Evidence for New Testament Textual Criticism', in B. Aland and J. Delobel, eds., *New Testament Textual Criticism, Exegesis and Church History. A Discussion of Methods* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 7; Kampen, 1994), p. 124.

[2] E. Amand de Mendieta, 'Un problème d'ecdotique. Comment manier la tradition manuscrite surabondante d'un ouvrage patristique', in Jürgen Dummer, ed., *Texte und Textkritik: eine Aufsatzsammlung* (Texte und Untersuchungen 133; Berlin, 1987), p. 31.

[3] Frederick Field, ed., *Sancti patris nostri Joannis Chrysostomi archiepiscopi constantinopolitani Homiliae in Matthaeum*, 3 volumes (Cambridge, 1838-9); id., *Sancti patris nostri Joannis Chrysostomi archiepiscopi constantinopolitani Interpretatio omnium epistolarum Paulinarum per homilias facta*, 7 volumes (Oxford, 1845-62).

Field's editions are not beyond improvement. See Blake Goodall, *The Homilies of St. John Chrysostom on the Letters of St. Paul to Titus and Philemon: Prolegomena to an Edition* (University of California Publications, Classical Studies, 20; Berkeley, 1979).

although he did not edit the Greek Homilies on John[4]. Yet, despite some superior editions, the Greek evidence is still basically of the 11th and 10th centuries. This is where Syriac speaking Christians come to our rescue. Many of Chrysostom's works were translated into Syriac at an early date[5], and for the Homilies on the New Testament, the principal Syriac manuscript evidence itself is of the sixth and seventh centuries — much earlier than the extant Greek evidence[6].

The Syriac manuscript evidence falls into two main categories: 1) commentary manuscripts, or books consisting entirely of portions of Chrysostom's exegetical Homilies on the New Testament; and 2) collections, such as topical anthologies, books on canon law, and in their own sub-category, the homiliaries. The collections contain extracts of part or all of one or more homilies. I have studied most of the extant manuscripts in both categories of this tradition. My study has been concerned with several things: the shape of the overall Syriac tradition of these texts, locating the translations in time by means of external and internal evidence, and determining their relationship to the extant Greek. I have also been concerned with issues of Biblical textual criticism. Here I will make a few remarks on the basis of my own observations, touching briefly on the Syriac translations of the Homilies on Matthew and the Homilies on St. Paul's Epistles, to focus primarily on one aspect of the translation of the Homilies on John.

Homilies on Matthew

Of the Homilies on Matthew, four Syriac commentary manuscripts preserve the first 32, albeit fragmentarily in certain homilies[7]. The manuscripts are all from the sixth century, one having been copied in the early years of the century (i.e. B.L. Add. 12,142). Numerous collections span the centuries. I have detected

[4] These have received some attention over the last half-century, but there is no sign of a critical edition appearing. See P.W. Harkins, 'The Text Tradition of Chrysostom's Commentary on John', (Ph.D. dissertation; Michigan State University (Ann Arbor), 1948); id., 'The Text Tradition of Chrysostom's Commentary on John', *Theological Studies* 19 (1958), pp. 404-12; id., 'The Text Tradition of Chrysostom's Commentary on John', in F.L. Cross, ed., *Studia Patristica* 7 (Texte und Untersuchungen 92; Berlin, 1966), pp. 210-20. More recently, M.-É. Boismard and A. Lamouille, *Un évangile pré-johannique*, two volumes (Études bibliques 17-8, 24-5, Paris, 1993-4).

[5] See Anton Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn, 1922), pp. 80-1. For a brief overview of studies of the Syriac translation tradition of Chrysostom, see also Paul Krüger, 'Eine bisher unbekannte Homilie des hl. Johannes Chrysostomus in syrischer Übersetzung', *Oriens Christianus* 51 (1967), pp. 78-9.

[6] The Syriac tradition attests to translations of all of Chrysostom's exegetical Homilies on the New Testament except: the Homilies on Acts; the Homilies on 1 and 2 Timothy (and possibly the Homilies on Hebrews — see n. 10 below).

[7] Viz. B.L. Add. 12,142; B.L. Add. 14,560; B.L. Add. 14,558; B.L. Add. 14,559. It may be presumed that the whole set was originally translated into Syriac, but others of the 90 homilies appear only as excerpts in collections.

two translations of the homilies. The age of the manuscripts indicates that both translations were in existence by the opening years of the sixth century. Moreover, Philoxenus cites from the earlier translation in a florilegium prepared by 484, thereby recording the existence of that translation by this date[8]. The most widely disseminated translation is seen to exhibit technical features common to fifth-century translations. The other translation is somewhat more literal, though possibly still of the (very late) fifth century.

Both translations of the Homilies on Matthew are extremely important to the Syriac Patristic and exegetical traditions. Also, they provide valuable information about Syriac translation literature. However, students and editors of the Greek texts tend to want more. Unfortunately, they may find these translations a bit disappointing. On the one hand, they do provide unparalleled evidence that the 10th- and 11th-century Greek texts of the editions is essentially the same as the pre-medieval text underlying the Syriac translations. However, when it comes to the evaluation of particular variants or even the segregation of textual groups, the translations are not so literal as to be generally helpful[9]. The same is true of the Biblical citations, although the Syriac translation may occasionally prove useful for New Testament textual critics working with the Greek homily texts who want to compensate for corruptions which have intruded upon their texts.

Homilies on the Epistles

With the Syriac translations of Homilies on St. Paul's Epistles[10], students and editors of the Greek texts have cause to rejoice. First, the manuscript evidence is ancient — mainly sixth- and seventh-century. However, the style of translation

[8] For the relevant text of the florilegium, see François Graffin, ed., *Sancti Philoxeni Episcopi Mabbugensis Dissertationes Decem et Uno e sancta trinitate incorporato et passo*, volume 5, *Appendices. Patrologia Orientalis* 41 (Turnhout, 1982), pp. 5-141; cf. id., 'Le florilège patristique de Philoxène de Mabboug', in I. Ortiz de Urbina, ed., *Symposium Syriacum 1972* (Rome, 1974), pp. 267-90.

[9] The Syriac could be very helpful where there is more substantial variation (e.g. major transpositions, large omissions and additions), but it is precisely this sort of variation which existing editions do not signal. Of course, a huge number of Greek manuscripts remain unedited, and future editors may discover a more diverse tradition than that of which we are presently aware, in which case the Syriac may become very useful.

[10] In Syriac, there are commentary manuscripts, sometimes fragmentary, for each set of Chrysostom's Homilies on the Epistles, except the Homilies on 1 and 2 Timothy. For the Homilies on Hebrews, there is only one extract in a seventh- or eighth-century anthology, and no extant commentary manuscript; the whole set of homilies may never have been translated into Syriac.

It should be noted that for the Homilies on Romans, the Syriac translation of the set itself survives but fragmentarily in a palimpsest legible perhaps only to an Agnes Smith Lewis; yet the commentary did once exist as such. It is impossible to do more than conjecture whether (or which) excerpts derive from existing Syriac translations of the Homilies on Romans or were translated independently as part of Greek collections.

is measurably more literal than the styles of the translations of the Homilies on Matthew. The various distinct sets of the Homilies on the Epistles share a common style, suggesting that they were translated at about the same time; certainly they were all translated according to the same basic technique, more formally precise. However, the translations do not exhibit the consistency and formal literalness typical of seventh-century translations. Also, they retain some relatively archaic features. Taken together, external and internal evidence put the date of translation squarely into the sixth century, perhaps by the middle of the century, since two manuscripts are dated 594 and 584[11].

A comparison between the Syriac texts and those of Field's editions shows that the Syriac texts are extremely important to any attempt to interpret the history of the Greek tradition. Even taking into account the limitations of the Syriac translation style to represent Greek, the translations nevertheless regularly provide unambiguous support for particular Greek variants. Also, in these Syriac translations, Biblical textual critics have citations which are very useful to their evaluation of the often corrupt citations in the late Greek homily manuscripts. Hence, for students of the Greek texts, the value of the Syriac translations of the Homilies on the Epistles is great indeed.

Homilies on John

Finally to be considered are the Homilies on John, for which sixth- or seventh- and eighth-century manuscripts preserve most of Homilies 1-43 and 60-88[12]. I have focused my research on these homilies, and have begun to edit some of them. Excerpts from the Homilies appear in numerous collections; in every case open to confirmation the excerpts draw on the existing Syriac translations of the homilies, and there is no evidence for systematic revision or re-translation.

Philoxenus' florilegium also draws on these homilies. The two citations are very brief, but there is sufficient amount of text to conclude that the citations do not draw on an existing translation of the Homilies on John but represent an independent translation[13]. In view of Philoxenus' reliance on the Syriac translation of the Homilies on Matthew, it is likely that a translation of the Homilies on John simply was not available. This is turn suggests that they were translated

[11] Viz. B.L. Add. 17,152 (1 and 2 Thessalonians) and B.L. Add. 12,160 (Homilies 34-44 on 1 Corinthians), respectively.

[12] B.L. Add. 14,561 (sixth- or seventh-century) contains most of Homilies 1-43; B.L. Add. 12,161 (sixth- or seventh-century) contains Homilies 60-88; B.L. Add. 14,562 (seventh- or eighth-century) contains most of Homilies 60-88.

[13] Several important variations occur in the short excerpts. The variations are not theological, but one or two of them appear to have been prompted by a desire to clarify the significance of the passages for their new context. However, most of the variants indicate a separate attempt to render the same Greek text, i.e. an independent translation.

after 482(-4), although certainty is impossible. But the weight of external evidence puts the likely date of translation between the end of the fifth century and the middle of the sixth.

Analyzing the translation style, it is possible to suggest a more precise range of dates for translation. The Homilies on John are somewhat less literal than the Homilies on the Epistles, but markedly more literal than Translation A of the Homilies on Matthew[14]. For example, the translator represents Greek conjunctions and particles only inconsistently, sometimes omitting them or substituting less literal Syriac words, sometimes adding them where none exists in the Greek. Yet in contrast with the (earlier) translation of the Homilies on Matthew, the Syriac Homilies on John do not have many expansions or double translations. His means of translating certain words (e.g. ὁμοούσιος and words related to σαρκωθέντα), along with the other features of translation technique, suggest a translation date around 500, perhaps shortly before or just after.

The best way to introduce the homilies textually is by way of M.-É. Boismard's theories[15]. I have found Boismard's edition to be very useful; it presents a more textually diverse picture than its predecessors have done, and is therefore more representative of the whole Greek tradition. Boismard maintains that the Greek Homilies on John underwent stages of compilation and revision. Specifically, a primitive 'short text' (itself a compilation) was expanded, then revised (and perhaps revised again)[16]. Two Greek manuscripts witness to 'the short text', whereas the remainder of the manuscripts and editions belong to 'the long text'. Boismard compared his collations of several Greek homilies with the Syriac text of B.L. 14,561. The presentation of the Syriac evidence is basically accurate, as far as it goes, although there are some errors[17], and the method of applying the evidence requires refinement[18]. As so often happens, two important

[14] The editions of Henry S. Savile (*Sancti Johannis Chrysostomi opera omnia*, 8 volumes (Eton, 1612-3)) and J.-P. Migne (*Patrologiae cursus completus, Series Graeca*, volume 59 (Paris, 1862)) provide helpful comparison texts, but Boismard's partial editions of several of the Homilies on John give much more evidence. Where extant, Boismard's text and apparatus provide 'the Greek' to which this study refers; everywhere else, we rely on Savile and Migne (the latter being a reprint of Theobald Fix's 1834 edition)).

[15] Boismard edits parts of Homilies 6, 16-23a, using 'short' and 'long' witnesses and employing the Syriac evidence (*Un évangile pré-johannique* 1.1). His edition of Homilies 8, 11-13 in the appendix of volume 1.1, and 23b-35 (*Un évangile pré-johannique* 2.1) use only the two 'short text' manuscripts and Migne's edition, and the catenae (John Anthony Cramer, *Catenae Graecorum patrum in Novum Testamentum*, 8 volumes (Oxford, 1844)), without reference to the Syriac.

[16] Boismard, *Un évangile pré-johannique*, 1.2, pp. 13-34.

[17] To document some examples just in Homily 22: the edition erroneously reports the omission of σκόπει(τε) δὲ (line 33, n. 18) and of τοῦτο (line 44, n. 16); it represents the Syriac as having the equivalent of δεικνύημεν rather than δεικνύητε, when in fact the Syriac form is clearly second person (line 6, n. 5).

[18] E.g. the Syriac is often cited as certain evidence where certainty is impossible. In a more technical vein, the Syriac evidence is regularly implied by the reference to *reliqui*, yet the Syriac is often not in agreement with the listed reading — sometimes in direct conflict — and no further explanation of the Syriac is provided.

factors have not been considered thoroughly enough: the limitations of Syriac in rendering Greek, and — especially in this case — the distinctive features of the translator's chosen style.

I agree with Boismard's assessment that the Syriac text has preserved some original readings, both in Biblical citations and in the homily text itself, readings which are corrupted in all the edited Greek witnesses; this is not surprising, in view of its age. I must also concur that the Syriac text generally agrees with witnesses belonging to Boismard's 'long text' (viz. the 'unrevised' form). However, the Syriac regularly goes its own way in small particularities — much more often than Boismard's edition would lead one to believe. Moreover, the Syriac often agrees with 'the short text', departing from 'the long'. Assuming the priority of 'the short text'[19], Boismard explains this apparent mixture by positing a Syriac tradition of multiple layers: an early Syriac translation of 'the short text', later augmented by another translator on the basis of the 'long' Greek text.

In response, it should first be noticed that the broader Syriac tradition makes no mention of two or more distinct translations[20], nor do the manuscripts have any but the single Syriac version of the Homilies on John. As evidence for his hypothesis, Boismard draws attention to some citations echoing the Old Syriac version of the Gospels in sections of the homilies supposed to derive from the earlier translation. In these five instances, actually involving only three scriptures, it is true that a translator has, in small ways, retained the wording of the Old Syriac against the Greek homily texts and the Peshitta[21]. In fact, I can add two more instances, from Homilies 23 and 62[22]. However, such a relatively tiny handful of distant echoes of the Old Syriac do not necessitate the identification of two separate translations. Practically all the citations within the material belonging to 'the short text' exhibit no such pattern: they tend to follow the Greek homily text, with very occasional accommodations to the Peshitta, a pattern repeated in 'long text' material. Measured according to translation style, the two supposedly distinct texts appear to be identical. When comparing Syriac translation styles and practices, particularly prior to the seventh century, a few slight exceptions are not sufficient to support a theory requiring distinct translations. If we are to believe that the necessary pattern no longer exists, save in faint and inconsistent echoes, only because of the normalizing hands of

[19] Indeed, the maxim, *lectio brevior, potior* has always been a defining characteristic of Boismard's methods.

[20] E.g. see 'Abdisho's notice in Joseph S. Assemani, ed., *Scriptorum ecclesiasticorum catalogus, Bibliotheca orientalis Clementino-Vaticanae*, volume 3, *de scriptoribus syris nestorianis* (Rome, 1725) pp. 24, 26, and the notice in *Chronicle of Seert* 1.67, in Addai Scher, ed., *Histoire Nestorienne (Chronique de Séert)*, *Patrologia Orientalis* 5 (Paris, 1910) p. 319.

[21] See Boismard, *Un évangile pré-johannique*, 1.2, pp. 30-1.

[22] In Homily 62, a citation of John 11:18; in Homily 23, where reference is made to 'the den of thieves' operating in the temple, the Syriac twice uses a term occurring only in the Old Syriac of Mark 11:17 (see parallels Matthew 21:13; Luke 19:46 (cf. John 2:16)).

a later translator, we are still bereft of solid evidence and must wonder where is the basis for a theory of multi-layer translation.

Boismard does in fact adduce other evidence, involving a paragraph of 'the long text' in Homily 16 which 'the short text' does not have[23]. The Syriac complicates the picture by including the paragraph, but shifts its position a few lines down — to Boismard, an indication that 'long text' material is merging into pre-existing Syriac 'short text' material, at the hands of a second translator who has slightly misplaced the paragraph. However, it is at least equally probable that the dislocation has actually occurred in the Greek tradition ultimately underlying the Syriac translation. Such errors occur, although no edited Greek manuscripts has just such a text of this particular homily. Still, postulating such a manuscript ranges no farther into the realm of the hypothetical than Boismard's explanation, perhaps less[24]. We might come to different conclusions, if such dislocations were typical, or even repeated, but it is not so. In only one other place amongst the homilies edited by Boismard[25] is a 'long text' paragraph of comparable length absent from 'the short text'[26]. The 'additions' of 'the long text' (or, omissions of 'the short text') are characteristically much shorter, consisting of words, brief phrases, sometimes a sentence. In any case, dislocations in the Syriac like that in Homily 16 occur nowhere else amongst the edited homilies.

Again, a different estimation of Boismard's theory might be required if the translation style of the dislocated paragraph were significantly different from that of 'short text' material. Boismard claims (indirectly) that it is, but his only indicator involves a minor variation in a citation of John 1:25: in 'short text' material, the Syriac renders τί οὖν with ܘܠܡܐ ('and why'), whereas within the paragraph in question the Syriac has ܠܡܐ ܗܝܟ ('why then'), in agreement with the Greek and the Peshitta (and the Old Syriac)[27]. This is taken to show that different translators are at work. Yet this conclusion takes no notice of the fact that this sort of 'discrepancy' between the Syriac and the Greek happens frequently in this translation, especially where conjuctions are concerned, and transitions involving τί are especially vulnerable to expansion and alteration[28].

[23] Boismard, *Un évangile pré-johannique*, 1.2, pp. 32-3.

[24] In fact, the break in the Syriac is not so abrupt as Boismard's edition leads us to believe: the Syriac completes its citation, not breaking off in the middle like the 'short' Greek text.

[25] It occurs in Homily 17 (see Boismard, *Un évangile pré-johannique*, 1.2, p. 66).

[26] In Syriac, the text amounts to approximately one column in the manuscript.

[27] The principle agreement is with the Greek homily text; agreement with the Peshitta (and Old Syriac) is coincidental.

[28] Boismard himself notices a similar occurrence elsewhere in Homily 16, where ܘܡܢܐ ('and what?') renders τί οὖν, although the phrase here also introduces a citation (*Évangile pré-johannique*, 1.2, p. 33). Other examples from passages without citations: in Homily 6, 'the short text' has *τί*, 'the long text' has τί οὖν, but the Syriac has ܘܡܢܐ ('and what?'); in the same homily, both texts have τί τοῦτο, which the Syriac expands into, ܡܢܐ ,ܡ ܗܘ : ܐܢܬ ܬܐܡܪ ܕܡܐ ('Perhaps you will say, "What is this?"'). Similar examples are to be found throughout the translation of the homilies.

As it happens, the paragraph's other features are entirely consistent — even in their inconsistencies — with the style of 'short text' material.

Therefore, I find no reason to consider the style of this paragraph, or any other of 'the long text's' additions, to be qualitatively different from that of 'short text' material. That is, although certainty in such matters is impossible, I find no persuasive evidence in support of the theory that two translations of the Syriac were made, or that the Syriac text consists of multiple layers. Instead, I would like to reiterate an axiom: before one can understand fully the significance of the text of a translation, one must take into account features of translation technique. This is true for Biblical versions as well as Patristic versions. It is true of homily material as well as Biblical citations, although the latter often warrant special treatment. When handling Biblical citations, the danger is to treat them as completely separate entities and to rely on the Greek Biblical text and the texts of Biblical versions for one's criteria of interpretation, ignoring important controls offered by the translation itself. One must not ignore individualistic patterns of a translation when estimating the significance of individual cases within it. This area of concern leads to the identification of similar problems facing anyone relying on Boismard's presentation of the Syriac evidence, problems which cannot be explored here.

If we cannot detect two layers of translation in the Syriac, it remains to explain how the Syriac can agree so frequently with 'the short text', while agreeing mainly with 'the long text', when the translation style in the two sets of material is the same. This is mainly a problem for those working with the Greek tradition, since there appears to be no reason to assume that any but a single type of Greek text, however mixed, underlies the Syriac translation. Those wanting to resolve these issues for the Greek tradition will need to make constant reference to the Syriac, but the relationship between these Greek text-types is largely an inner-Greek matter, concerning which Boismard has issued a comprehensive theory. Another belongs to P.W. Harkins, who concluded that 'the short text' is aberrant in character, not primitive[29]. For future interpreters (dare we hope, future editors?) of the tradition, it can only be said that the oldest extant evidence, the Syriac version, witnesses to a basically 'long' Greek text, with some 'short text' features, in the late fifth or early sixth century.

Thus, as with Chrysostom's other exegetical Homilies on the New Testament, the Syriac Homilies on John are important for understanding the Greek homily traditions. But their evidence must be employed in a way which respects the inner Syriac tradition and the distinctiveness of the translation styles.

[29] See n. 4.

The Protonike legend and the *Doctrina Addai*

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The Protonike legend is one of the three versions of the legend of the discovery of the True Cross. The other two are the Helena legend and the Judas Cyriacus legend. Each version is named after its principal person. All three versions originated and developed in the second half of the fourth and the first half of the fifth century[1]. Contrary to the Helena- and Cyriacus legends, which are both situated in the fourth century during the reign of Constantine the Great, the Protonike legend is set in the first century. It tells the story how Protonike, alleged to be the wife of the emperor Claudius, found the cross on which Christ had died.

The Protonike legend, as well as the Judas Cyriacus legend, is based on the Helena legend. The latter originated in the second half of the fourth century in Jerusalem and it relates how Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, found the Cross during her stay in Jerusalem[2]. However, unlike the Helena legend and also the Judas Cyriacus version, the Protonike legend is not known in Greek and Latin, but only in Syriac (and later on in Armenian). Since the only early references to the legend are in Syriac, we may safely assume that it was not known outside the Syriac-speaking areas[3]. The Protonike legend circulated in two alternative forms in these Syriac-speaking regions: as an independent story[4]

[1] For these versions of the legend, see J.W. Drijvers, *Helena Augusta. The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of her Finding of the True Cross* (Leiden, 1992).

[2] E.g. J. Straubinger, *Die Kreuzauffindungslegende. Untersuchungen über ihre altchristlichen Fassungen mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der syrischen Texte* (Paderborn, 1912), pp. 94ff.; Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, pp. 156-158; S. Heid, 'Zur frühen Protonike- und Kyriakoslegende', *AB* 19 (1991), pp. 73-108, 73.

[3] Heid, 'Zur frühen Protonike- und Kyriakoslegende', p. 79, thinks for reasons unclear that Socrates knew the legend: 'Sokrates ... kennt offensichtlich die Protonikelegende'.

[4] There are known in total nine mss. in Syriac which contain the (independent) Protonike story. For a list of these mss., see A. Desreumaux, *Histoire du roi Abgar et de Jésus. Présentation et traduction du texte syriaque intégral de La Doctrine d'Addaï* (Turnhout, 1993), pp. 47-48. The independent Protonike story includes in most mss. an additional paragraph where it is said that the cross found by Protonike was hidden again by the Jews in the time of the emperor Trajan. This addition is clearly meant to connect the Protonike story with the Judas Cyriacus version of the discovery of the Cross. The Cyriacus version was also known in Syriac. The Syriac texts of this version tell how the Cross was found for the second time — in the Syriac tradition the first discovery was made by Protonike — by the empress Helena with the help of the Jew, Judas. After the discovery Judas converted and adopted the name Cyriacus. See E. Nestle, *De Sancta Cruce* (Berlin, 1889).

and as part of the *Doctrina Addai*, the fictional legend about the foundation of the Edessene Church. The *Doctrina Addai* is set in the first century and relates how during the reign of King Abgar the apostle Addai came to Edessa and converted the whole city to Christianity. This should have happened shortly after Christ's crucifixion. There is still much that is unclear with regard to the development of the *Doctrina Addai*. It is generally assumed that the text gradually developed by adding and incorporating (elements of) stories and legends. The *Doctrina* had its origin at the end of the third century and gradually developed from then on. The incorporation of the Protonike legend is to be considered as part of the developing process of the *Doctrina*. The *Doctrina's* final redaction is to be dated around the year 500[5].

In this paper I should like to bring forward three points of discussion: how, why and when did the Protonike legend originate? Before attempting to answer these questions, a summary of the Protonike legend is probably helpful.

In brief, the story goes as follows. After having been converted in Rome by Simon Peter, Protonike, together with her daughter and two sons, travel to Jerusalem to search for the Cross. After she has ordered the Jews, who have control over Golgotha, to hand over the sacred places to James, the bishop of Jerusalem, she enters Christ's tomb. There she finds three crosses. The instant Protonike enters the tomb her daughter falls down and dies. The empress is thus able to identify the True Cross by placing it upon her daughter. After the touch of the first two crosses has no effect, the contact with the third cross, the cross on which Christ died, does the trick and the girl comes back to life at once. Protonike gives the True Cross to James to keep it in great honour, and she gives orders to build a church on the site of crucifixion and tomb. After Protonike has returned to Rome and related the things that have happened to the emperor Claudius, the latter gives orders that the Jews should be driven out from Italy[6].

There has been — and still is — discussion about the origin of the Protonike legend. But there is at least consensus among scholars that the legend came

[5] For the origin and development of the *Doctrina Addai*, see e.g. H.J.W. Drijvers, 'Abgarsage', in W. Schneemelcher (ed.), *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung*, Band 1, Evangelien (Tübingen, 1990), pp. 389-395; Desreumaux, *Histoire du roi Abgar et de Jésus*, p. 34. The earliest text of the Protonike legend can be found in the ms. Petersburg/Leningrad N.S. 4 of the *Doctrina Addai*, which ms. is to be dated to the end of the fifth century. The text in the Leningrad/Petersburg ms. is generally assumed to be the final redaction of the *Doctrina Addai*. The ms. was first published and translated by G. Phillips, *The Doctrine of Addai, the Apostle. Now First Edited in a Complete Form in the Original Syriac* (London, 1876). For a new English translation see G. Howard, *The Teaching of Addai* (Texts and Translations 16, Early Christian Literature Series 4; Chico, 1981). A French translation is offered by Desreumaux, *Histoire du roi Abgar et de Jésus*. The ms. is described by M. van Esbroeck, 'Le manuscrit syriaque nouvelle série 4 de Leningrad (V[e] siècle)', *Mélanges Antoine Guillaumont. Contributions à l'étude des christianismes orientaux* (Cahiers d'Orientalium XX; Geneva, 1988), pp. 211-219.

[6] *DA* f.7b-f.11a = Howard, *The Teaching of Addai*, pp. 21-33.

into being in Syria and that, in order to explain its creation, the original legend about Helena's finding of the Cross is to be presupposed[7]. The Protonike legend is therefore an adaptation of the Helena legend. There is, however, no *communis opinio* about exactly how the Protonike legend originated. Did the transformation of the Helena legend into the Protonike story take place independently, and was it only in a second stage added to the *Doctrina*[8]? Or was the Protonike legend constructed out of a desire to add the story about the discovery of the Cross to the *Doctrina Addai*[9]? It is hardly imaginable that the composition of the Protonike legend can be detached from the *Doctrina Addai*. The composers of the story had to make quite a 'tour de force' in adapting the story about Helena's discovery of the Cross in such a way as to situate the discovery in the first century. The story had, after all, to be adjusted to the circumstances of that century[10]. Furthermore, there are many similarities with respect to content between the legend and the *Doctrina Addai* (see below). For what reason could this be other than to make the legend part of the *Doctrina Addai*? It is hard to believe that the Helena legend was adapted to a first-century setting as known from the *Doctrina*, that the legend thenceforth circulated independently for some time and only then was added to the *Doctrina*. The conclusion, therefore, seems justified, that the Protonike story is a transformation of the traditions about the discovery of the Cross — the Helena legend — as known in the Syriac-speaking regions, so as to render these traditions suitable for incorporating into the *Doctrina*. From this it follows that the story about Protonike's discovery of the Cross started as part of the *Doctrina Addai*[11]; it was only later on that the legend was separated from the *Doctrina* and became an independently circulating story.

Why was the Protonike legend incorporated into the *Doctrina Addai*? At a first reading the Protonike legend seems to be a rather peculiar story in the

[7] M. van Esbroeck, 'Jean II de Jérusalem et les cultes de S. Étienne, de la Sainte-Sion et de la Croix', *AB* 102 (1984), pp. 99-134, has made the unlikely suggestion that the Protonike legend had its origin in Jerusalem during the episcopate of John II, bishop of Jerusalem (387-417). For a refutation of van Esbroeck's view, see Heid, 'Zur frühen Protonike- und Kyriakoslegende', pp. 74-76.

[8] E.g. R.A. Lipsius, *Die Edessenische Abgarsage* (Braunschweig, 1880), p. 69; A. Desreumaux, 'La Doctrine d'Addaï. Essai de classement des témoins syriaques et grecs', *Augustinianum* 23 (1983), pp. 181-186; Desreumaux, *Histoire de roi Abgar et de Jésus*, pp. 22-23.

[9] S. Borgehammer, *How the Holy Cross was Found. From Event to Medieval Legend* (Stockholm, 1991), pp. 74-75; Heid, 'Zur frühen Protonike- und Kyriakoslegende', p. 84, 89.

[10] See for the adjustments to first-century circumstances, Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, pp. 159-160.

[11] In constructing the Protonike legend use was made of already existing Syriac documents. The occurrence of Simon Peter in the legend is based on a (monophysite) work entitled *Doctrine of Simon Képha in the city of Rome*; see W. Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents* (Amsterdam, 1967[2]), pp. 35-41. The hiding of the Cross by the Jews is probably derived from the *Transitus Mariae* text; Cureton, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-111. See also A. Desreumaux, 'La *Doctrina Addai*: le chroniquer et ses documents', *Apocrypha. Le champ des apocryphes* 1 (1990), *La fable apocryphe* I, pp. 249-267, 263-264.

context of the *Doctrina*[12]. However, closer reading makes clear that the story fits perfectly well into the *Doctrina Addai*. Let me give some examples. The *Doctrina* is severely anti-Jewish. In this respect I only mention here the letter of King Abgar to the emperor Tiberius, in which he asks for an expedition against the Jews in Palestine to punish them for having murdered Christ[13]. Furthermore, the Protonike legend itself contains many anti-Jewish elements: the Jews are held responsible for hiding the Cross; they persecute the Christians; the Jews are expelled from Italy — to mention just a few[14]. Christian acts of healing are a central theme of the *Doctrina Addai*. Jesus is presented as the good physician whose ability to cure is so great that he can even raise the dead to life[15]. The apostle Addai likewise has healing powers: he cures King Abgar of a chronic disease, as well as many of his courtiers. This ability to heal, indeed, is the main reason why Abgar and many Edessenes converted. The healing theme is also a central theme in the Protonike legend[16]. The raising of Protonike's daughter from the dead (after she had suddenly died in Christ's tomb) by way of the touch of the Holy Wood, is the climax of the legend. Other similarities between the *Doctrina* and the legend concern the role of Simon Peter, who converted Protonike, and is also mentioned in the *Doctrina*[17]; the same goes for Tiberius' expedition against the Spaniards[18]. These similarities are an additional argument for the suggestion that the Protonike legend arose because of the need to incorporate it within the *Doctrina*. However, similarities alone are not a sufficient explanation for the incorporation. The explanation must be sought in the political and religious circumstances in the first decades of the fifth century in Edessa.

In the *Doctrina Addai* there are three cities which figure prominently: Rome, Jerusalem and, of course, Edessa. It is obvious that of these three cities

[12] In the last century Lipsius, *Edessenische Abgarsage*, 69, wrote: 'Es ist klar, dass das ganze Stück (the Protonike legend) mit den Acten des Thaddaeus nur in einem sehr äusserlichen Zusammenhang steht'.

[13] *DA* f.23b-f.24b = Howard, *The Teaching of Addai*, pp. 75-79.

[14] *DA* f.54a-f.54b, f.10b = Howard, *The Teaching of Addai*, pp. 21-25, 33. The original (Greek) Helena legend is not directed against the Jews. The later Latin versions of the Helena legend by Ambrosius, Paulinus of Nola and Sulpicius Severus do, however, contain anti-Jewish remarks; see Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, pp. 143-145. It is hard to establish whether the anti-Jewish elements in the Protonike legend are new and the result of the transformation of the original story, or whether the original story as it was known in the Syriac-speaking regions already exhibited anti-Jewish features.

[15] E. Segal, *Edessa. 'The Blessed City'* (Oxford, 1970), p. 71; Heid, 'Zur frühen Protonike- und Kyriakoslegende', p. 85; Desreumaux, 'La *Doctrina Addaï*', p. 258.

[16] According to Heid, 'Zur frühen Protonike- und Kyriakoslegende', p. 86, the legend's main theme is the miracle of the Cross; the discovery of the Holy Wood as such is less important than the (healing) power of the Cross.

[17] *DA* f.7b, f.10b, f.29a, f.33a = Howard, *The Teaching of Addai*, pp. 21, 33, 93, 105.

[18] *DA* f.7b, f.24b = Howard, *The Teaching of Addai*, pp. 21, 77-79. See also Heid, 'Zur frühen Protonike- und Kyriakoslegende', pp. 88-89.

Rome, being the centre of imperial power, is the most important. Jerusalem is presented as a Jewish city up to the moment when the Cross is found. As a consequence of that discovery, pagans and Jews convert, and Protonike orders a church to be built on Golgotha. The traditions of the finding of the Cross and the building of the church make Jerusalem one of the first and most important cities of Christendom. Since the Cross was alleged to have been found by the empress Helena, a direct relationship between Jerusalem and the imperial house was established[19]. Two of the principal objectives of the *Doctrina Addai* are: to present Edessa as the first Christian city ever, and to emphasize the good relations with the Roman government[20]. The *Doctrina Addai* shows Edessa's longing for a special position within the Christian world as well as for the protection of the Roman Emperor. It is not unlikely that Jerusalem, which, because of its unique position in the Christian world had the emperor's special attention and patronage, served as an example for Edessa, and that the story about the finding of the Cross was inserted into the *Doctrina* to underline Edessa's prominent position as a Christian city as well as to express the wish for a bond between Edessa and the imperial house[21]. Good relations with the imperial government were of particular importance for Edessa since Julian's fatal campaign against the Persians (363), as a result of which Edessa had come to border on the Persian empire.

There also must have been theological reasons for incorporating the story about the finding of the Cross into the *Doctrina Addai*. As the French scholar Desreumaux especially has made clear, monophysite ideas figure strongly in the *Doctrina Addai*[22]. The Protonike legend likewise bears the hallmark of monophysitism[23]. In transforming the legend of the discovery of the Cross into the Protonike legend, the original story must also have been adapted to advance monophysite ideas.

[19] See for this Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, pp. 135ff.

[20] The correspondence between Abgar and Tiberius — about what to do with the Jews, the murderers of Christ — is illustrative and shows the intention of the Edessene king to maintain good relations with the Roman emperor. The name of Abgar's mother, Augustina, may also express the Edessene wish for good relations with the imperial house. Augustina is a name that never occurs in Syriac but immediately brings to mind the imperial title of *Augusta*.

[21] See Desreumaux, 'La Doctrine d'Addaï, pp. 184-185; Heid, 'Zur frühen Protonike- und Kyriakoslegende', p. 93.

[22] A. Desreumaux, 'La doctrine d'Addaï, l'image du Christ et les monophysites', in F. Boespflug, N. Lossky (eds.), *Nicée II, 787-1987. Douze siècles d'images religieuses* (Paris, s.a.), pp. 73-79, 75ff.

[23] When her daughter has suddenly died, Protonike prays to God as follows: 'The God who gave himself to death for all people, being crucified in this place and laid in this tomb, and who as God gives life to all, arose and brought many to life with him…'. Several lines further Protonike says the following words: '… if this cross is yours, my Lord, and on it your humanity was hung … show the strong and mighty power of your divinity which dwells in the humanity…'. (*DA* f.8a, f.9a = Howard, *The Teaching of Addai*, pp. 25, 29).

This brings us to the last point of discussion. When did the Protonike legend become part of the *Doctrina*? It would be my suggestion that Rabbula, bishop of Edessa between 412 and 435, had a role in the origin of the Protonike story[24]. There is a clear link between Rabbula and Jerusalem, the city where the story about the discovery of the Cross arose. From his biography it is known that Rabbula after his conversion went to Jerusalem and prayed before Golgotha and visited Christ's tomb[25]. It is also known that Rabbula composed a hymn on the Cross[26]. Inclusion of the commemoration of the apparition of the Cross in Jerusalem on 7 May 351 into the Syriac lectionary, may also be ascribed to Rabbula[27]. It can be inferred from this that Rabbula must have known the legend of the finding of the Cross, with which he probably had become familiar in Jerusalem[28], and that he apparently had great veneration for the Cross as a Christian symbol. Rabbula, who was a monophysite, may have understood the power of the legend, in employing it in the theological conflict about the nature of Christ, as well as in using it in Christianity's competition with Judaism. The anti-Judaism of the Protonike legend and of the *Doctrina Addai* in general may be due to Rabbula's influence. If the biography of the bishop is to be believed, Rabbula managed to convert thousands of Jews to Christianity[29]. It is hardly imaginable that these conversions were brought about without coercion. The climate of the time was generally anti-Jewish and especially the Jews in Edessa may have gone through some hard times[30]. Rabbula's converting the synagogue in Edessa into a church dedicated to the protomartyr St. Stephen — who had been stoned to death by Jews (Acts 7:58-59) — may serve as an indication of this[31]. Furthermore, the monophysite features of the legend, as perhaps of the complete *Doctrina*, are probably also Rabbula's work[32]. He was a great opponent of the Nestorians and (in the beginning of the 430s) and ardent supporter of Cyril of Alexandria[33]. He supported Cyril at the Council of Ephesus (431) and corresponded with him about matters of the faith. Rabbula may also have understood what formidable power the legend could have in advancing the status of Edessa as a Christian city and in establishing a link with the imperial government.

A few remarks by way of conclusion. Since the Protonike legend makes sense only in the context of the *Doctrina Addai*, the legend must be seen as beginning as part of the *Doctrina*, and it was only later separated therefrom. The legend was inserted into the *Doctrina* to advance the status of Edessa as a Christian city, to establish a link between Edessa and the imperial house, and also to promote monophysite and anti-Jewish ideas. As to the date of origin of the Protonike legend, it seems likely that the legend arose in Edessa during the episcopate of Rabbula, and that this bishop himself had a hand in constructing the story and incorporating it into the *Doctrina Addai*.

[24] For Rabbula, see P. Peeters, 'La vie de Rabboula, évêque d'Édesse', *Mélanges de Grandmaison* (*Recherches de science religieuse* 18; 1928), pp. 170-201; G.G. Blum, *Rabbula von Edessa. Der Christ, der Bischof, der Theologe* (Louvain, 1969).

[25] J.J. Overbeck, *S. Ephraemi Syri, Rabulae Episcopi Edesseni, Balaei aliorumque opera selecta* (Oxonii, 1865), p. 164 *l.* 23 - p. 165 *l.* 4; German translation in G. Bickell, *Ausgewählte Schriften der syrischen Kirchenväter Aphraates, Rabulas und Isaak von Ninive* (Kempten, 1874), p. 171.

[26] Bickell, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, p. 271.

[27] B.C. Burkitt, 'The early Syriac lectionary system', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 11 (1921-1923), pp. 301-338, 323-324. It may even be that in Rabbula's time the letter of Cyril of Jerusalem to Constantius II about the apparition of the celestial Cross in Jerusalem on 7 May 351, was translated into Syriac. For a Syriac edition of this letter, see J.F. Coakley, 'A Syriac version of the Letter of Cyril of Jerusalem on the Vision of the Cross', *AB* 102 (1984), pp. 71-84.

[28] In the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem the Cross was venerated from at least the middle of the fourth century on; for the veneration and cult of the Cross, see e.g. Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, 81ff.

[29] Overbeck, *S. Ephraemi Syri, Rabulae Episcopi Edesseni ... opera selecta*, p. 193 *ll.* 10-11; Bickell, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, p. 196.

[30] Illustrative in this respect is that Rabbula in his efforts to win heretics for the orthodox faith resorted to violence, like ravaging the heretics' churches; Overbeck, *S. Ephraemi Syri, Rabulae Episcopi Edesseni ... Opera selecta*, p. 193 *l.* 14 - p. 194 *l.* 18; Bickell, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, pp. 196-198.

[31] *Chronicum Edessenum*, ed. I. Guidi, *Chronica Minora* I, CSCO Syr. 1 (Louvain, 1903), p. 6, sub LI. The relics of Stephen had been discovered in 415; see gen. E.D. Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire AD 312-460* (Oxford, 1982), p. 212ff.

[32] It is not unlikely that the *Doctrina Addai* as well as the Protonike legend acquired their monophysite features in the same period.

[33] See Peeters, 'La vie de Rabboula', p. 156ff.; Blum, *Rabbula von Edessa, passim*.

Ephraem von Antiochien und sein Neuchalcedonismus

Theresia HAINTHALER, Frankfurt

Der Syrer Ephraem[1] (der gleichwohl die griechische Sprache gut beherrschte) ist zweifellos die prägende Gestalt des antiochenischen Patriarchats in der ersten Hälfte des 6. Jh. auf der chalcedonischen Seite. Nachdem Patriarch Euphrasius am 29. Mai 526 bei einem Erdbeben in Antiochien starb, wurde der *comes Orientis* Ephraem, dessen Geschicklichkeit und Integrität selbst seine Gegner zugeben[2], zum Nachfolger eingesetzt und blieb es für 18 Jahre. Charakteristisch ist für ihn sowohl eine tatkräftige kirchenpolitische Aktivität[3] als auch ein ziemlich umfangreiches theologischen Wirken[4].

Photius lagen drei Bände mit Schriften von Ephraem vor: der erste Band (cod. 228) mit Briefen und Predigten, der zweite (cod. 229) enthielt vier Traktate, immer über christologische Fragen; der dritte Band wird von Photius leider nicht weiter analysiert. Erhalten sind uns Fragmente, von denen hier besonders erwähnt seien: die Fragmente einer Apologie Chalcedons und des Tomus Leonis (CPG 6902), von 12 orthodoxen Capita (CPG 6907), und ferner einer Definitionensammlung (CPG 6906); damit scheint Ephraem zumindest einer der ersten Vertreter dieser letztgenannten literarischen Gattung zu sein[5].

Nach einer ersten Lektüre seiner Schriften kann man seine christologische Position meines Erachtens so umschreiben[6]: als Cyrillianer ist er ein Apologet der Zwei-Naturen-Lehre, des Tomus Leonis und Chalcedons. Daß Cyrill für ihn die große Referenz darstellt, kommt immer wieder zum Ausdruck; so

[1] Photius, *Bibl.* cod. 228: Henry IV, S. 114,21-22, berichtet, Ephraem sei Syrer der Herkunft und der Sprache nach.

[2] Zacharias Rhetor Cont., *HE* VIII 4: 'rechtschaffen in seinen Werken, nicht begierig nach Bestechung, weise und erfolgreich'.

[3] Insbesondere: 535 die Alarmierung von Papst Agapet, als der antichalcedonische 'Dreierbund' Anthimus von Konstantinopel, Severus von Antiochien und Theodosius von Alexandrien übermächtig zu werden drohte; 536/7 die Verfolgung der Antichalcedonier im Osten von Antiochien; ab 540 das Vorgehen gegen die Origenisten. Vgl. A. Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche* 2/2. Unter Mitarbeit von T. Hainthaler (Freiburg i. B., 1989), S. 361, 363-367, 407-408.

[4] CPG 6902-6909.

[5] Vgl. A. Grillmeier, *Jesus d. Christus* 2/1 (Freiburg, ²1991), S. 96, mit K.-H. Uthemann, *JÖB* 30 (1981), S. 107, Anm. 12.

[6] Die christologische Position Ephraems wird ausführlich im entsprechenden Kapitel zu Ephraem in Band 2/3 von *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche* (in Vorbereitung) dargestellt werden.

zählte Richard Zitate aus 30 Schriften von Cyrill[7]. Mit Recht wies Ephraem gegen orientalische Mönche auch auf den cyrillischen Ursprung der vv. 19 (der Unterschied der Naturen wird durch die Einung nicht aufgehoben) und 21 (Zusammenkommen der zwei Naturen in einem Prosopen oder einer Hypostasis) der Definition von Chalcedon hin.

Im Unterschied zu seinem antichalcedonischen Konkurrenten Severus von Antiochien (der übrigens noch über 10 Jahre während des Patriarchats von Ephraem im Exil in Ägypten lebte), setzt sich der antiochenische Patriarch klar und unmißverständlich für die *zwei Naturen* ein, worin er sich auch durch Cyrill unterstützt glaubt. Das ist insofern bemerkenswert, als ja Severus, ebenfalls auf die Autorität Cyrills gestützt, vehement jede Zweiheit ablehnte[8].

Ein weiteres Characteristicum von Ephraems Christologie ist die Bereitschaft, die Definition von Chalcedon und den Tomus Leos immer wieder zu verteidigen[9]. Sein Anliegen ist es, die Übereinstimmung von Chalcedon und Leo mit Cyrill und den Vätern aufzuweisen[10].

Ephraem versteht sich also zweifellos als entschiedener Chalcedonier, aber auch als Cyrillianer. Und die Mia-Physis-Formel, die Cyrill in seine Theologie aufnahm im Glauben, sie sei von seinem Vorgänger Athanasius, anstatt ihren apolinaristischen Ursprung zu erkennen, will nun Ephraem durchaus auch in seinen Ansatz mit aufnehmen. Er hat darin Vorgänger, insbesondere Johannes Grammaticus, den chalcedonischen Opponenten des Severus von Antiochien[11]. Während aber Johannes im simultanen Bekenntnis zur Mia-Physis-Formel und zur Zwei-Naturen-Lehre ein Kennzeichen der Orthodoxie sieht, geht Ephraem nicht so weit. Für ihn ist die Mia-Physis-Formel wohl eine Hilfe gegen Häresien — gemeint ist Nestorius; in diesem Sinn drückt er sich an zwei Stellen aus: im 1. Anathematismus der orthodoxen Capita[12], sowie in einem Brief an den Bischof Magnus von Beroea. Aber in der letztgenannten Schrift gibt er auch die Begründung — nach Photius:

[7] M. Richard, 'Les florilèges diphysites du V^e et du VI^e siècle', in: *Chalkedon* I (1952) (721-748) = *Op. Min.* I, Nr. 3, S. 738.

[8] Vgl. A. Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus* 2/2 (1989), S. 77-79 u.ö.

[9] Eine eingehende Auseinandersetzung mit Angriffen gegen den Tomus Leonis findet sich in dem Brief an die orientalischen Mönche (Photius, *Bibl.* cod. 229, Henry IV, S. 159-174). — Mit Recht stellt P.T.R. Gray, *The Defense of Chalcedon in the East (451-553)* (Leiden, 1979), S. 142 fest: '... Ephrem's constant theme was the defense of Chalcedon, and with it of Leo's Tome'.

[10] In *Ad monach. orient.*: Photius, *Bibl.* cod. 229, Henry IV, S. 163, ist die Übereinstimmung Chalcedons mit Cyrill z.B. besonders deutlich formuliert.

[11] Vgl. A. Grillmeier, *Jesus d. Christus* 2/2, S. 70-74.

[12] Capita xii (*CPG* 6907), ed. S. Helmer, *Der Neuchalkedonismus* (Diss. Bonn 1962), S. 263,2-5: 'Wenn einer also nicht mit Seele und Mund die eine fleischgewordene Natur des Gott-Logos gegen Nestorius bekennt, der die Naturen nach der Einung voneinander trennt, der sei anathema'. Εἴ τις τοίνυν οὐκ ὁμολογεῖ ψυχῇ καὶ στόματι μίαν φύσιν τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένην, κατὰ Νεστορίου τοῦ διαιροῦντος ἀπ' ἀλλήλων τὰς φύσεις μετὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.

'So bekämpfen die (Formeln von der) "Einung in zwei Naturen der Hypostase nach" und "die eine fleischgewordene Natur des Logos" die ihnen entgegengesetzten Meinungen, ohne daß die Formeln einander bekämpfen.
(Begründung:) Die eine fleischgewordene Natur des Logos wird weder ausgesagt zur Aufhebung des Unterschieds der Naturen, noch führt die in zwei Naturen erkannte Einung der Hypostase nach eine Trennung der Naturen voneinander ein; so ist die Einung der zwei Naturen eine Bekräftigung der einen unvermischten fleischgewordenen *Hypostase* des Logos und des ungetrennten Unterschieds, der verkündet wird'[13].

Ephraem spürt also das Problem, das darin liegt, zwei Formeln zu gebrauchen, die sich anscheinend widersprechen. Er formuliert hier bereits die cyrillisch aufgebesserte Zwei-Naturen-Lehre: 'die in zwei Naturen erkannte Einung der Hypostase nach'. Und im weiteren ersetzt er sofort die 'physis' in der Mia-Physis-Formel durch Hypostasis. Diese Ersetzung nimmt er mehrfach vor. Für ihn ist die Mia-Physis-Formel eigentlich eine Mia-Hypostasis-Formel, und die Hypostase dabei ist die eine Hypostase in der Definition Chalcedons. Das ist also eine Weise für einen Chalcedonier, die Mia-Physis-Formel zu akzeptieren. Die andere, in der Formel die zwei Naturen ausgedrückt zu sehen (also im sesarkomene die menschliche Natur), findet sich bei ihm so direkt nicht; die Mia-Physis-Formel lehrt aber den Unterschied der Naturen[14].

Der Begriff des Neuchalcedonismus ist 1909 von Lebon geschaffen worden[15]. Er wollte damit eine Gruppe von Theologen kennzeichnen, die die Lehre des Konzils von Chalcedon zu verteidigen suchten unter Berufung auf das Schrifttum des Cyrill von Alexandrien und indem sie mit Hilfe der Philosophie eine wissenschaftliche Inkarnationslehre aufbauten. Diese Umschreibung einer theologischen Richtung ist später insbesondere durch Moeller und Richard präzisiert worden. Mit A. Grillmeier[16] wird darunter eine Recyrillianisierung Chalcedons verstanden, wobei man unterscheiden kann zwischen einem integralen und einem gemäßigten Neuchalcedonismus.

Der integrale Neuchalcedonismus fordert zur Orthodoxie den simultanen Gebrauch beider Formel-Systeme: den der Mia-Physis-Formel gegen Nestorianismus, den der Zwei-Naturen-Formel gegen Eutychianismus.

Der gemäßigte Neuchalcedonismus sucht die Sprache Chalcedons aufzufüllen durch cyrillische Termini besonders aus den 12 Anathematismen Cyrills. Am Beispiel des justinianischen Dekrets von 551 lassen sich zu solchen Elementen zählen: a) die Unterscheidung (der Naturen) (nur) der Theoria nach (ἐν θεωρίᾳ μόνῃ); b) der gleichzeitige Gebrauch von 'aus zwei' und 'in

[13] Ep. ad Magnum Berroeensem: Photius, *Bibl.* cod. 228, Henry IV, S. 124,37-125,3.
[14] *Apologia conc. Chalc.*, Photius, *Bibl.* cod. 229, S. 153, mit Verweis auf den 2. Succensus-Brief von Cyrill.
[15] J. Lebon, *Le monophysisme sévérien* (Louvain, 1909), S. 522.
[16] A. Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche* 2/2. Unter Mitarbeit von T. Hainthaler (Freiburg i.B., 1989), S. 450-457; engl.: *Christ in Christian Tradition* 2/2 (London, 1995), S. 429-436.

zwei'; c) die Bezeichnung von Christus als *synthetos*; d) die Wendung von der 'Einung der Hypostase nach' und e) das 'unus de sancta trinitate'.

Bei Ephraem nun finden wir von den zuletzt genannten neuchalcedonischen Elementen nicht: a) die Unterscheidung der Naturen nur der Theoria nach. Er bleibt hier streng bei der chalcedonischen Unterscheidung und Erkennbarkeit (*gnorizomenon*). b) Das 'aus zwei' gebraucht er nach Photius zurückhaltend, die Formel 'in zwei' bringt er hingegen häufig; in den 12 orthodoxen Capita jedoch kommt das 'aus zwei' überwiegend vor.

Wir finden aber bei Ephraem, daß er c) Christus als *synthetos* bezeichnet und dies mit Berufung auf Ps.-Dionys[17]: der 'einfache Christus ist zusammengesetzt' und zwar in seiner Hypostase, nicht etwa in seiner Ousia. Die eine Hypostase ist zusammengesetzt. d) Die 'Einung der Hypostase nach' kombiniert Ephraem sehr oft mit der Zwei-Naturen-Formel und versteht dies dann als Kerygma Chalcedons.

Ausdrücklich nimmt er den Cyrill der 12 Anathematismen auf. In der theopaschitischen Frage tritt er klar für das *passus carne* ein, wobei er betont, daß nie die Gottheit leiden könne. Vom 'einen der heiligen Trinität' sagt er die Fleisch- und Menschwerdung aus, aber nicht das Leiden. Den theopaschitischen Zusatz beim Trishagion hat er für richtig erklärt, falls man das Trishagion auf Christus beziehe, hingegen als falsch, falls man es auf die ganze Trinität bezieht[18]. Moeller hat ihm dafür wohl mit Recht 'gesunden Menschenverstand' attestiert[19].

Die Position Ephraems sei nun an drei Texten weiter erläutert. Das Problem des Neuchalcedonismus, zwei verschiedene Formelsysteme zu verwenden, die eigentlich nicht miteinander zu vereinen sind, bzw. die Aufgabe, die Begriffe Natur und Hypostase genau zu definieren, wird von Ephraem anscheinend erkannt. Sein Vermittlungsversuch lautet (nach Photius) so: Ausgangspunkt ist die basilianische Terminologie, wonach *physis, genos* und *ousia* das Allgemeine (*koinon*) bezeichnen, *hypostasis* und *prosopon* hingegen das Einzelne (*idikon*). Man kann *physis* für *ousia* lesen und umgekehrt, aber nur ungenau/mißbräuchlich (καταχρηστικῶς) *physis* statt *hypostasis*. Dabei müsse jedoch 'der Denkart der Frömmigkeit' (πρὸς τὴν τῆς εὐσεβείας διάνοιαν) gemäß vorgegangen werden und nicht so, wie die Häretiker wollen! Nun heißt es:

'Wenn die Rede über ein Prosopon und den vollendeten (realisierten) Einen geht, dann muß man den Namen Natur für *hypostasis* nehmen, wenn aber über die Naturen, aus denen der eine Christus vollendet ist, dann muß man die Rede von der Natur verstehen von der eigentlichen Natur und Ousia'[20].

[17] *Apol. conc. Chalc.*, S. 144,20-21: ἁπλοῦς Ἰησοῦς συνετέθη (= cit. *Div. nom.* I 4) κατὰ τὸν ἐν ἁγίοις Ἀρεοπαγίτην Διονύσιον.
[18] Ep. ad Zenobium: Photius, *Bibl.* cod. 228, Henry IV, S. 115-116.
[19] Ch. Moeller, *Chalkedon* I, S. 682: 'cette vue de simple bon sens'.
[20] Apol. Cyrill. ep. II Succ.: Photius, *Bibl.* cod. 229, Henry, S. 133,22-27: Καὶ εἰ μὲν ἐπὶ προσώπου λέγεται ἡ φωνὴ καὶ τοῦ ἀποτελεσθέντος ἑνός, ἀντὶ ὑποστάσεως δεῖ παραδέχεσθαι τὸ τῆς φύσεως ὄνομα, εἰ δὲ περὶ τῶν ἐξ ὧν ἀπετελέσθη φύσεων ὁ εἷς Χριστός, τότε τὴν φωνὴν τῆς φύσεως ἀντὶ τῆς κυρίας φύσεως καὶ τῆς οὐσίας νοεῖν.

Wenn man also das *apotelesma* des einen Christus betrachtet, dann darf man von ihm auch als Natur reden; wenn man aber die geeinten Naturen betrachtet, dann handelt es sich um die beiden Naturen (im Sinne von *ousiai*) Gottheit und Menschheit, und man muß wohl mithören: es sind keine Hypostasen. Mir scheint, daß Ephraem hier — vielleicht etwas verlegen, wissend um die seiner Ansicht nach ungenaue Ausdrucksweise Cyrills, die aber doch hilfreich sein kann gegen die Häretiker (gemeint sind die Nestorianer) — für eine wohlwollende Interpretation plädiert.

Ephraem bringt auch einen Versuch, *enhypostatos* zu umschreiben[21]:

'Enhypostatos ist das, was sich in der Hypostase niederläßt (Gray: was in Hypostase vorgefunden wird), wie Größe oder weiße Farbe oder Vaterschaft oder wiederum das eigentlich Seiende und das was nicht nur ausgedacht in Existenz/Wirklichkeit (hyparxis) erkannt wird. Das Fleisch des Gott-Logos nennen wir nicht Hypostase, denn es existiert nicht für sich wie jede bloße Hypostase. Wiederum nennen wir sie nicht anhypostaton, welches ja das Nichtseiende (anyparkton) bedeutet, deshalb bestimmen wir diese Natur als enhypostatos oder enyparktos und enousios'.

Deutlich ist hier das Bemühen, aufzuweisen, daß die Sarx Christi nicht *anhypostatos* ist, weil das heißen würde, sie habe keine Existenz, sondern *enhypostatos* (in einer Hypostase) oder in einer Ousia. Sie ist also wirklich und in einem Seienden. Meines Erachtens liegt hier eine Nähe zu einer Formulierung in der Schrift Epilysis (PG 86, 1945BC) von Leontius von Byzanz vor, vielleicht sogar im Sinn einer Abhängigkeit[22]. Es handelt sich dabei gerade um jene Stelle bei Leontius, in der er sich nach A. Grillmeier[23] 'intensiv darum bemüht, Natur und Hypostase sprachlich und begrifflich voneinander abzuheben, um den chalcedonischen Weg rechtfertigen zu können'.

[21] *Ad Acac. philos. et presbyt. Apamaeens.* Cap. xii (*CPG* 6906), ed. Helmer, 272: Ἐνυπόστατόν ἐστιν τὸ ἐν τῇ ὑποστάσει καθιδρυμένον οἷον μακρότης ἢ λευκότης ἢ πατρότης ἢ πάλιν τὸ κυρίως ὂν καὶ ἀφαντάστως ἐν ὑπάρξει γνωριζόμενον. Τὴν μέντοι τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σάρκα οὐχ ὑπόστασιν λέγομεν, οὐ γὰρ καθ' ἑαυτὴν ὑπέστη ὡς πᾶσα ψιλὴ ὑπόστασις. Οὔτε πάλιν αὐτὴν φαμεν ἀνυπόστατον ὅπερ σημαίνει τὸ ἀνύπαρκτον, διόπερ αὐτὴν φύσιν ὁρίζομεν ἐνυπόστατον ἤγουν ἐνύπαρκτόν τε καὶ ἐνούσιον.

[22] Ephraem nennt als Beispiele für enhypostata: Größe, weiße Farbe, Vaterschaft; Leontius von Byzanz sagt entsprechend, daß eine Hypostase charakterisiert wird (χαρακτηρίζει) durch μέγεθος, χρῶμα, γονεῖς, nennt aber darüberhinaus Form, Zeit, Ort, Erziehung, Unterricht. Wenn Abhängigkeit vorliegt, dann ist Ephraem von Leontius abhängig; es könnte sich hier aber einfach auch um gängige Beispiele handeln. Die umgekehrte Annahme einer liter. Abhängigkeit des Leontius von Ephraem ist bekanntlich aufgestellt worden von J.P. Junglas, *Leontius von Byzanz. Studien zu seinen Schriften, Quellen und Anschauungen* (FCLDG 7,3; Paderborn, 1908), S. 49 und 53f. J. Lebon, 'Ephrem d'Amid, patriarche d'Antioche (526-544)', in: *Mél. d'histoire off. à Ch. Moeller* I (Louvain, Paris, 1914), S. 213, wies diese Annahme umgehend ab mit dem Hinweis, daß beide unabhängig voneinander aus den gleichen Quellen schöpfen konnten. Auch M. Richard (*Op. Min.* I, Nr. 3, S. 731) sah in der Annahme Junglas' keine Lösung.

[23] A. Grillmeier, *Jesus d. Christus* 2/2, S. 202.

Schließlich sei noch ein Text von Ephraem aus den Testimonien orthodoxer Väter auf dem Konzil von Konstantinopel III (681) angeführt, eine Erklärung des Seewandels (man fühlt sich sofort an Ps.-Dionys, ep. 4 erinnert):

'Das über das Meer gehen, dies war möglich der Gottheit, wirkend durch das menschliche Fleisch. Wenn wir also sagen würden, daß im bloßen Fleisch die Energie des Geschehenen geschehen ist, wäre die Überlegung unsinnig. Ebenso auch wenn wir der bloßen Gottheit das Gehen zuschreiben, von ihr den Marsch behaupten und das Gehen bekennen würden. Nun aber bekennen wir, daß der fleischgewordene Gott-Logos solche Energie bewirkt hatte und sagen entsprechend, daß das eine gemäß der Physis des Fleisches geschehen ist, das andere aber durch die übernatürliche Physis der Gottheit. Daher (sehen wir) auch darin zwei Energeiai'[24].

Im Text des Fragments insgesamt zeigen sich zwei Anliegen Ephraems: zum einen die Betonung, daß der Gott-Logos nach der Menschwerdung immer mit seinem menschlichen Fleisch verbunden war. Es gibt kein von der Gottheit getrenntes Wirken des Fleisches. Zum andern unterstreicht Ephraem, daß die Eigenschaften der menschlichen Sarx vollkommen erhalten sind. Christus wirkte das Übernatürliche in seiner menschlichen Natur und zerstörte nicht das Menschliche. Das Gehen über das Wasser nun wirkte der Gott-Logos durch sein menschliches Fleisch. So sieht Ephraem zwei *energeiai*, die der menschlichen Physis und die der übernatürlichen Physis der Gottheit. Deutlich ist ihm, daß es ein Subjekt ist, (das die gesamte Tätigkeit bewirkt), aber zwei Energien. Severus, dem entschiedenen Verfechter der *mia energeia*, wäre ein solches Denken völlig unverständlich gewesen.

Der Text ist aus dem Geist des Tomus Leonis heraus geschrieben und eine Illustration des *agit enim utraque forma cum alterius communione quod proprium est* (v. 94).

Nicht zuletzt hier, aber auch wenn er unentwegt die beiden Naturen unterscheidet, nicht bloß der Theoria nach, sondern ihre ontologische Differenz aufrechterhält, erweist sich Ephraem trotz allem als Antiochener. In seiner Sicht handelt es sich nicht um die Idee, zwei Systeme zu verbinden, sondern er sieht gar keinen Gegensatz: Die eine Hypostasis der Definition von Chalcedon ist die eine Hypostasis des fleischgewordenen Gott-Logos. Er will nicht zwei Systeme gebrauchen, sondern nur das eine von Chalcedon, das mit Cyrill und den Vätern ein einziges bildet. Die Notwendigkeit der Arbeit am Begriff ist ihm deutlich, aber die eigentliche Durchführung dieses Programms bleibt anderen überlassen.

[24] *Apologia conc. Chalced.* (*CPG* 6902) (fragm.), PG 86, 2105B: τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης πεζεύειν, τοῦτο τῆς θεότητος ὑπῆρχε διὰ σαρκὸς ἀνθρωπίνης ἐνεργούσης. Εἰ μὲν οὖν γυμνῇ τῇ σαρκὶ τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἐλέγομεν γίνεσθαι τοῦ γεγονότος, ἄπορος ἦν ὁ λογισμός· καθάπερ καὶ εἰ μόνῃ τῇ θεότητι βαδίζειν ἀνετίθεμεν, πορείαν ὑποτιθέμενοι, καὶ πεζεύειν ὁμολογοῦντες. Νῦν δὲ σεσαρκωμένον Θεὸν Λόγον ἐνηργηκέναι τὴν τοιαύτην ἐνέργειαν ὁμολογοῦντες, τὸ μὲν ἀκολούθως φαμὲν πρὸς τὴν τῆς σαρκὸς γεγενῆσθαι φύσιν· τὰ δὲ διὰ τὴν τῆς θεότητος ὑπερφυᾶ φυσιν· ὥστε καὶ ἐνταῦθα δύο ἐνεργείας.

The Soul's Sorrow in Syrian Patristic Thought

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This paper explores the treatment of πένθος by St. Isaac the Syrian, and seeks to place the notion within the context of Syrian religious anthropology. Isaac's *Homilies*[1] provide an enormous reservoir of ideas and experiences of πένθος, the tears which flow from the penitent grief of the spiritual athlete[2]. The concept is treated in at least 40 of the 80 plus homilies. However, Sebastian Brock's translation of chs. IV-XLI of Isaac's *Second Part*[3] provides more specific illumination on the subject, since in ch. XVIII Isaac himself defines the causes of such tears. This provides, as we shall see, the appropriate focus for Isaac's teachings on the subject.

Isaac offers ambiguous clues as to his dates and identity. He claims to be writing his homilies when the demons were six thousand years old[4]. According to the Byzantine calendar, this would give a date of c.492[5]. However, internal evidence suggests he was born around 613 A.D., and became bishop of Nineveh around the second half of the 7th century. After only 5 months in office, he begged to be released back into solitude. He fell asleep at the beginning of the 8th century. This basic structure of the Vita is founded on two contemporary biographical accounts[6], although their use needs caution, as is normal when dealing with hagiography.

[1] The two available complete translations are: (I) *Mystic Treatises by Isaac of Nineveh*, tr. from Bedjan's Syriac text by A.J. Wensinck; Wiesbaden, 1923 (republished 1969). All quotations are from this translation.

(II) *The Ascetical Homilies of St. Isaac the Syrian*, tr. Holy Transfiguration Monastery (Boston, Massachusetts, 1984).

[2] The Greek πένθος is expressed in Isaac's writings by several words, namely repentance, compunction, weeping, mourning. The Syriac ܐܒܠܘܬܐ, includes these concepts.

[3] *Isaac of Nineveh* 'The Second Part' ch. IV-XLI, tr. S.P. Brock (CSCO 554-5, Scriptores Syri 224-5; 1995). I first encountered the passage in ch. XVIII in Maggie Ross, *The Fountain and the Furnace: the way of tears and fire* (New York, 1987). The text is quoted by kind permission of Dr. Brock.

[4] Homily LIII, Wensinck p. 257, Bedjan p. 384.

[5] *Ascetical Homilies* p. lxiii. This date, according to the translator, is at odds with the customary date of Christ's birth. Discussion of the hypothesis over the next few pages suggests the alternative date of 613.

[6] The extant autobiographies can be found in (I) *Le Livre de la Chasteté*, by Isho'denah, ed. J.B. Chabot, in *Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire* 16 (1896), pp. 63-64 (277-8) and (II) *Studia Syriaca* I, ed. I. Rahmani (Beirut, 1904), p. 33 (32-33).

The homilies and other writings which form Isaac's written legacy are characterized by an intense awareness of the mystical dialogue between God and the man Isaac. They reveal a person far advanced on his spiritual journey, yet simultaneously full of insight into his condition as fallen and tempted. To describe this state as the condition of sinfulness would be to misinterpret the very concrete nature of Syriac, in which, as in other Semitic tongues, abstract concepts do not readily find expression.

In Isaac's writings we find an understanding of humanity which is rooted in the physicality of אָדָם man, earth. Wensinck is keen to argue much evidence of Platonic dualism in Isaac[7]. Certainly, we cannot afford to ignore the Hellenized nature of Syriac society in the 7th and 8th centuries. But while Isaac exhorts us to subjugate the body and its importunate demands on us, he is well aware that our communications with God must involve our bodies and cannot be a discretely spiritual experience[8]. Πένθος, the freely flowing tears which, he teaches, must accompany pure prayer[9], and which indeed characterize the spiritually mature[10], is, for him, a graphic example of the need to integrate soul, spirit and body when articulating the intercourse between man and God. This is an imperative for Isaac: 'Every prayer, in which the body does not participate and by which the heart is not affected, is to be reckoned as an abortion without a soul'[11].

For Isaac, it is not our initiative, but God's, that involves materiality in the spiritual journey, as attested by ch. XI of the *Second Book*: 'Blessed is God who uses corporeal objects continually to draw us close in a symbolic way to a knowledge of His invisible (nature), sowing and marking out in our minds the recollection of His care for us'[12].

Furthermore, it is the process of repentance and compunction, expressed by tears, which, in Isaac's teachings, defines the very identity of the monk. He is ܐܒܝܠܐ (abila), the mourner, as much as he is the solitary one[13].

In his *Homilies*, the many references to repentance and mourning can easily be woven together by the interpreter to produce a veritable mystical theology of πένθος. This gives us a schema which includes the primacy of repentance among the virtues, the relationship between body, soul and spirit in expressing

[7] Pp. XLVIIff. Wensinck here is concerned with similarities between Isaac and Philo.

[8] *Homily* LXV, Wensinck pp. 298/9, Bedjan pp. 444-6, includes a section on the interdependence of the emotional life and that of the body.

[9] Note especially Homily XXII, Wensinck pp. 112/3, Bedjan pp. 165-7: 'Lamentations and selfhumiliations and beseechings and inner supplications and sweet tears, and all other habits which prayer possesses, — as I have said: their boundary and the domain within which they are set into motion is pure prayer'.

[10] Note Homily XIV, Wensinck p. 85, Bedjan p. 125: 'do not think that in behaviour thou hast reached anything till tears come forth … When thou hast reached the place of tears, then understand that the spirit has left the prison of this world and set its foot on the way towards the new world'.

[11] Homily XVIII, Wensinck p. 98, Bedjan p. 144.

[12] Section 31, Brock p. 62.

[13] Homily VI, Wensinck p. 57, Bedjan p. 83.

compunction, the role of tears in pure prayer, the need for us to suffer in order to receive consolation.

But if we concentrate instead on the much briefer but more focused text in chapter XVIII of the *Second Part* (sections 4-21), we find that Isaac has already done the systematic weaving himself.

There are, he states, three causes of continual weeping: first, sweet spontaneous tears 'as a result of wonder at the insights full of mysteries that are revealed all the time to the intellect'[14]. Secondly, that which derives 'from a fervent love of God, which enflames the soul'[15]. Thirdly, that which derives 'from an abundant lowliness of heart', either from 'a precise knowledge of one's sins, or as a result of recollecting the lowliness of our Lord'[16].

Taken as a whole, these three reasons for the sorrow of the soul describe the divine economy, in which the monk participates. The first step is that of awe, fear of the greatness and majesty of God, an experience of the transcendance of God, who is unimaginably greater than and distant to us. Second comes the great power of love the monk feels for God — a love characterized by hope and joy which reveal the intimacy of the Son who shares our humanity. Third comes the monk's engagement with this awe and love; a humbleness of heart which is the creature's response to the kenotic humility of Christ. It is also a conscious recognition of our creaturely need for the salvation effected by God's kenosis.

It is Isaac's awareness of these great benefits of πένθος which causes him in the *Second Part* to focus on the experience of joy contained within the soul's sorrow. This is in contradistinction to the *Homilies* where the prevailing doctrine is of the primacy of repentance as the mother of all other virtues. From the *Second Part* we read: 'Rig together my impulse for the ship of repentance, so that in it I may exult as I travel over the world's sea until I reach the haven of your hope'[17].

How much brighter and more joyful this is than a comparable passage in *Homily* XLI: 'Fear places us in the ship of repentance and makes us cross the foetid sea of the world and brings us in the divine port, which is love'[18].

The essential quality which enables the monk to participate in penthotic redemption is discernment. Isaac insists that the humility which provokes compunction is not the innate humility of the infant[19]; it must be a conscious experience. We must feel we are 'pierced by the sharp pain that comes from a

[14] Brock, Section 4, p. 97.
[15] Ibid., Section 5, p. 97.
[16] Ibid., Section 6, p. 97.
[17] Ibid., Chapter V, section 14, p. 12.
[18] Wensinck p. 212, Bedjan p. 317.
[19] Brock, ch. XVIII, Section 10, p. 99. In Section 15 of this chapter, p. 100, we read: 'where there is lowliness of heart coupled with discernment, then it is not possible for that person to hold himself back from weeping'.

knowledge of (our) sin'[20] — a concrete, physical experience of the soul's awakening.

It is this self-awareness during the experience of πένθος which leads Isaac to describe repentance as a confirmation of the baptismal pledge[21], the mature corroboration of an event in infancy.

The spiritual athlete who has sufficient discernment to recognise himself as having sinned will, by that experience, comprehend the mercy extended by God to the mourner. This unwraps the apparent paradox of joyful tears. Weeping marks the boundary of pure prayer[22], Isaac claims, and thus opens up the most intimate encounter with God; whose love is 'sweetness poured out continually in our hearts like honey or a honeycomb'[23].

The way of repentance is bitter and hard at first, but becomes sweeter, just as fruit does when ripened by the sun[24].

Two points by way of conclusion: first, consider the sharp pricking of compunction and the sweet taste of God's love — two very physical expressions of the human engagement with God. In the Syrian tradition, as represented by Isaac, we see πένθος as a concrete experience of the love of God, a mystical encounter that is rooted in the physicality of the first Adam. It thus holds in balance both Platonic ideals and the Semitic understanding of the essence of humanity.

Secondly, Isaac's writings disclose πένθος as not a peripheral and optional experience, as described by some Western commentators, but as the mark of an essential encounter between God and His created being. The kenotic soteriology revealed by Isaac's description of the soul's sorrow is *the* fundamental Christian experience. In discerning the human need for humble repentance and recognizing the salvific humility of Christ, the grieving soul draws close to God. Πένθος in the Syrian mystical tradition is thus the ultimate experience of the transcendance and immanence of God.

[20] Brock, chapter XVIII, section 9, p. 98.
[21] Note Homily XLIV, Wensinck p. 213/4, Bedjan p. 320: 'spiritual knowledge is, as we have said, that of which we have received the pledge in baptism and which we receive really by repentance'. Isaac states that this knowledge includes 'a perpetual stabbing of the heart', Cf. Brock, chapter XVIII section 9, p. 98.
[22] See footnote 9 above.
[23] Brock, ch. XXIX, section 5, p. 131.
[24] *Homily* XLV, Wensinck p. 219, Bedjan p. 328.

The Voice of Many Waters: the Baptismal Homilies of Narsai of Nisibis

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The mystery of the redeeming power of God radiating through the human person and from that locus, throughout all of creation, is the story retold by Narsai of Nisibis, a fifth century Syrian Father of the Church (d. 503 A.D.). His poetic genius in retelling this story has earned for him the title 'the harp of the Holy Spirit' in the Syriac tradition. Indeed, Narsai's voice represents a little known yet vibrant view of the life-giving role of baptismal waters in the Christian East.

The background of Narsai's life and times occupies the first part of this presentation. Then, an outline of Narsai's two homilies on baptism will precede a discussion of the themes found in these two homilies. This will be followed by a comparison of Narsai's themes with the central themes found in the non-Christian religious milieu of his times, especially those representative of Zoroastrianism. Lastly, a summary of the Syrian Church experience and their articulation of that experience, as demonstrated in the baptismal homilies of Narsai of Nisibis, will focus on insights helpful for developing models capable of leading to the inculturation of the Gospel in non-Christian cultures in the future.

The works of Narsai, who was a first-generation disciple of Theodore of Mopsuestia (c. 350-428 A.D.)[1], are important resources for understanding the context of early Syriac Christianity, especially the origin and growth of Nestorianism. Moreover, many of them are used in Syrian rite services even today[2]. Among Narsai's writings are two homiles on baptism which provide valuable insights into a Christian sacramental tradition that developed outside the

[1] Frederick McLeod, trans., 'Narsai's Metrical Homilies: On the Nativity, Epiphany, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension', in *Patrologia Orientalia*, vol. 40, fasc. 1, no. 182 (Turnhout, 1979), p. 7. See Lionel L. Mitchell, 'Four Fathers on Baptism: St. John Chrysostom, St. Ephraem, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Narsai', in *Studies on Syrian Baptismal Rites* (The Syrian Church Series, ed. Jacob Vellian, 6; Kottayam/ Kerala, India, 1973), p. 53. Also see Abraham Mattam, 'The School of Nisibis-Edessa: First Theological University in Christendom', *Christian Orient* 7 (March 1985), p. 32.

[2] R.H. Connolly (trans.), *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* (Cambridge, 1909), pp. x-xi. Also see H. Leclercq in *Dictionarie d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, 12 (pt. 1; 1935), s.v. 'Narsai'.

Hellenizing influences of the Roman Empire[3], as well as deal directly with liturgical matters as celebrated in the archaic period of the East Syrian Church[4].

In 1965 Arthur Vööbus published *The History of the School of Nisibis*, the most scholarly English source for a study of Narsai and his relationship to both the School of Edessa and the School of Nisibis. As a result of his research, Vööbus places Narsai's birth after 400 A.D. during a period when Christians experienced a severe persecution that broke out in the last years of the reign of Yazdegerd I (399-420 A.D.)[5]. Born at the foot of the mountains of Kurdistan, Narsai began his schooling at the age of seven. Later, he was forced to flee with his teacher into the mountains to avoid a persecution of Christians during which his parents died. Later, he received assistance from his uncle Amanu'el, who was the abbot of the monastery of Kephar Mari that had connections with the School of Edessa[6]. From this monastery Narsai went to Edessa as a student and became the leader of the school around 451 A.D.[7]. In Edessa, Narsai established a reputation as a teacher, a writer, and an ascetic.

[3] P. Brouwers, 'Premier Poème de Narsai: Sur le baptême', *Mélanges de l'université Saint-Joseph* 41 (Beirut, 1965), pp. 179-180. Brouwers explains his position in these words:

> L'ancienneté du témoignage et la personne de l'auteur vivant dans une Église qui n'a pas encore subi, comme celles d'Alexandrie et de Cappadoce, l'influence hellénistique, donnent à ces texte une importance toute particulière dans la tradition sacramentelle de l'Église. Cette origine non occidentale et, au surplus, nestorienne, leur confère également un incontestable intérêt œcuménique.
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> The primitiveness of the testimony and the person of the author living in a Church which has not yet submitted to the Hellenic influence, like the ones of Alexandria and Cappadocia, gives to the texts a very special importance in the sacramental tradition of the Church. This non-western and, moreover, Nestorian source gives to them an unquestionable ecumenical interest likewise.

Some authors question the extent to which the Syrian Church was excluded from the sphere of Hellenic influence by pointing out that the school of Edessa and Nisibis translated Greek works early in their history (5th century). See Vööbus, *History of the School of Nisibis*, pp. 20-22. Also see Kathleen McVey, 'The Memra of Narsai on the Three Nestorian Doctors as an Example of Forensic Rhetoric', in *Symposium Syriacum III: Les contacts du monde syriaque avec les autres cultures (Goslar 7-11 Septembre 1980)*, ed. Rene Lavenant (Rome, 1983), p. 87. Here McVey refers to parallels in the style and structure of the Syriac poetic form known as memra and Greco-Roman forms of rhetoric.

[4] Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, xi.

[5] Adrian David Hugh Bivar and Mark J. Dresden, in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1983 ed., s.v. 'Iran, History of'. Likewise persecutions occurred under Vahram V (421-438). See Vööbus, *History of the School of Nisibis*, pp. 57-59. Earlier scholars reckoned 399 A.D. as the date of Narsai's birth; however, later scholars, such as Vööbus and McLeod, argue for a date that will coincide with the persecutions which broke out sometime during Narsai's life from age seven onward.

[6] Ortiz de Urbina, *Patrologie syriaca* (Rome, 1958), pp. 115-16. Also see Vööbus, *The History of the School of Nisibis*, pp. 57-59.

[7] Many sources favor an earlier date of 431 A.D. for Narsai's ascendancy as leader of the School of Edessa; however, Vööbus and McLeod opt for the later date of 451 A.D. See Vööbus, *The School of Nisibis*, pp. 61-65. Also see McLeod, *Narsai's Metrical Homilies*, pp. 19-22.

The major portion of Narsai's literary career unfolded in the middle of a period involving great theological ferment. Narsai was engaged in a major theological dispute over the Monophysite/Diophysite questions that plagued the Christian Church at this time[8]. As a result of these controversies, serious dividing lines appeared between the positions of Jacob of Serugh, Cyril of Alexandria, and their followers on one side, and Narsai, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Nestorius, and their followers on the other side. In this climate, Narsai wrote some 360 hymns, poems, homilies, and biblical commentaries, with his homilies on baptism dating from around 450 A.D. or sometime afterward[9]. His source of literary strength lies in his mastery of the genre of didactic poetry known in Syriac as memra[10]. A profound grasp of biblical texts and a thorough knowledge of the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia were his sources of inspiration. He combined his efforts to produce anti-Monophysite literature with his efforts to provide instructional material for his students. In these words, Vööbus suggests his underlying motive: 'Whatever nourished the celebrating community comes within range of his loving care'[11].

Forced to flee from Edessa when the Monophysites came to power, Narsai established himself in Nisibis around 471 A.D. In Nisibis, Narsai is credited with founding the School of Nisibis. As leader of the school, his duties included the surveillance of the teaching staff as well as the highest office of commentator, interpreter, and exegete of Sacred Scripture. Under Narsai, the Antiochian exegetical tradition and the spirit of Theodore of Mopsuestia became normative for the School of Nisibis[12]. The instruction offered by the school was given free of charge and the School of Nisibis became the principal

[8] McLeod, *Narsai's Metrical Homilies*, pp. 22-29. McLeod does raise serious questions concerning how substantial is the union that Narsai is actually holding because Narsai has a manner of attribution in which:

> Narsai can affirm the union of the oneness of the Word and the Second Adam as an object or predicate or subject of the verb 'to be'. But he cannot use the composite as a subject that acts and suffers. For this would entail a mixture of distinct natures and would mean either that Word is reduced to lowly things or that creation has lost the bond linking it to glory.

[9] E. Tisserant in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 11 (pt. 1; 1935), s.v. 'Narsai'.

[10] Vööbus, *The History of the School of Nisibis*, p. 71. Also see Sebastian Brock, 'Dramatic Dialogue Poems', in *Symposium Syriacum 1984: Literary Genres in Syriac Literature (Groenen-Gosterhesselen 10-12 Septembre 1984)*, ed. H.J. Drijvers, R. Lavenant, C. Molenberg, C.J. Renink (Rome, 1987), p. 143.

[11] Vööbus, *The History of the School of Nisibis*, p. 79 and 65-69, 80.

[12] The date of Narsai's flight to Nisibis has been given as 457 A.D. by earlier scholars. In spite of this, Vööbus and McLeod argue for the year 471 A.D. as a more probable date. See McLeod, *Narsai's Metrical Homilies*, pp. 19-22. Also see Vööbus, *The History of the School of Nisibis*, pp. 61-65 for a discussion of the dating of Narsai's migration from Edessa to Nisibis, pp. 96-103 for a description of the duties of the rabban, and pp. 105-107 for a summary of the Antiochian exegetical tradition that was used as a model by Narsai at the School of Edessa and Nisibis.

institution for the education of the clergy, missionaries, monks, and teachers of the East Syrian Church[13]. During all of this time, Bishop Barsauma of Nisibis supported Narsai, except for a period when Barsauma's wife caused friction between them and Narsai was forced into exile at Kephar Mari[14]. Of this account, Vööbus writes: 'This story rather leaves the impression of heavy retouching and oversimplification'[15]. The actual situation was much more complicated than this account suggests for Barsauma was advocating a married Christian clergy, thus introducing a practice unknown in the Syrian Church of the region at this time. As a result of his position, he and Narsai clashed. Narsai was eventually reconciled with the bishop and resumed his office in the School of Nisibis by 496 A.D., but strong anti-feminine elements are evident in Narsai's writings after this episode[16].

In the beginning of the sixth century, Nisibis was caught between two battling armies when war broke out between the Byzantine emperor, Anastasius, and

[13] Vööbus, *The History of the School of Nisibis*, p. 109.

[14] Ibid., pp. 115-16. In the controversy which arose between Narsai and the bishop of Nisibis, Barsuma, over the issue of Barsauma's wife named Mamai, Voobus says that 'Barhadbesabba ascribes all these difficulties to Mamai ... that this was purely an intrigue engineered by her since she could not endure the reputation and esteem offered to Narsai by the people'. Barhadbesabba 'Arabaia', in his *Histoire II: La seconde partie de l'histoire ecclésiastique*, ed. F. Nau, in *Patrologia Orientalis* 9, 5 (Paris, 1913), p. 609 is the source that Vööbus refers to in this passage. Of his account, Voobus writes: 'This story rather leaves the impression of heavy retouching and oversimplification'. (116) Likewise, E. Tisserant in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, s.v. 'Narsai', gives an account in these words:

> Mais il y eut dans cette période une interruption de cinq ans, pendant laquelle Narsai reprit la direction du monastere de Kefar-Mari, après que Barsauma, influencé par sa concubine, Mamai, se fut montré jaloux de la popularité que son enseignement avait attiré à Narsai.
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> But there was in this period an interruption of five years, during which Narsai resumed the direction of the monastery of Kefar Maari, after Barsauma, influenced by his concubine, Mamai, who appeared jealous of the popularity which Narsai's teaching attracted to him.

The actual situation was much more complicated than either of these accounts suggest. See M.J. Costello in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 10 (1967), s.v. 'Nestorian Church': 'At court Bar Sauma urged the advantages of a married Christian clergy'. As a result of his position, he and Narsai clashed. The consequences of this polarization on the question of married clergy was the source of friction between the two, and this brought about Narsai's retirement to Kephar-Mari. However, Narsai was the director of the School of Nisibis in 496, a date fairly certain, and he died in 503 A.D. while troops were in Nisibis. There is a question as to whether his exile took place in the years preceding 496 or after 496 A.D. Another passage from Costello's article on the 'Nestorian Church' helps to clarify this:

> In 485 Acacius was elected patriach, and in February of the following year he held a synod at Seleucia ... at which permission was granted to deacons and priests to marry even after ordination. In 497 a synod held by the Catholicos Babai extended this permission to bishops and the catholicos.

[15] Vööbus, p. 16.

[16] Ibid., pp. 83, 115-116.

the Persian Empire. The Persians lay siege to the Amid area in 503 A.D. and Narsai died while these troops were in Nisibis[17]. Buried but not forgotten, Narsai continues to speak through his writings.

Narsai's two homilies on baptism form part of his legacy to the Christian world: 'On Baptism' is numbered as Homily XXII or memra 39 while 'On the Mysteries of the Church and On Baptism' is numbered as Homily XXI or memra 38. Also, Homily XXII should stand before Homily XXI in order and it should be noted that these two homilies are complementary[18].

Narsai opens Homily XXII with an exhortation addressed to the entire audience, encouraging them to give thanks to the Creator who in love renews them through their baptism. Moreover, Narsai believes 'that before creation the image of our renewal was depicted before Him', indicating a bond between creation and redemption from the beginning, rather than a theology of redemption as an afterthought on God's part[19]. Then, Narsai states that priests are the mediators between God and others, in order to seal the work of renewing creation. This point he will continue to develop in the subsequent lines of his homily.

Next, Narsai gives a description of the actual baptismal ceremony. The priest calls all to prayerful listening and then calls each candidate by name. Following this, each candidate confesses the name of the creator, rejects the Evil One, and declares that their wish is to become a servant of Christ, the Master. Then the priest turns the face of each candidate from the Evil One, traces the image of the Divinity upon their forehead, and exhorts them to warfare against the Evil One and his followers[20]. Here Narsai mentions a number of contemporary heretics and forbids each candidate to mingle with their sects or to engage in certain practices[21]. Each candidate stands silent and naked while the priest acts as an advocate on their behalf in the lawsuit before the Judge and 'accuses the devil on behalf of sinners'[22]. Bending the knee and bowing the head, each of the candidates is covered with sackcloth, symbolizing their former subjection to the Evil One and the fall in paradise of Adam. Immediately thereafter, the sponsors witness to their candidates' preparation and sincerity, call their candidates by name, and present them to the priest. Next, the priest enters the candidates' names in the official book of Church members[23].

[17] Ibid., pp. 120-121.
[18] Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, p. xlvi.
[19] Ibid., p. 33.
[20] Ibid., pp. 35-36.
[21] Ibid., pp. 37-38. The heretics mentioned by Narsai are important to note because the dates of their activity helps to date this homily: Mani (216-276 A.D.); Valentinus of Rome (136-165 A.D.); Arius (250-336 A.D.); Eunomius (d. 394 A.D.); Appollinarius (310-390 A.D.); Paul of Samosata (bishop of Antioch in 260 A.D., deposed in 268 A.D.); Eutyches (378-545 A.D.), opposed Nestorianism in 448, was acquitted in 449, charged again in 450, condemned by Chalcedon in 451, exiled and died in 454 A.D.
[22] Ibid., pp. 38-39.
[23] Ibid., pp. 39-40.

Then, Narsai turns his attention to the priest, addressing him as dust-born but blessed because by the power of the Good One he is able to restore His creation through water and the Spirit. Narsai reminds all present of the office of the priest as he explains that it is 'by the hand of the priesthood that God has designed to reveal His power', and 'with the Trinity men are signing men'[24].

Returning to the description of the baptismal ceremony, Narsai relates how the priest consecrates the oil, signs the forehead as well as the whole body of each candidate with it, and lays on the Spirit with the symbol of oil: all done in three Names, the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Spirit, who are 'equal with no distinction of elder or younger between One and Another'[25]. Equally important, the priest does not say 'I sign', but rather he uses the phrase 'is signed'; for the stamp that he sets is not his, but his Lord's. The oil is an outward symbol of God's work done in secret so that body and soul no longer fear death, but being empowered by the Spirit, go and wage war against the Evil One[26].

Narsai ends Homily XXII by calling on the newly baptized to praise God, who has made their body 'a second sun' by His gift, who has set them free, who has set in humans the power to sow life in their mortality, and who has lifted them up from dust to His own greatness[27].

An outline of Narsai's Homily XXI is the topic of the next section of this paper. After analyzing the first nine paragraphs of this homily, the ones which deal directly with baptism, a detailed examination discloses the following considerations.

First, Narsai sings of the mystery of life-giving waters of baptism in which, with oil and water, the renewal of the human race takes place through the power of the Spirit[28]. He calls all present to examine the mystery of human renewal: the power that is hidden in the visible waters and in the priesthood to make atonement[29].

Second, Narsai addresses the priest, who speaks the three Names over the water, as greater than angels like Gabriel and Michael. In Narsai's theology, priests stand as mediators between God and humans 'that men to men might be shewing mercy by His gift'[30]. For this reason the priest vests himself with rich robes and stands before the people as a symbol of the spiritual things about to be done[31].

Third, Narsai explains that the priest consecrates the water with the name of the Divinity, the three Names. Then the human, both body and soul, is buried

[24] Ibid., pp. 40-41.
[25] Ibid., pp. 41-44.
[26] Ibid., pp. 44-45.
[27] Ibid., p. 45.
[28] Ibid., p. 46.
[29] Ibid., p. 47.
[30] Ibid., p. 49.
[31] Ibid.

in the waters of baptism[32]. He points out that the name of the Divinity is mentioned as the priest says three times the names of the 'Father and Son and Holy Spirit, one equality'. The priest does not say 'I baptize' since it is the power that is set in the three Names that baptizes, forgives iniquity, and sows new life[33]. Each candidate bows the head at the Three Names and learns the relation 'that while They are One They are Three'[34].

Fourth, Narsai relates that the priest embraces the newly baptized after they come up from the water. After this, the whole assembly embraces and kisses them. The newly baptized are clothed in garments 'as a bridegroom on the day of the marriage supper'[35]. This baptismal birth is a symbol of 'that birth which is to be at the end, and the conduct of (their) life of that conversation which is (to be) in the kingdom on high'[36].

The remainder of Homily XXI discusses the introduction of the newly baptized persons to the Eucharistic celebration and the first reception of the Body and Blood of Christ in communion with the entire Christian community. Participation in the Eucharistic celebration followed immediately as the natural outcome and conclusion of the baptismal rites with oil and water. From this time forward, the newly baptized are to confess the goodness of the Creator and pay the debt of praise due for so great a gift as life[37].

In brief, Narsai's Homilies XXII and XXI outline the baptismal rite of the East Syrian Church and its component parts: the two most important being the pre-baptismal anointing with oil and the actual baptism with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Ordinarily, these rites are followed immediately by celebration and reception of the Eucharist. His line of argument throughout the whole of the homilies is that God has made human beings co-authors of life through the power of the Holy Spirit; priests are mediators of this power; oil and water are the chief symbols of this hidden reality; and human beings are called to praise and thank God for this great gift of life by actively participating in the Christian quest.

Having studied Narsai's description of the baptismal rites of the East Syrian Church and his line of argumentation for their administration, one is able to identify several basic themes that run throughout his liturgical homilies. These include: God's loving act of creation; the Holy Spirit's power to re-cast human beings as co-authors of life; the role of the priest and the symbols of oil and water in baptism[38]; and the call of the baptized Christian to be an active

[32] Ibid., pp. 50-51.
[33] Ibid., p. 51.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid., p. 52.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid., p. 52ff.
[38] Ibid., p. 40, 43.

participant in this ongoing and life-giving act of God in human history[39]. The task of illustrating these themes is accomplished by Narsai through the use of metaphors or images peppered with a Syrian flavor.

To demonstrate the loving creativeness of God, Narsai employs imagery and metaphors that portray God as an artisan. Narsai's words read: 'As in a furnace He re-casts our image in Baptism; and instead of our clay He has made us spiritual gold ... O Painter, that paints an image upon the tablets of the waters'[40]. Next, Narsai uses the image of God as an artist with paint and brush fashioning humans through the power of the Spirit, and he says that God 'painted us in spiritual colors' and 'mixed the colors for the renewal of our race, with oil and water and the invincible power of the Spirit. A new Art the Chief Artist put forth'[41].

The relationship between the power of the Spirit and the priestly action of consecrating oil and water for baptism is suggested in metaphors such as 'the rust of iniquity He willed to wipe away from mortals; and His purpose put the sponge of the Spirit into the hand of our body'[42]. Always Narsai insists that the power is from the Spirit, not the priest or the oil and water. The oil and water are described in the poetic images of building an edifice or firing pottery in a furnace: 'Oil and water he lays first as a foundation, and by his words he completes and builds the name of the Divinity. With liquid oil and weak water he re-casts the body; and instead of clay he changes and makes it pure gold'[43].

The role of the priest as mediator affords Narsai the opportunity to weave images within images. The metaphors that he constructs to describe God are expanded to encompass the priestly participation in the divine action. In this passage, the idea of artist is combined with the image of a pen: 'The priest is like a pen to the hidden Power; and in Its hands he writes the three Names over the water. O writer, that writes the Spirit upon a weak tablet ... O how slender is the pen of thy mind to depict the mysteries!'[44].

All of this is linked to the action of the Son who died on the cross on behalf of all human beings and 'taught them to travel by the way of his death and life. His death and life men depict in Baptism'[45]. Therefore, the call of the baptized Christian is an active one of co-operation with the Creator and warfare against evil. The ceremonial setting for entry into his conscious process is the baptismal

[39] Ibid., p. 45. Narsai strikes a fine balance in passages such as: 'Come, O mortal, give glory to the power of the Divinity, who has set in thee power to sow life in thy mortality'. By God's initiative and power the process is set in motion, but the human being is called to full participation in this process.
[40] Ibid., p. 33.
[41] Ibid., p. 46.
[42] Ibid., pp. 33-34.
[43] Ibid., p. 42.
[44] Ibid., p. 47.
[45] Ibid., p. 54.

chamber. Here Narsai uses the image of a lawcourt with the priest acting as an advocate before the Judge on behalf of the one to be baptized, who has been defrauded by the devil[46]. The baptized Christian emerges from this ceremony as a victor. The oil and water become as armor against the devil's attacks, so that the Christian might escape capture by the enemy[47].

In like manner, Narsai compares the Son to an athlete who 'went down to the contest on behalf of His people'[48] and joined battle with Satan, vanquishing and conquering him. Using this image he speaks of the Christians in these words: 'as athletes, they descend and stand in the arena'[49].

These images and numerous others are carefully set by Narsai in poetic verse: didactic poetry written in Syriac and cast in twelve syllable meters known as memra. His meter and versification are highly developed with constantly recurring words or short phrases that are positioned either to begin or end a line or couplet[50]. Narsai's strength lies in his command of the written word. He is a poet who possesses a clear and vivid style, who knows his material thoroughly, and who passionately desires to share his Christian beliefs with his world built upon a Zoroastrian foundation. His well portrayed examples develop his themes in a lucid fashion. The major weakness of Narsai's Homily XXII and XXI hinges on the question of weight: he devotes an excessive amount of attention to the role of the priest and the Spirit at the expense of the role of Jesus Christ and the Christian community, including the one to be baptized. Yet this weakness in the eyes of Christian communities bordering on the west of Narsai's home territory may be read as a strength when cast in relationship to an on-going dialogue which he has undertaken within his own historical theological context in relationship to Zoroastrianism. Narsai's baptismal theology is definitely a theology of the Spirit in which the power of the priesthood emerges as a theme that dominates a major portion of his homilies on baptism. When writing on Baptism, he refrains totally from using the phrase Jesus Christ, the name of Jesus is never used, and the term 'Christ' is employed

[46] Ibid., p. 39.
[47] Ibid., p. 53.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid., p. 45.
[50] Brouwers, 'Premier Poème de Narsai', p. 181. See Vööbus, *The History of the School of Nisibis*, p. 71. See Brock, 'Dramatic Dialogue Poems', 143. See McVey, 'The Memra of Narsai', p. 87. Also see Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, pp. xvii-xviii:

> A marked peculiarity of Narsai's style when he is writing in the twelve-syllable meter is that he frequently begins a new couplet with the same word or words with which the preceding couple ended, or with a word that takes up some important word, or leading idea, in the preceding couplet. Moreover, when he falls into this trick of style he often repeats it for several successive couplets. This device is employed with greater or less frequency throughout Narsai's twelve-syllable Homilies. ... Another very marked characteristic of Narsai's style is that he frequently begins a number of successive couplets with the same word or words.

only once. Narsai finds himself situated in a socio-religious culture which emphasizes Spirit and priesthood; therefore, Narsai capitalizes on this ready made language to move into his presentation of Christian baptism in his homilies.

In these homilies, Narsai's methodology is a simple and functional one. His choice of words demonstrates a preference for concrete terms over abstract ones, a characteristic of other early Syrian writers as well. Some scholars argue that Narsai uses the figure and events of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, as an inexhaustable source for his literary creation[51]. At the same time, others assert that the images in these homilies are frequently unfamiliar to Latin audiences. In these words, Bouwers explains his position:

> The images, although often of Biblical origin, are not always familiar to us: the trick is not to forget that they are typical of an eastern work. These literary characteristics are to be met again, nevertheless, in all the contemporary authors of Narsai, chiefly in Ephrem[52].

Bouwers has proved to be basically correct in his assertion: Narsai's images are mostly reworked with Syrian expressions and metaphors since he is engaged in dialogue with new Christians coming from the Zoroastrian heartland. In addition to this, links with certain scriptural passages, which are used by Latin and Greek theologians, are absent in Narsai's homilies. Brock comments on this fact in regard to a passage from John 19:34 in which the idea that the water which flowed from the side of Christ is a common symbol of baptism in the Greek East and Latin West. This idea is ignored completely by Narsai in his homilies on baptism. Brock states:

> Although a number of Antiochene writers connect the water of John xix 34 with baptism, it is interesting that Theodore makes no reference at all to the passage in his baptismal homilies, and the same is true of Narsai in his two memre on baptism; Narsai's silence is particularly significant in that at one point the context cries out for such a reference to be made. It would rather appear that East Syrian writers go out of their way to avoid making use of John xix 34 in a baptismal context[53].

It would appear that Narsai prefers to use culturally specific metaphors and images arising from a Zoroastrian context to address his audience located in the Persian empire. Although Narsai does not quote or refer to the words or ideas of John's Gospel explicitly in relation to baptism, he does, nevertheless,

[51] Thomas J. Thumpeparampil, 'Mar Narsai and His Liturgical Homilies on Christian Initiation', *Christian Orient* 13 (June 1992), p. 125.
[52] Bouwers, 'Premier Poème de Narsai', p. 181. In these words, Bouwers explains his position:

> Les images, quoique souvent d'origine biblique, ne nous sont pas toujours familières: il s'agit, ne l'oublions pas, d'une œuvre typiquement orientale. Ces caractéristiques littéraires se retrouvent, du reste, chez tous les auteurs contemporains de Narsai, surtout chez Ephrem.

[53] Sebastian Brock, 'The Epiclesis in the Antiochene Baptismal Ordines', in *Symposium Syriacum 1972* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta, no. 197; Rome, 1974), pp. 211-212.

use the Johannine method of dialogue with culture. Whereas, the Johannine school located in the heart of the Greco-Roman empire is carrying on a dialogue with Greek philosophical circles, Narsai is grappling with Zoroastrian mythology and cosmology. Virtually no passages from Sacred Scripture are quoted explicitly in these homilies; rather, allusions to scriptural persons and events remain implicit and they are woven into a smooth, unified presentation in order to make a marriage of the Gospel message with Zoroastrian constructs.

Narsai's homilies represent an articulate documentation of the Syrian Church experience which affords valuable insights for understanding the inculturation of the Gospel in a specific context. The Syrians emphasize certain images and themes as they draw from the indigenous Syriac religious experience and, in their efforts to combine their cultural heritage with the Gospel, they develop original and concrete expressions useful for transmitting the Christian message within their specific context.

A study of non-Christian East Syrian texts, under the heavy influence of the thought and language contained in the sacred writings of the Zoroastrian *Gathas*[54], reveals striking parallels to the language employed by Narsai in his homilies on Baptism. In the *Gathas*, many passage emphasize the power of the Holy Spirit and refer to God as the good Creator. For example, verses from Yasna 44 read: 'to discern Thee as Creator of all things through the Holy Spirit'[55]. This finds direct corollaries in Narsai's homilies where God is addressed continuously as 'Creator' and an exalted place is given to the power of the Holy Spirit in his writings. This use of the term, 'Creator', is characteristic of Theodore of Mopsuestia also. In Yasna 31, Zoroaster relates: 'When with my eyes I perceived Thee to be Father of Good Purpose, real Creator of Truth, by Thy acts Lord of Existence. Thine was Devotion, thine the (Ox-)Fashioner, Thine the Spirit of great wisdom'[56]. Narsai echoes these phrases when he refers to God as: Creator, Father, Nod, Hidden One, Artist or Chief Artist, Fashioner, Painter, Quickener, and Good One. In addition to this, one of the characteristics of Zoroastrianism is triplication based upon the idea that three is a favorable, happy, and hopeful number[57]. In response to this cultural clue pointing to divinity, Narsai uses the term 'three Names' repeatedly throughout his baptismal homilies while the title 'Trinity' is referred to only once.

[54] The *Gathas* are the sacred songs of Zoroaster contained in the *Yasna*, chapters 28-34, and 53, of the *Zend Avesta*. The general name for the sacred writings of the Zoroastrians is the Avesta. There are four main parts: the Yasna, the Vispered, the Yasts, and the Vendidad. The Yasna is a collection of 72 hymns, which are chanted in connection with the preparation and offering of the Haoma, a sacred drink. Seventeen of these, thought to be by Zoroaster himself and the oldest part of the Avesta, are called the Gathas. The sacred texts are written in old Iranian, an Aryan dialect related to the Sanskrit of the Rig-Veda, the earliest literature of India.

[55] Mary Boyce (ed. and trans.), *Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism* (Totowa, New Jersey, 1984), p. 34.

[56] Ibid., p. 38.

[57] Ibid., p. 90.

Narsai's emphasis on the office and dignity of the priesthood echoes similar passages on the role and exalted position of priesthood throughout the *Gathas*. Verses from Yasna 33 demonstrate this emphasis in lines such as: 'The priest officiating, upright through truth, embodies the Best Spirit'[58]. Building on this understanding of priesthood in his society, Narsai declares that:

> 'He (God) chooses Him priests as mediators between Him and our people; and He was sent them on an embassy to men. To them He gave the great signet of His Divinity, that with it they might seal the work of the renovation of all ... Ah, priesthood, how greatly is it exalted above all, having won a station in the height and the depth by the power of Him that has chosen it![59]

Zoroastrianism teaches that humankind's purpose in the created order is to take part in a cosmic battle between the forces of good and evil[60]. Narsai describes this battle in some detail in his Homily XXII. He compares Christians to brave soldiers who stand at the King's door, and the priest leads them like a general at the head of an army. Oil and water are the armor worn by the Christians against the warfare and attacks of Satan and the devils. They are stamped with the great brand of the King of kings so that they may serve as soldiers in the spiritual contest. At the hour of the mysteries, they are set in rank so that they may cast sharp arrows at the foe: 'The arrows of words he fixes (as on a bowstring, and) sets in the midst of their mouths, that they may be aiming against the Evil One who made them slaves'[61].

In addition to this, there is an emphasis on the human's free choice for good and the responsibility of humankind to reject evil in the Zoroastrian system of belief. Humans by their thoughts, words, and deeds, influence their fate at the final judgment. The baptismal liturgy, which Narsai outlines in his homilies, contains a lengthy ceremonial rejection of evil and the physical turning of the faces of the ones being baptized to symbolize their new orientation toward God. Moreover, in Zoroastrianism, when a person freely chooses good over evil[62], that person is then empowered by the Spirit to actively co-operate with the divinity in building up the reign of good on the earth[63]. In doing so, evil is

[58] Ibid., p. 37. Also see Mary Boyce, *Zoroastrians: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London and Boston, 1979), p. 12 for a discussion of the Zoroastrian teaching that man, in the person of the celebrating priest, was a partner with gods in the task of maintaining the world in a state of strength and purity.

[59] Connolly, p. 34.

[60] Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, p. 20.

[61] Connolly, p. 43.

[62] Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, p. 20. Also see William W. Malandra (trans. and ed.), *An Introduction to Ancient Iranian Religion* (Minneapolis, 1983), p. 20. One who chosen the life of Truth is a truth possessor or righteous man, while one who chooses the lie is a lie-possessor.

[63] Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, p. 26. Zoroastrians believe that man shares with the lesser Zoroastrian divinities the great common purpose of overcoming evil and restoring the world to its original state.

defeated and the world is transformed[64]. For a Zoroastrian, the religious duty of the human person is to be a fellow worker with God. Similarly, Narsai writes: 'Who should not marvel at the greatness of His (God's) love and His (God's) graciousness, that He has made our clay the creator of a creation, after His own likeness?'[65] Then Narsai says: 'To our own nature did He (God) give the authority, together with its renewal, that it should create itself a new creation of immortals'[66]. Triumphantly Narsai states: 'His art of creation He (God showed) shewed to our soul: and it acquired power to create a creation, even as the Creator'[67].

Only a few studies treat exclusively of Narsai's Homilies XXII and XXI on baptism; instead, these homilies are referred to in part and included in material focusing on the wider investigation of Syrian Church studies or early baptismal studies in general[68]. The major question concerning Narsai's homilies on baptism in the early decades of the twentieth century centered on the emphasis given in Homily XXI to baptism with water and Eucharist to the exclusion of anointing, on the emphasis in Homily XXII to pre-baptismal anointing to the exclusion of baptism with water and Eucharist, and on the fact that neither of these homilies mention a post-baptismal anointing. However, later studies of companion literature from this same archaic period in Syriac literature have confirmed that Narsi's description of fifth century baptismal practices in the East Syrian Church are accurate[69]. It is the contention of this presentation that the major questions concerning Narsai's writings in the future should focus on his relationship to his historical theological setting.

In conlusion, Narsai's homilies XXII and XXI on baptism are indispensable documents for a serious study of the theology and liturgical practices of the early Church. They represent accurate descriptions of the baptismal liturgies of the East Syrian Church in the fifth century, excellent examples of the poetic genre known as memra, and clear articulations of the East Syrian theological traditions of the fifth century that influenced later developments in the East Syrian Church

[64] Ibid., p. 21. In the end Ahura Mazda would win the great struggle and destroy evil to achieve a universe which would be totally good forever. Also see Malandra, *An Introduction to Ancient Iranian Religion*, p. 23. When transformation did not happen immediately, a reassessment took place. Instead of the immanent establishment of Ahura Mazda's dominion on earth, Zoroastrians came to expect fulfillment at the end of time.

[65] Connolly, p. 34.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Three dissertations make mention of Narsai's liturgical homilies on baptism: E.P. Myers, *A Study of Baptism in the First Three Centuries* (Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1985); V. Van Vossel, *L'onction baptismale chez St. Ephrem*, (Excerpta ex diss. Rome, Facultas Scientiarum Ecclesiasticarum Orientalium, Pont. Inst. Orientale, 1984); B. Varghese, *Les onctions baptismales dans la tradition syrienne* (Ph.D. diss., Paris: Sorbonne, 1985).

[69] Connolly, *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, p. xlvi. Also Connolly was one of the first scholars to emphasize that 'no post-baptismal anointing is contemplated at all'.

as well as strands of spirituality in the Latin West. More importantly, questions raised and insights gleaned by examining the interaction of the Christian Gospel with the pre-Christian Syrian religious tradition, prove capable of informing the future efforts of Christians grappling with the problems surrounding the inculturation of religion in the modern global context. The Syrian Church experience and their articulation of that experience affords valuable insights for dialogue leading to the inculturation of the Gospel in modern cultures, especially in terms of language accommodation. The Syrian emphasis on certain images and themes, as demonstrated in Narsai's texts, draws from the indigenous Syriac religious experience to combine with the Gospel and form images that are capable of enriching the Christian consciousness and broadening its vision in the on-going process of Christian inculturation. Narsai's words encourage us 'to give glory to the power of the Divinity who has set in (us) power to sow life (in our human bodies) ... and who has lifted (us)' up from the dust to (divine) greatness'.

Ephrem on the Name of Jesus

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Ephrem's theory of divine names in his theological polemics, especially in his anti-Arian works has already been pointed out by various scholars[1]. Divine names form the very foundation of our God-talk as far as Ephrem is concerned. But rationalization and scrutiny of revealed names are ruled out. Revelation by means of divine names culminates in the person of Jesus. Divine incarnation is the climax of divine self-revelation. All the symbols and types flow into the ocean of Jesus and thus they acquire their real sense once they reach this goal. This divine pedagogy is central to our knowledge about God. God put on human names that humanity may put on divine names[2]. So we read:

It is a merciful Lord
Who Himself also put on our names,
Even to a mustard seed[3],
Humbing Himself, was He compared.
He gave us His names;
He accepted from us our names.
His names made us great;
But our names made Him small.
Blessed is anyone who has spread out
Your good name over his own name
And adorned his names with Your name[4].

Abbreviations

Epiph (?)	*Hymns on Epiphany*
HcH	*Hymns against Heresies*
HdF	*Hymns on Faith*
HdN	*Hymns on Nativity*
HdV	*Hymns on Virginity*
Pr Ref	*Prose Refutations*
SdDN	*Discourse on Our Lord*

[1] I. Hausherr, *The Name of Jesus* (Kalamazoo, 1978), pp. 42-52; C. Molenberg, 'An Invincible Weapon: Names in the Christological passages in Ephrem's "Hymns on Faith" XLIX-LXV', in R. Lavenant (ed.), *V Symposium Syriacum 1988* (OCA 236; Roma 1990), pp. 135-142; T. Koonammakkal, 'Divine Names and Theological Language in Ephrem', *Studia Patristica* 25 (1993), pp. 318-323; idem, 'Changing Views on Ephrem', *Christian Orient* 14 (1993), pp. 113-130.

[2] *HdF* 5:6-7.

[3] Mt 13:31-32; Jn 12:24.

[4] *HdF* 5:7.

The good name (ܫܡܐ ܛܒܐ) of Christ as it is put on by His followers, becomes the means of their ascent to the divine realm. The exchange of names between God and human beings works in a twofold manner. By putting on divine names we become great; by putting on our names God became small. When God put on our names it was for our benefit; when we were allowed to put on His names it is also for our benefit. The divine descent is precisely for this purpose. The divine descent is complete only in the human ascent. Thus incarnation becomes the revelation of God's goodness and grace (ܛܝܒܘܬܐ). Thus the soteriological connotations of ܫܡܐ ܛܒܐ are pointing to the concept of divinization[5]. The beatitude resulting from the spreading out of the ܫܡܐ ܛܒܐ of Jesus over ourselves is the same as theosis and the culmination of salvation history[6]. Ephrem describes this theme further by presenting the glorious name of Jesus as the hidden bridge of salvation:

O Jesus, the glorious name!
The hidden bridge which causes to pass over
From death to life.
To You have I come and stood still
At the 'yod', Your letter, have I stayed.
Be a bridge to my word
That it may pass over to Your truth.
Make Your love a bridge for Your servant.
Through You let me pass over to Your Father,
Let me pass over and say: Blessed is He
Who mitigated His might through His Son![7]

According to Ephrem ܫܡܐ ܛܒܐ is the same as ܝܫܘܥ which is ܫܡܐ ܕܚܝܐ as well. The salvific dimensions of the good name Jesus make it a glorious name and hidden bridge[8] for humanity to pass over to divinity. The ascent of first Adam through the second Adam to the once lost divine realm of Paradise by putting on divine names is a passage from death to life. By means of this hidden bridge (ܓܫܪ ܟܡܝܪ) dead Adam has come to life. Suddenly Ephrem's sense of devotion to the name of Jesus comes to light. He reflects on the first letter (ܝ) of the name ܝܫܘܥ and makes a prayer typical of Ephrem's style. Ephrem is constantly aware of Jesus' role as bridge between death and life, Sheol and Paradise, sin and salvation, humanity and divinity. His imagery of ܓܫܪ ܟܡܝܪ could possibly be a source of inspiration for the later iconographic traditions which depict Christ standing between life and death at the

[5] S. Brock, *The Luminous Eye: The Spiritual World Vision of Saint Ephrem* (Kalamazoo, 1992), pp. 148-154.

[6] S. Brock, 'Clothing metaphors as a means of theological expression in Syriac tradition', in M. Schmidt (ed.), *Typus, Symbol, Allegorie bei den östlichen Vätern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter* (Eichstätter Beiträge 4; Regensburg 1982), pp. 11-38.

[7] *HdF* 6:17.

[8] E. Beck, 'Zwei ephrämische Bilder', *Oriens Christianus* 71 (1987), pp. 1-9.

mouth of Sheol and dragging out Adam and Eve from the womb of death and Sheol. Ephrem has more to say on this elsewhere: 'This is the Son of the Skilful Carpenter[9] who mounted His cross (ܨܠܝܒܐ) over the all-devouring Sheol and caused humanity to pass over to the abode of life. Since it was by means of the tree (ܥܨܐ) that humanity had fallen into Sheol, upon the same means of the tree (ܥܨܐ) it passed over to the abode of life. Thus in the very tree (ܥܨܐ) in which bitterness was tasted sweetness too was tasted, to teach that He has no adversary among His creatures. Praise to You who made the cross a bridge (ܨܠܝܒܐ ܓܫܪ ܠܗ) over death so that souls might pass over it from the abode of the dead to the abode of the living'[10].

In Hymns on Faith 6 the alphabetic acrostic runs thus:

ܐ ܒ ܓ ܕ ܗ ܘ ܙ ܚ ܛ ܝ ܟ ܠ ܡ ܢ ܣ ܥ ܦ ܨ ܩ ܪ ܫ ܬ.

At the third ܝ Ephrem is reminded of the name ܝܫܘܥ and stops the hymn with a reflection on the name of Jesus. For Ephrem the name of Jesus serves as the last haven of safety since it is the bridge between life and death. The very initial letter ܝ is the place where one's ship of faith should halt. The threefold repetition of ܝ seems to be deliberate. ܝ is the tenth letter of the alphabet and its numerical value is ten; so the letter ܝ is a great symbol as Ephrem explains in the following texts:

Let the tenth day give praise through its number.
For 'yod' is the letter of the beautiful name of Jesus.
Its numerical value is ten; it is like a lord,
Returning[11] the numbers,
For when the number has climbed to ten
It turns itself down to begin again from one.
O great symbol[12] which is in the name Jesus
Whose power is restoring (all) creatures![13]
'Yod' is placed at the beginning of Your name,
It is placed at the tenth in the month of Nisan.
On the tenth You entered the womb[14]:
In the symbol of the perfect number is Your conception[15].
The name of Joseph was not able
To be your father, for it was feeble.
Your name gave him the letter 'yod'[16].
Your name strengthened the name of Joseph to be Your father[17].

[9] *HdF* 17:11.
[10] *SdDN* 4.
[11] Restoring, bringing back, changing, etc.
[12] ܪܫܝܬܐ ܕܟܠ.
[13] *HdN* 26:12.
[14] See Ex 12:3.6; *HdN* 5:14; S.P. Brock, 'Passover annunciation and epiclesis: some remarks on the term *aggen* in the Syriac version of Lk 1:35', *NT* 24 (1982), pp. 222-233.
[15] *HdN* 27:2.
[16] ܝ, of ܝܗܒ.
[17] *HdN* 27:5.

Also John did not baptize
His holy body without His power.
The 'yod' carried the name of John[18]
As the power of Jesus carried John.
Now, if He bestowed the beauty
Of His letters to their names,
If He mixed His glorious beauty with their names,
How much more did He mix
His hidden power with their names![19]
And just as the number
Has only ten steps[20]
The creation has six sides:
The height and depth and the four sides[21]
Are (all) filled with You!
'Yod' the letter of Jesus our King,
Is the queen of all numbers[22]
On its fullness depend all reckonings
As all meanings[23] are mixed in Jesus[24].

The letter ܝ represents the perfect number because its numerical value is ten. When we reach the number ten we have to return to one in order to continue the counting. So ten is the queen of all numbers; all other numbers return while ten remains as the climax. The Pythagorean philosophers had a similar view which was perhaps known to Ephrem[25]. Thus for Ephrem ܝ, or ten is the great ܪܫܝܬܐ that is in the name Jesus. The power (ܫܠܝܛ) of Jesus restores all creatures. Jesus was conceived on the tenth of Nisan. The power of ܝ was given to Joseph's name because Jesus will also be known as the Son of Joseph[26]. The 'yod' of Jesus' name can also be found in the name of John who was to baptize Jesus. Mary received ܝ from Jesus' name ܡܫܝܚܐ[27]. The first letters of ܝܫܘܥ and ܡܫܝܚܐ are carrying the names of Joseph and Mary because their names are unable to carry themselves. Thus 'yod' gave the real meaning and power to their names. Most probably Ephrem has in mind the

[18] ܝ, of ܝܘܚܢܢ.
[19] E. Beck, CSCO 187 Syr 83, p. 126 n. 8: their bodies.
[20] *HdN* 26:12.
[21] See *Pr Ref* II, pp. cxxii-cxxiv.
[22] *HdN* 26:12.
[23] ܟܠ ܐܢܫ. See J. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionnary*, p. 546; E. Beck, CSCO 187 Syr 83, p. 126: 'jeder (menschliche) Geist'. But see *HdN* 27:14-22.
[24] *HdN* 27:10-13.
[25] See R. Waterfield (trans.), *The Theology of Arithmetic: On the Mystical, Mathematical and Cosmological Symbolism of the First Ten Numbers: Attributed to Jamblicus* (Grand Rapids, 1988), pp. 109-115.
[26] Mary is at a loss: How to call Jesus? Her love for Joseph prompts her to call Jesus 'Son of Joseph'. See *HdN* 2:6.13.22; 6:1-2; 23:4; Lk 3:23; Jn 1:45; Mt 1:18.
[27] *HdN* 27:6-8.

'yod' of the name ܡܫܝܚܐ[28], which also has ܝ and ܐ, and thus pointing to the mystery of the incarnation. Ephrem identifies ܡܫܝܚ with Jesus the Messiah, though the latter is not identified reversely. Ephrem's repeated use of the term ܡܫܝܚܐ in *HdN* 26:12, 27:6-10 and the verb ܡܫܚ in *HdN* 27:5 are significant in the light of the term ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚ in *HdN* 27:11. The mention of conception on the tenth of the first/seventh month Nisan is another indication in *HdN* 27:2 which highlights the indwelling of the ܡܫܝܚܐ from above in Mary's womb and which was revealed later at the Jordan. This idea we find also in *HdN* 5:13-14.19-24. The ܡܫܝܚܐ of the Most High dwelt in Mary's womb and that is why Jesus is called Son of God[29]. The ܡܫܝܚܐ of ܝ was not revealed through the name Jesus bar-Nun; but his name depicted the mystery that was revealed through Jesus' birth[30]. ܝܫܘܥ ܕܢܐ had to wait until the arrival of ܝܫܘܥ to know what his own name depicted as ܐܝܟ in advance.

Mary does not dare to call Jesus with any particular name because 'ten thousand names would not suffice' Him[31]. The prophecy of Isaiah[32] about the child whose name is a great symbol (ܫܡ ܐܝܟ) is fulfilled in Jesus. The name ܥܡܢܘܐܝܠ is a mixture of two names[33]. Our names are mixed with His name in the Church, because in the incarnate Son God put on humanity. Those born in baptism are mixed into His body which is the Church[34]. It is the name of Jesus that supplies meaning and power to our names. The name Jesus is understood in the context of salvation history and the mystery of incarnation. By giving meaning to all other names it remains identical with the name 'With us is God'. This is the 'mixing' of God with human beings, exchanging the mantle of names. So Christ is called 'the garment of our glory'[35], which restores all creation just as the ܝ returns all other numbers[36]. Thus members of the Church are restored creation whose names are mixed with Christ's — which take us to the core of Ephrem's theology of divine names. This theme has its soteriological as well as ecclesiological implications[37] worth exploring.

[28] Ex 15:2; *HdF* 44:4.

[29] See S.P. Brock, 'The Lost Old Syriac at Lk 1:35 and the Earliest Syriac Terms for the Incarnation', in W.L. Petersen (ed.), *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century: Origins, Recensions, Text, and Transmission* (Notre Dame, 1989), pp. 117-131.

[30] *HdN* 1:31-32; *HcH* 4:18.

[31] *HdN* 6:2.

[32] Is 7:14.

[33] *HdN* 25:5. El (God) is with us (= our names). See *HdF* 41:6.

[34] *HdN* 25:5-6.

[35] *HdN* 17:6. See *HdP* 2:7; 6:9; *HdV* 35:2; *Epiph (?)* 13:1-3; S. Brock, *Saint Ephrem: Hymns on Paradise* (Crestwood, 1990), pp. 66-72.

[36] *HdN* 26:12; 27:12-13.

[37] T. Koonammakkal, 'Christ and Christians: An Ecclesiological Theme in Ephrem', *Christian Orient* 15 (1994), pp. 163-169.

The Sources of Ibn Bahlûl's Chapter on Dream Divination

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al-Hasan ibn Bahlûl was a Nestorian Christian of the tenth century[1]. He spent most of his life in Baghdad. He is best known for his magnificent, multi-volume *Syriac-Arabic Lexicon*, edited by Rubens Duval at the turn of the century[2]. In the early 1970s Fuat Sezgin discovered in Istanbul a unique copy of the complete text of another work by Ibn Bahlûl, his *Kitâb al-Dalâ'il* or *Book of Signs*[3]. The Iraqi scholar Joseph Habbi has now published a critical edition of this text[4].

It would be hard to overemphasize the importance of this new work by Ibn Bahlûl. The text in question is not unlike a modern almanac. In the main it offers synopses of the various feasts and festivals of the diverse eastern churches, as well as those of the Jews, Muslims, Harranians, and others[5]. Much of this information is unique. At the same time, the later chapters of the *Book of Signs* turn their attention to other types of 'signs' — such matters as signs for determining the health of slaves, signs useful for divination via physiognomy, signs of the manes of horse and their diseases, and so forth.

[1] An overview of the little which is known of his life can be found in Joseph Habbi, 'Le *Livre des Signes* de al-Hasan b. Bahlul', *Oriens Christianus* 68 (1984), pp. 210-12. He was born in the city of Awana about 60 kilometers north of Baghdad sometime toward the beginning of the tenth century. Eventually he came to Baghdad in order to study and then to teach. His intellectual interests ranged from medicine to philosophy. He also appears to have been active in the events surrounding the election of the Catholicos 'Abdisho' I in 967. See Jean Maurice Fiey, *Chrétiens syriaques sous les Abbassides* (Louvain, 1980), p. 158.

[2] Ruben Duval (ed.), *Lexicon Syriacum auctore Hassan Bar Bahlul* (Paris, 1886-1903).

[3] Ibn Bahlûl's *Book of Signs* was written between the years 942 and 968, see Jean Maurice Fiey, 'Sur le calendrier syriaque oriental arabe de Bar Bahlul', *Analecta Bollandiana* 106 (1988), p. 271.

[4] In the early 1980s Sezgin provided Joseph Habbi with a copy of the manuscript of the *Book of Signs* and Habbi quickly began work on a critical edition, individual chapters appearing over the next few years in a number of Arabic periodicals: 'Signes des fêtes et des jeûnes', *Journal of the Iraqi Academy: Syriac Corporation* 7 (1983), pp. 206-34; 'L'interprétation des songes ou l'onirique du *Livre des Signes*', *al-Mawrid* 13.1 (1984), pp. 127-62; 'Les signes météorologiques dans le *Livre des Signes*', *Journal of the Iraqi Academy: Syriac Corporation* 8 (1984), pp. 165-95. In 1985 Fuat Sezgin published a facsimile 'edition' of the complete text: *The Book of Indications (Kitab al-Dala'il) by al-Hasan ibn al-Bahlul (Tenth Century A.D.)* (Publications of the Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science, ed. F. Sezgin; Frankfurt am Main, 1985). In 1987 Joseph Habbi offered the first critical edition of the complete text: *Kitâb al-Dalâ'il lil-Hasan b. al-Bahlul* (Kuwait, 1987).

[5] An overview of the contents of the work can be found in Joseph Habbi, 'Les sources du *Livre des Signes* d'al-Hasan ibn Bahlul', K. Samir (ed.), *Actes du 2e Congrès d'Études arabes chrétiennes* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 226; 1986), pp. 193-203.

For our purposes, the last of Ibn Bahlûl's chapters is of primary importance, signs for the interpretation of dreams in order to predict the future. This chapter is far and away the longest in the work: fifty-two pages in the edition of Habbi. As to its format, it is not unlike the well-known dream manual of Artemidorus. Ibn Bahlûl is interested in the future events which are foreshadowed in the symbols of a person's dreams. He is not like modern psychologists concerned with the insight these symbols offer as to a person's mental states, conscious or subconscious. Dream interpretation is rather a type of divination, its object being the prediction of future events.

This chapter can be divided into two parts. The first of these is a theoretical introduction in which Ibn Bahlûl establishes the nobility of the science of dream divination and discusses some of the principles involved in the interpretation of dreams[6]. Following his theoretical introduction, Ibn Bahlûl immediately takes up the various types of dream symbols and what they prognosticate. These symbols are divided into forty-one chapters[7]. Within each of these chapters, there are further subdivisions. Most of the interpretations which Ibn Bahlûl gives are rather laconic: 'the meaning of x is y', or 'if someone see x, y will happen'[8].

Certain indications within the text suggest that Ibn Bahlûl may have been writing under an Islamic influence. Let me cite just a few of these. He gives an interpretation of the festival of al-Mawsim[9]. He speaks of dreams of the

[6] The topics which are treated include the influence of the four humors on the types of dreams which predominate in a person (e.g., if black bile predominates, a person will see dreams of frightful things, death, and black objects, all of which are scary). Ibn Bahlûl further specifies that the true dream vision can be classified as a type of revelation. It is in fact one part of the forty-five parts of prophecy. Certain dreams are, however, more auspicious than others. Those, for example, which are seen by a virtuous person, or those which are seen toward the first break of day. Although a unitary phenomenon, not all dream visions are to be interpreted in the same way. Rather, their interpretation varies according to the different states of a person: such things, for example, as occupation, religion, the time of the year in which the dream is seen. Moreover, different methodologies can be applied to the interpretation of the dream. Some are best interpreted through analogy. The meaning of others can be applied not to the person who had the dream but to that person's namesake or friend or leader. The interpretation of some dreams can be provided through verses of the Scripture, others through proverbs, others through well-known verses of poetry, yet others through the etymology of words.

[7] Let me give just a few examples of the classes of symbols which he treats: dreams of God, of the resurrection, paradise, and hell, of the sun, moon, and stars, of a human being and his or her members, of marriage and divorce, and so on.

[8] To give a sense of the style consider this selection from the chapter on dreams of the sun, moon, and stars: 'The sun is a great king. Whatever he sees vis-à-vis change, eclipse, or darkness, this he shall suffer at the hands of the king, along with grief and sickness, and the likes of that. Whoever sees that he becomes the sun, he shall obtain kingship. His exaltedness will be in accordance with the number of his rays … The moon in interpretation is the minister of the king. Venus is his wife. Mercury is his scribe' (*Kitâb al-Dalâ'il*, ed. Habbi, pp. 388-9).

[9] *Kitâb al-Dalâ'il*, ed. Habbi, p. 390.

Ka'bah and of the Qiblah[10]. He is interested in prayer leaders and imâms[11]. If someone dreams that his five fingers are extended, this signifies his prayers[12]. (The Muslims of course have five daily prayers). Ritual ablution also comes in for a mention[13]. Occasionally also interpretations are cited on the authority of Ibn Sîrîn, the father of Islamic dream interpretation, or even on the authority of the prophet, i.e., Muhammad[14]. Such passages speak *prima facie* for an Islamic influence on Ibn Bahlûl. I wish to argue that Ibn Bahlûl's dream manual is in fact a direct summary of an earlier dream manual by Ibn Quataybah.

Ibn Qutaybah was one of the great Muslim savants of the ninth century. Born in 828 in the city of Kufa, he died in 889 in the city of Baghdad. The subjects to which he devoted himself were diverse. They include: astronomy, theology, literature, Qur'ân, and legal matters. He was also the author of the earliest *extant*, Islamic manual for the interpretation of dreams, his *Kitâb 'ibârat al-ru'yâ* or the *Book of the Interpretation of Dream Visions*. This text has not yet been edited. Two copies, one complete and one partial, can be found in Jerusalem and Ankara[15].

A comparison of Ibn Qutaybah's dream manual with that of Ibn Bahlûl shows clearly that the latter is in fact a summary of the former. The one major difference between the texts is that Ibn Bahlûl gave only the barest outlines of Ibn Qutaybah's lengthy theoretical introduction. What interested him more was the actual content of the text, the dream symbols and their interpretations.

Ibn Qutaybah's dream manual, not including the theoretical introduction, is quite long, forty folios of a rather tight hand with fifteen lines per page. Ibn Bahlûl's dream manual, again excluding the introduction, is about one fifth the length. Such compression was possible largely because Ibn Bahlûl gave only the results of Ibn Qutaybah's dream manual. Whereas Ibn Qutaybah would often cite the Qur'ân, poetry, or proverbs, or state the analogy underlying his interpretations, none of this was of interest to Ibn Bahlûl. He was instead concerned with the resulting interpretation only: 'if someone sees x in a dream, such and such will happen'. Another factor which allowed Ibn Bahlûl to summarize so much and yet still retain the substance is that Ibn Qutaybah's dream manual is organized along the *akhbâr* format, that is, many of the traditions which he cited are provided with a lengthy chain of authorities or *isnâd*: 'I

[10] *Kitâb al-Dalâ'il*, ed. Habbi, pp. 386-7.

[11] *Kitâb al-Dalâ'il*, ed. Habbi, p. 388.

[12] *Kitâb al-Dalâ'il*, ed. Habbi, p. 392.

[13] *Kitâb al-Dalâ'il*, ed. Habbi, p. 400.

[14] *Kitâb al-Dalâ'il*, ed. Habbi, pp. 396, 400, 411, 414.

[15] The most complete manuscript of it is Yahuda ms. ar. 196 (67ff, copied in 1441 A.D.) of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. This copy, however, has a number of lacunae in the theoretical introduction. We are therefore fortunate that another copy of the introduction can be found in ms. Is. Saib Sincer I, 4501 (ff. 180-217), which is now located in the University of Ankara, in the library of The Language, History, and Geography Faculty. These are, to the best of my knowledge, the only manuscripts in which the text is preserved.

heard it from x, who heard it from y, who heard it from z, who heard it from the prophet's wife, that Muhammad said ...'. Such materials are simply excised by Ibn Bahlûl.

Apart from these types of compressions, Ibn Bahlûl summarizes almost all the content of Ibn Qutaybah's dream manual, often verbatim. Even the order of the chapters is exactly the same[16]. It is not here possible to show in detail the extensive parallels between these two texts: a few illustrative examples will have to suffice. Compare the following passages from the first chapter, on dreams of God.

Ibn Qutaybah: 'Interpreters say: "Whoever sees God (may he be lifted up and exalted) in a place, that place will be filled with justice and prosperity shall befall its people, along with joy and goodness, for God is the manifest truth, to whom is this world and the next and with him are the keys of sustenance"'[17].

Ibn Bahlûl: 'Whoever sees God (may he be blessed and exalted) in a place, that place will be filled with justice and felicitation and joy and goodness, for to God is this world and the next'[18].

Or again, consider the following two passages from the beginning of the next chapter, on dreams of the resurrection.

Ibn Qutaybah: 'Whoever sees that the resurrection has happened in a place, justice shall spread in that place for its inhabitants, if they are oppressed, but against them, if they are the oppressors, for the day of the resurrection is the day of separation and the day of requital and judgment. God (may he be lifted up and exalted) said: "And we shall set up scales of justice for the day of the resurrection. No one will be treated unjustly in any way" (Qur'ân 21:47)'[19].

Ibn Bahlûl: 'If he sees that the resurrection has happened in a place, justice shall spread and be published aboard in that place, if its people are oppressed, and against them, if they are oppressors'[20].

Page after page, the same sorts of parallels are found, with topics being treated in exactly the same order and often with exactly the same words. There can be no doubt but that Ibn Bahlûl was drawing upon the earlier work of Ibn Qutaybah.

This established, a number of important conclusions follows. The first of these is of a historical-critical nature. There has been some doubt as to the authenticity of the dream manual of Ibn Qutaybah. G. Lecomte summarized the state of the question in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* (2nd edition, vol. 3, p. 845) when he stated that the attribution of this work to Ibn Qutaybah was 'at

[16] Although Ibn Bahlûl's text has 41 chapters (i.e., sets of dream symbols) and Ibn Qutaybah's has 46, this is only because a number of shorter chapters were combined by Ibn Bahlûl.
[17] Yahuda ms. ar. 196, f. 25r.
[18] *Kitâb al-Dalâ'il*, ed. Habbi, 385.
[19] Yahuda ms. ar. 196, f. 25v.
[20] *Kitâb al-Dalâ'il*, ed. Habbi, 385.

present doubtful'[21]. Similarly, Toufic Fahd has withheld judgment on the question, stating that such would require 'a long, comparative study in order to establish this work's authenticity'[22]. Ibn Bahlûl, however, was clearly dependent on the dream manual ascribed to Ibn Qutaybah. Moreover, no more than one hundred years separate Ibn Qutaybah from Ibn Bahlûl. One can thus no longer dispute an early date for the dream manual ascribed to Ibn Qutaybah, which is also a powerful argument for its authenticity.

Secondly, that Ibn Bahlûl was able to draw so freely upon the work of his Islamic predecessor contributes to our understanding of the civilizational context shared and contested by both Muslims and Christians in the early medieval Near East. The significance of this single civilizational context should not be underemphasized. For there are longstanding tendencies to treat early medieval Christian cultural developments (whether in Byzantium or under Islam) as distinct from developments taking place among the Muslims. The dependence of Ibn Bahlûl on Ibn Qutaybah suggests, however, that cultural boundaries are not nearly as firm as are sometimes imagined. Here at least we can see in some detail how a Christian living under Islam was engaged in an earnest and lively dialogue with a Muslim concerning a single cultural tradition. I would thus argue that there needs to be an interdisciplinary approach to the development of Near Eastern culture in the early middle ages, one which minimizes the significance of religious or political boundaries and attends to the significant strands of cultural continuity.

The fact of dependence has been established. It remains to examine in further detail some of the subtle differences which distinguish the interpretations of Ibn Bahlûl and Ibn Qutaybah. Sometimes these amount to a single word or a short phrase. Nonetheless, such differences may well betray more substantial differences in outlook. For it must not be forgotten that the act of compiling is itself a form of unavowed authorship. These and other questions I hope to treat at greater length in a forthcoming study on the origins of the Islamic tradition of dream divination and the ways in which Christians living under Islam and in Byzantium adapted that tradition to their own purposes.

[21] Cf. his comments in *Ibn Qutayba* (Damascus, 1965), 157-8.
[22] 'Les procédés oniromantiques', in *La divination arabe* (Leiden, 1966), p. 317.

The Lent Cycle in Ancient Georgian Homiletic-Liturgical Collections

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Over the course of a few centuries ancient Georgian literature developed in close contact with the literature of Byzantine. Beginning in the 5th century, Georgian writers, scholars and translators, wishing to enrich Georgian culture with the latest achievements of world literature and science, alongside vigorous efforts in creating an original Georgian literature, also took an interest in translating well-known works of medieval writings in the Greek, Arabic, Armenian and Syriac languages.

Scholarly literature recognizes the significance of Georgian homiletics, especially homiletic-liturgical works. Old-Georgian translations of early Byzantine works of the so-called Jerusalem epoch arouse a great interest on the part of specialists, as most of the Greek originals of these works have been lost. One of these unique works is the Georgian polycephalon. It is thought to have been compiled, as an independent collection, at an early stage in the development of Georgian writings (5th century) Several valuable copies of the Georgian polycephalon have come down to us (the most ancient one being dated to the 8th century). They contain homilies by well-known authors, translated from the 5th to the 8th centuries. Subsequently polycephala were enriched by original homiletic and hagiographical works.

It should be stressed here that the basis of the whole architectonics of the above collections is the Jerusalem lectionary. The polycephalon, as a work of old Georgian translated homiletic literature, was popular until the 11th century, when the Jerusalem liturgical practice had already been supplanted by that of Constantinople, and when the collection had lost its basic function as a homiletic addition to the Jerusalem lectionary[1].

Today I would like to draw your kind attention to the Lent cycle which in the ancient Georgian Polycephalon is attributed to Ioanne Bolneli.

Georgian written sources have preserved very scanty information concerning Ioanne Bolneli. Proceeding from these data, researchers have voiced contradictory opinions about life and activities of this author (K. Kekelidze, R. Baramidze). According to these researchers, Bolneli was a writer who lived

[1] კლარჯული მრავალთავი. ტექსტი გამოსაცემად მოამზადა და გამოკვლევა დაურთო თამილა მგალობლიშვილმა, ძველი ქართული მწერლობის ძეგლები, ტ.XII, თბილისი, 1991, გვ.176.

and worked at the end of the 10th century and in the early 11th century[2]. P. Ingorokva dates his works to the 9th century[3], while according to M. Tarchnishvili[4] and M. van Esbroeck[5], he was a 6th-7th century author. Later N. Dalmais agreed with the opinion M. van Esbroeck expressed in his monograph[6]. In this connection the dating of the above original system of lections for Sundays in Lent acquires a great significance.

It has long been recognized in scholarly literature that from the 5th through to the 10th century divine service in Georgia followed the Jerusalem practice. It is also known that the content of the Sunday service in the triodion cycle was determined, in Jerusalem, by the system of Gospel lections in the Greek manuscript from the Sinai collection (No. 210; 9th-10th centuries)[7]. K. Kekelidze discovered an analogous system of Gospel lections in the Georgian translation of the Jerusalem lectionary (6th-7th centuries)[8].

Through the lectionary, the peculiar feature of the Holy Service in Jerusalem was reflected in the oldest tropology and in the polycephalon as both are additions to the lectionary: the tropology — to hymnographic works, and the polycephalon — to homiletics. As the liturgical aspect of the polycephalon, like the most ancient tropology, is wholly dependent upon the lectionary, the study of the cycle of Lent in the Georgian polycephalon was pursued with a eye to the material in the lectionary and the tropology.

According to Ioanne Bolneli's original system the duration of Lent was 8 weeks[9]. It is also noteworthy that on the above system the liturgy was offered during the whole period of Lent on Saturdays and Sundays.

It is known that the question of the number of weeks in Lent was a subject of dispute during the first centuries of Christianity. 'Egeria's Pilgrimage' makes it clear that by the year 384, Lent in Jerusalem lasted eights weeks[10]. Analysis of the Armenian lectionary enabled A. Renoux to conclude that the change-over from an 8-weeks Lent to 7 weeks took place sometime between the years 384 and 439[11],

[2] კ. კეკელიძე, ქართული ლიტერატურის ისტორია, ტ.1, თბილისი, 1960, გვ.182, რ. ბარამიძე, იოანე ბოლნელი, თბილისი, 1962, გვ.10-11.

[3] ვ. ინგოროყვა თხზულებათა კრებული შვიდ ტომად, ტ.IV, თბილისი, 1978, გვ. 406-407.

[4] M. Tarchnisvili, 'Zwei Georgische Lektionarfragmente, aus dem 5 und 8. Jahrhundert', *Le Muséon*, t. 73, fasc. 3-4, (1960), pp. 280-282.

[5] M. van Esbroeck, *Les plus anciens homéliaires géorgiens* (Louvain-La-Neuve, 1975), pp. 312-316, 328-331.

[6] J.A. Dalmais, 'Les Géorgiens à Jérusalem', *Le Monde de la Bible* (Paris, Sept. Oct. 1990), pp. 45-48.

[7] И. Карабинов, *Постная триодь*, СПБ, 1910, с. 22-26.

[8] К. Кекелидзе, *Иерусалимский Канонарь*, Тифлис, 1912, с. 196.

[9] See კლარჯული მრავალთავი, გვ.30; 33; 29-40.

[10] Паломничество по святым местам конца IV века, изданное, переведенное и объясненное И. Помяловским, *Православный Палестинский сборник*, т. VII, вып. 2, СПБ, 1889, с. 147.

[11] A. Renoux, Le codex arménien Jérusalem 121, II, *Patrologia Orientalis*, t. 56 (Turnhout, 1971), p. 184.

eight weeks becoming canonical for the monophysites and for residents of Constantinople, while seven weeks was the rule for the Orthodox Christians in Jerusalem[12].

The epoch of the Emperor Heraclius is remarkable for its tendency to reconcile the various doctrinal issues and customs. According to sources from this period, in Jerusalem, Lent for Orthodox Christians was extended for another week: — so it came to last eight weeks[13]. This is well attested by the Greek triodion, as well as by the story of Eutyches (10th century)[14]. However, a seven-weeks Lent was advocated by Maximus the Confessor, an ardent opponent of Heraclius's policy[15].

After the failure of the religious policy pursued by Heraclius in the 8th century, the Orthodox believers in the East embarked upon a heated discourse as to whether Lent should last seven or eight weeks[16].

Georgian literary works also reveal a controversy regarding the number of weeks in Lent. According to 'The Martyrdom of Shushanik' (5th century), Lent lasts 8 weeks. In this work the liturgy was offered only on Sundays[17]. According to 'The Martyrdom of Abo Tbileli' (8th century), Lent lasted 7 weeks. From this work we known that the days free from fasting were Saturdays and Sundays[18]. According to the most ancient lectionary and tropology that reflect the Jerusalem practice at a certain stage of its development (7th-10th centuries), the period of Lent covered seven weeks[19]. It was only in the 10th-century liturgical works and in new tropologies that Lent was set to last eight weeks again. In these works the liturgy was offered on Saturdays and Sundays[20]. The eight-week Lent in Georgia was connected with the new tropologion, particularly with the collection that comprised, actually for the first time, the hymns sung by John Damascene's generation. In his treatise on Lent St. John of Damascus maintained that the forty-day period of Lent could be rightfully placed within eight weeks on the basis that the ancient Antioch practice stems from the teachings of the Apostles[21].

[12] See И. Карабинов, *Постная триодь*, с. 3-22.
[13] M. van Esbroeck, *Anciens homéliaires*, p. 330.
[14] M. van Esbroeck, *Anciens homéliaires*, p. 330.
[15] See Georg. ms. Q 34, pp. 503-504, 506.
[16] See კლარჯული მრავალთავი, გვ.31.
[17] ძველი ქართული აგიოგრაფიული ლიტერატურის ძეგლები, ილ. აბულაძის რედაქციით, ტ.1, თბილისი, 1963, გვ.25.
[18] ძეგლები, 1, გვ.60.
[19] უძველესი იადგარი, გამოსაცემად მოამზადეს, გამოკვლევა და საძიებლები დაურთეს ილ. მეტრეველმა, ც. ჭანკიევმა და ლ. ხევსურიანმა, ძველი ქართული მწერლობის ძეგლები, ტ.II, თბილისი, 1980, გვ. 759. И. Карабинов, *Постная триодь*, с. 31-51.
[20] უძველესი იადგარი, გვ. 764-767; И. Карабинов, *Постная триодь*, с. 31-51.
[21] И. Карабинов, *Постная триодь*, с. 17-20; უძველესი იადგარი, გვ. 759; კლარჯული მრავალთავი, გვ.31.

It is noteworthy that in copies of 10th-11th century polycephala the period of Lent covers 8 weeks too (according to Bolneli's system) and begins with Sexagesima Sunday. In earlier collections the Lent cycle had not yet taken shape as a system. In these manuscripts there occur only separate lections for certain days of the triodion and most of them come from the pen of John Chrysostom or Pseudo-Chrysostom[22].

Thus, Bolneli's eight-week system of lections for Lent which is attested exclusively in 10th-century manuscripts and is liturgically close to new tropologies dating from the 10th century was, in our opinion, created in the 10th century.

In conclusion we might add that Bolneli, being well-versed in both contemporary and ancient written sources, adapted them to the conditions of his time, creating a new system of lections to be read on Sundays in Lent, as well as an entire cycle of original sermons to serve the Georgian church in the 10th century.

A typical feature of Georgian literature of that period is the growth of the national trend which found the most vivid expression in the Tao-Klardjeti and in Palestinian-Jerusalem scholarly centres. Georgian national hagiography and hymnography were revived. Considering these circumstances, we find it natural that an original system of lections for Sundays in Lent should have been created in the 10th century and Georgian literature ascribes them to Ioanne Bolneli.

[22] კლარჯული მრავალთავი, გვ.30-31.

The Quotations from the Lost Works of Theodoret of Cyrus and Theodore of Mopsuestia in an Unpublished East Syrian Work on Christology

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The East Syrian manuscripts *Mingana 544* and *Cambridge Or. 1317* contain a still unpublished Christological work[1], composed by the monk Simon the Persecuted[2]. The work, which bears the title *On the Union*[3], is divided into 21 chapters (called *rēšē* or *mēmrē*)[4] and preceded by a metrical *mēmrā* directed against a certain George Washnaya[5]. Both this metrical *mēmrā* and a final non-metrical *mēmrā* dealing with the refutation of Monophysite heresies may be attributed to the same author, Simon the Persecuted[6]. The title, the literary structure

[1] Cf. A. Mingana, *Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1933), cc. 1001-1004. This manuscript is incomplete at the beginning and the end and there are also lacunae in other parts of the manuscript, as a consequence of which some chapters are partially or completely lost. The old manuscript *Urmia 31* (actually *Urmia 32*, probably written somewhere between 1100 and 1300 AD), mentioned by A. Baumstark (*Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn, 1922), p. 210, n. 9) seems to have disappeared; cf. W.F. Macomber, 'New Finds of Syriac Manuscripts in the Middle East', in W. Voigt (ed.), *XVII. Deutscher Orientalistentag von 21. bis 27. Juli 1968 in Würzburg. Vorträge, Teil 2, Sektion 4* (ZDMG Suppl. I, Teil 2; Wiesbaden, 1969), p. 479; A. Desreumaux, *Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits syriaques* (Paris, 1991), pp. 242-243. An extract from *Urmia 32* was published by D. Jenks, *Ktābōnā d-partūtē* (Urmi, 1898), pp. 317-319. The manuscript *Cambridge Or. 1317* is a modern copy from *Urmia 32*; cf. A.E. Goodman, 'The Jenks Collection of Syriac Manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge', in *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1939), p. 595. In this article I quote *Ming. Syr. 544* according to the modern numbering of the folios, which was carried out after the loss of certain folios.

[2] Simon calls himself 'the Persecuted' (*rdīpā*) for the sake of God and for the sake of Christ. The epithet refers to his being persecuted by the demons, which may be a metaphor both for his ascetic life and for his struggle against the heretics, whom he calls 'the children of Satan' (cf. f.105^r).

[3] In the first chapter 'On the true Faith' Simon calls his work *'al ḥdāyūtā*, 'On the Union' (f.5^v).

[4] Chapters 1-2 are called *rēšē*, chapters 3-10 *mēmrē*, and chapters 11-21 again *rēšē*.

[5] ff.1^r-4^v; since quire 1 ends on f.8^v and most quires have 10 folios, we may assume that 2 folios covering the first part of the metrical *mēmrā* are lost in *Mingana 544*.

[6] In the treatise *On the Union* Simon frequently conducts a polemic against the heretical ideas of his contemporary George Washnaya, so that we may assume that the preceding metrical *mēmrā* was composed by Simon as a preamble to the principal work. The final *mēmrā* may be attributed to Simon on the two grounds of content and style (the form of the dialogue between the Persecuted and his oppontents).

and many of its themes are strongly influenced by another Christological treatise *On the Union* — the one composed by the famous East Syrian theologian Babai the Great (died 628)[7].

Very little is known with any certainty concerning the author, the date and the place of origin of Simon's work. But on linguistic grounds and with regard to its contents we may assume that the work is rather late (not earlier than the end of the twelfth century) and that it was composed somewhere in Northern Iraq (perhaps in the monastery of 'Abdisho' near Amadia)[8]. The direct cause leading to its composition may have been the appearance of the heresy of George Washnaya, whom Simon calls 'the second Origen'[9], accusing him of 'attributing everything to the nature of God' and blurring the essential difference between God and His Creation[10].

Apart from its importance as a source for the medieval history of East Syrian Christianity Simon's work *On the Union* has a special significance connected with its quotations from the works of Greek and Syriac patristic writers. In this communication I should like here to focus attention on the quotations from the now lost works of the Antiochene doctors Theodoret of Cyrus and Theodore of Mopsuestia.

Theodoret is quoted once, namely in the sixth *mēmrā*[11]. Here Simon quotes Theodoret's *Defence of Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia* against Cyril of Alexandria, with the purpose of demonstrating that Cyril too had to accept the concept of the divine nature as being infinite and unlimited[12]. In the quotation from Theodoret's *Defence* Cyril's words expressing the doctrine of the infinity of the divine nature are quoted, whereupon Theodoret argues that Cyril in this respect agrees with the view of Diodore and that he (Cyril) is, therefore, vainly getting into an argument with 'these holy men' (*i.e.* Diodore

[7] Although Babai is only sporadically mentioned by name (ff.10^r, 24^r, 55^v, 100^r), many sections betray the influence of Babai's treatise. Furthermore, the division into 21 chapters and the addition of a final *mēmrā* corresponds with Babai's plan, according to which his treatise is divided into 6 *mēmrē* subdivided into 21 *rēšē*, followed by a final 7th *mēmrā*; cf. A. Vaschalde (ed., trans.), *Babai magni liber de unione* (CSCO 79, 80, Script. Syri 34, 35; Louvain, 1915). For Babai's Christology, see V. Grumel, 'Un théologien nestorien: Babai le Grand (VIe et VIIe s.)', in *Échos d'Orient* 22 (1923), pp. 153-181; 23 (1924), pp. 162-177, 257-274, 395-399; L. Scipioni, *Ricerche sulla cristologia del 'Libro di Eraclide di Nestorio'* (Friburgo, 1956), pp. 110-158; L. Abramowski, 'Die Christologie Babais des Grossen', in *Symposium Syriacum 1972* (OCA 197; Roma, 1974), pp. 219-244; *idem*, 'Babai der Grosse: Christologische Probleme und ihre Lösungen', in *OCP* 41 (1975), pp. 289-343; G. Chediath, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great* (Kottayam, 1982).

[8] Cf. Jenks, *Ktābōnā d-partūtē*, p. 316.

[9] ff.4^v, 152^v. On f.89^r Simon says that his work is in fact directed against George and on f.100^r he compares his refutation of George with Babai's work against the Emperor Justinian.

[10] f.23^v.

[11] f.85^v.

[12] In the preceding section (f.85^{r-v}) Simon mentions Cyril's *Letter addressed to Nestorius* as an example of Cyril's admitting that the divine nature is unlimited.

and Theodore). The quotation appears to offer new evidence for Theodoret's *Defence*, since no parallel can be found in the fragments of this work preserved in the Acts of the Synod of Ephesus (449)[13], the Acts of the Fifth Council of Constantinople (553)[14], in Facundus of Hermiane's *Defence of the Three Chapters*[15] and in the East Syrian Church History of Barḥadbeshabba ʿArbaya[16].

The present writer has found nine quotations from the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia: two in *mēmrā* 3, two in *mēmrā* 6, three in *mēmrā* 7, one in *rēšā* 11, and one in *mēmrā* 21. Three of them concern still surviving works of Theodore, viz. a quotation from the *Commentary on the Twelve Minor Prophets* in *mēmrā* 3[17], a quotation from the *Commentary on the Twelve Minor Epistles of St. Paul* in *mēmrā* 6[18], and a quotation from the *Catechetical Homilies* in *rēšā* 11[19]. The last quotation (in *mēmrā* 21) cannot be traced to a particular work, since it defines in general terms the typical Theodorian view of the union of the divine and human nature of Christ[20]. This quotation is undoubtedly taken from Babai's work *On the Union*[21]. The remaining five quotations, however, seem to offer fresh pieces of information regarding Theodore's lost works.

The first of these (in *mēmrā* 3) is taken from the lost *Commentary on Matthew*[22]. It explains why Jesus asked his disciples, 'But whom say ye that I am?', and how Simon Peter's profession was revealed to the disciples (Matth. 16:15-16). Theodore's exegesis here is closely related to the exegesis of Matth. 16:15 in the *Anonymous Commentary on the New Testament* preserved in the East Syrian manuscript (*olim*) *Diyarbakir 22*[23], which is — as I have

[13] Cf. J. Flemming (ed.), *Akten der ephesinischen Synode vom Jahre 449 syrisch mit Georg Hoffmanns deutscher Übersetzung und seinen Anmerkungen* (Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, phil.-hist. Klasse, N.F. Bd. XV,1; Berlin, 1917), pp. 104-109.

[14] Cf. J. Straub (ed.), *Concilium universale Constantinopolitanum sub Iustiniano habitum* (*ACO* IV,1; Berolini, 1971), pp. 94-95.

[15] Cf. J.-M. Clément-R. Vander Plaatse (eds.), *Facundi episcopi ecclesiae Hermaniensis opera omnia* (CCL XC A; Turnholti, 1974) (see Index, p. 461); L. Abramowski, 'Reste von Theodorets Apologie für Diodor und Theodor bei Facundus', in *SP* I (TU 63; Berlin, 1957), pp. 61-69.

[16] See L. Abramowski, *Untersuchungen zum Liber Heraclidis des Nestorius* (CSCO 242, Subs. 22; Louvain, 1963), pp. 74-103.

[17] f.42^{r-v}; this quotation concerns Theodore's exegesis of Nah.1:1 in H.N. Sprenger (ed.), *Theodori Mopsuesteni commentarius in XII prophetas* (Göttinger Orientforschungen V. Reihe: Biblica et Patristica, Bd. 1; Wiesbaden, 1977), pp. 239, *28* - 240, *17*.

[18] f.86^{r}; see below notes 32 and 34.

[19] f.117^{v}; this quotation concerns Theodore's conception of baptism being the earnest of the blessings of the Second Age; cf. for example *Hom. catech.* XIV,6, R. Tonneau-R. Devreesse (eds.), *Les homélies catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopsueste* (Studi e Testi 145; Città del Vaticano, 1949), pp. 412-415.

[20] f.171^{v}.

[21] Vaschalde (CSCO 79,80), p. 246,*6-8* (ed.), p. 199,*35-36* (trans.).

[22] f.41^{v}.

[23] *Diy. 22*, f. 254^{r}; Simon's profession (Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God) is attributed to the hidden revelation by Christ. This revelation, in which not only Simon Peter, but also the other disciples shared, is compared with God's revelations to the righteous people and the prophets of old, who received revelations in dreams or in a state of wakefulness.

argued elsewhere[24] — heavily dependent on Theodore's New Testament commentaries[25].

There are three quotations from Theodore's lost work *On the Incarnation*: according to Simon's introductions these are taken from Book II (in *mēmrā* 6), Book XII and Book V of this work (both occurring in *mēmrā* 7)[26]. In the quotation from Book II Theodore explains the perfect and complete equality of will of the Father and the Son[27]. In the quotation from Book XII Theodore states that nobody has even ventured to say that God the Word was anointed by the Holy Ghost (cf. Acts 10:38), since it had never come into the mind of anybody to suppose that the Holy Ghost is greater than God the Word[28]. The quotation from Book V is directly connected with the quotation from Book XII. Here Theodore cites the words of Peter (Acts 2:36) and, in addition, he explains that at this place the name 'Christ' does not denote the divine nature, but him who was so called because of his being anointed by the Holy Ghost, viz. the man 'who was taken from us'[29].

The last quotation stems from Theodore's work *Against the Magicians*, dedicated to the Armenian bishop Mastubius[30]. This quotation perhaps is the most interesting one, since almost nothing of this work is now extant[31]. In this quotation Theodore explains how the conjunction (*naqqīpūtā* / συνάφεια) of the *homo assumptus* with the *verbum assumens* made the man who was taken by God the Word 'the store of all thoughts by which the divine economy of the whole creation is performed'. The Lord, Christ according to the flesh, no longer cherishes human, but only divine thoughts and reflections. Theodore compares this condition with what happened to the prophets and apostles, who

[24] See G.J. Reinink, 'Die Exegese des Theodor von Mopsuestia in einem Anonymen nestorianischen Kommentar zum Neuen Testament', in *SP* XIX (Leuven, 1989), pp. 381-391.

[25] For a survey of preserved fragments of Theodore's *Commentary on Matthew*, see M. Geerard, *CPG* II (Turnhout, 1974), pp. 349-350 (no. 3840).

[26] For a survey of preserved fragments of Theodore's *On the Incarnation*, see Geerard, *ibid.*, pp. 355-356 (no. 3856). For a criticism of Geerard's distinguishing between fragments of the *traditio genuina* and the *traditio alterata*, see now L. Abramowski, 'On the fragments of Theodore of Mopsuestia in Brit. Libr. add. 12.156 and the christological fragment in double tradition', in *The Harp* VI,3 (1993), pp. 199-206.

[27] f.88^{r-v}.

[28] f.95^{r}.

[29] f.95^{r}.

[30] f.95^{v}.

[31] Cf. R. Devreesse, *Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste* (Studi e Testi 141; Città del Vaticano, 1948), pp. 51, 136. One fragment has survived in Dadisho''s *Commentary on the writings of Abba Isaiah*: R. Draguet (ed., trans.), *Commentaire du livre d'Abba Isaïe (logoi I-XV) par Dadišo Qaṭraya (VII^{e} s.)* (CSCO 326, 327, Script. Syri 144, 145; Louvain, 1972), pp. 270,*12*-271,*8*, cf. 275,*27*-276,*6* (ed.), pp. 208,*20*-209,*7*, cf. 212,*31-36* (trans.) (on the souls of the righteous and holy people in Paradise); cf. H. Scheinhardt, 'Zitate aus drei verlorenen Schriften des Theodor von Mopsuestia', in *Paul de Lagarde und die syrische Kirchengeschichte* (Göttingen, 1968), pp. 192-196.

received divine revelations. As an example he adduces the revelation of Peter in Joppa (Acts 10:9-12), when Peter fell into a deep trance, forgot his hunger and thought only of the things which appeared to him in the vision. However, whereas the prophets and the apostles were only for a short time in such a state of mind, it happens to Christ unceasingly and in an unspeakable way, because that manner of 'seeing' departs not at all from his mind, since everything that happened to him is far beyond all human comprehension. Therefore, the *homo assumptus* is 'completely the store of divine reflections and thoughts and those thoughts are unceasingly and always in him, which are in the divine nature performing the divine economy of all'.

There is no doubt as to the Theodoretian and Theodorian origin of these quotations in Simon's work *On the Union*. But still two questions remain to be answered. Firstly: by which channels did these quotations enter Simon's work? Were they transmitted through the intermediary of some source or did Simon take them directly from the Syriac translations of these works? This question can be answered with more certainty only within the framework of further inquiries into the sources underlying Simon's comprehensive work as a whole. The second question concerns the literary character of the quotations as such. How literal are they, and to what extent is it possible that they have undergone adjustements by being used in a new literary context? Here, a more profound analysis of the quotations from the surviving works of the authorities cited by Simon may give us some indications and directives. By way of conclusion I shall take as an example Simon's quotation from Theodore's *Commentary on the Twelve Minor Epistles of St. Paul*, which is preserved in a fragment in a Greek *catena* and in its Latin translation[32].

In this quotation Simon adduces Theodore's exegesis of Eph. 1:23b:

'He (*i.e.* Christ) is wholly in all and wholly in every man because of the unlimitedness of the nature, not being divided into parts. For that (addition)[33] of *all* is necessary, showing that he is in all and wholly in each one of us, depending on what one would like to think: either by nature, or by energy, or again by power, or by authority, or by something else, since he is unlimited in everything. And, therefore, he is considered to be in each one of us wholly in everything, because thus he is wholly in all and (because thus) it is indeed possible that he is wholly in all'[34].

[32] H.B. Swete (ed.), *Theodori episcopi Mopsuesteni in epistolas B. Pauli commentarii*, Vol. I (Cambridge, 1880), pp. 141,*11-16*, 142,*16-17*, pp. 141,*2-9*, 142,*1-2*.

[33] Supplied by the present writer from the Greek, Latin and the Syriac text in *Diy. 22* (see below note 36).

[34] f.86^{r}: ...

The Syriac is very close to the Greek and Latin texts and we may assume that Simon's quotation reasonably faithfully renders the text of the Syriac translation of Theodore's *Commentary*. It is exactly the same Syriac translation which has been used in the commentary of Isho'dad of Merw (c. 850). Isho'dad's exegesis of Eph. 1:23b can even be considered to be an abstract of the text represented by Simon's quotation[35]. The same Syriac translation also underlies the exegesis of this verse in the *Anonymous Commentary on the New Testament* in the manuscript (*olim*) *Diyarbakir 22*, which — independently of Isho'dad — contains the first part of Simon's quotation[36]. So this example not only demonstrates that Simon (or perhaps his source) used a widely known and probably old Syriac translation of Theodore's work, but it also shows that this Syriac translation was reproduced in a fairly faithful way.

[35] M.D. Gibson (ed., trans.), *The Commentaries of Isho'dad of Merv, Bishop of Ḥadatha (c. 850 A.D.) in Syriac and English*, Vol. V,1,2 (Horae Semiticae XI; Cambridge, 1916), p. 101,*1-4* (ed.), p. 66 (trans.).

[36] *Diy. 22*, f.473^{v}: ...

An Anti-Neo-Arian Interpolation in Ephraem of Nisibis' Hymn 46 *On Faith*

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The involvement of the Syriac-speaking church in the theological development of early Christianity has often been overlooked or understated. It is surprising from a scholarly point of view, though not from a cultural one, that a writer as renowned as R.P.C. Hanson could produce a 931 page history of the Arian Controversy, published in 1988[1], in which the name of Ephraem of Nisibis is found neither in footnote or text, despite Ephraem's production of hundreds of pages of works relating to that theological struggle. This sort of neglect is an impediment to the development of our understanding of the life and thought of Christians during this formative period. A deeper knowledge of all the evidence that survives to our day would help enlighten us about the breadth of that theological argument and what points in it were considered of primary importance by the entire range of Christians of the period, even those Christians who resided beyond the usual bounds of modern scholarly interest. It is in the hope of beginning to add some breadth to our field of focus with regard to the Arian Controversy that this paper is written.

As I stated before, Ephraem's involvement in argument with those groups and individuals commonly described as 'Arian'[2], is extensive, even in the works surviving for us to read. Unfortunately, our ability to use them to the full is limited by the fact that virtually all of the works that survive from Ephraem's pen are undatable[3]. There are, however, other means than dating

[1] R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (Edinburgh, 1988).

[2] There is not enough room here to enter into the nuances of deciding what is the proper terminology for referring to people and parties long dead. I mean no disrespect to anyone either living or dead by calling all those against whom Ephraem argued in defense of the Nicene Creed 'Arian'. I mean this term to include, for the purpose of this paper, both those commonly called 'Neo-Arians' and their predecessors, often called 'Arians'. Common sense will lead the reader not to confuse writers like Basil of Caesarea (during the early period of his life) with this group. As long as we do not confuse our convenient traditional terminology with the reality it attempts to describe it is best to use familiar terms. In fact, since the 'Arians' were the source of most of the points of discussion during this long debate and their opponents acted in response to them, it would make more sense to call those opponents 'anti-Arian' rather than 'Nicene', especially since not all of them were pleased with the product of the Nicene council. I fear, however, it is too late for any such rearrangement of scholarly diction.

[3] A. de Halleux has written two articles which address this problem of the transmission and dating of the works of Ephraem: 'Une clé pour les Hymnes d'Ephrem dans les MS. Sinai Syr. 10' *Le Museon. Revue d'etudes orientales* LXXXV, 1-2 (Louvain, 1972), pp. 171-199 and 'La Transmission des Hymnes d'Ephrem d'apres le MS. Sinai Syr. 10, F. 165v-178r', *Symposium Syriacum 1972* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta no. 197; 1974), pp. 21-63. He concludes that the collections of Ephraem's works as they survive to our day are of later construction and cannot be used for grouping the works temporally. See Paul S. Russell, *St. Ephraem the Syrian and St. Gregory the Theologian Confront the Arians* (Kottayam, India, 1994), Chapter I, esp. p. 8 note 5, for more discussion on this point.

the pieces for discovering signs of where Ephraem's writings should be located in the course of the development of the Arian Controversy as this is known to us. After all, different regions of the Church will have focused on different aspects of the discussion according to their own internal dynamics, so dating, as such, is not a dependable tool for locating writings, without other methods. At times, the variety within the textual tradition of the works will yield some clues about the progress of the argument for us. An example of this can be found in the collection of Ephraem's works called *Hymns On Faith*, at Hymn 46.

The reader of this hymn will discover in the third strophe an interesting discrepancy between the text as printed in Edmund Beck's critical edition[4] and as printed in the earlier Roman edition[5]. The Roman edition contains the equivalent of four complete metrical lines inserted into the hymn as printed in Beck, beginning with the second half of the second line of the strophe[6]. There are a number of reasons for not considering the lengthier version the work of Ephraem.

The first is that it throws off the balance of the strophes in the hymn, increasing the third strophe to 10 complete metrical lines while every other strophe in the hymn contains only six. This is a much more serious disruption in a song meant to be sung to music that recurs on a set pattern than it would be if these were merely verses to be recited. On metrical grounds alone, I think there is no question that Beck is right to omit these four lines. However, let us turn to examine their content as well.

The text of the passage in question as Beck prints it translates to English as follows[7]:

> The fool is angry: 'Why does God have a son? If the True One begot, He slandered Himself (as being) despicable'. Why is your eye evil? Because He really begot? You are zealous for what He is not zealous for[8]. Flee all these things and seek whatever is His will. The Father wants you to believe that His Son is from Him.

[4] *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen De Fide*, herausgegeben von Edmund Beck (CSCO vol. 154; 1955). Hymn 46 is found on pp. 146-149.

[5] J.S. Assemani, *S. Patris Nostris Ephraem Syri opp. omnia quae exstant graece, Syriace, latine*, in sex tomos distribuata, nunc primum e Vaticana Bibl. Produent (6 voll., Romae, 1732-43). Hymn 46 is found in vol. vi, 'tomus tertius syriace et latine', pp. 83-85.

[6] It is a sign of some sophistication for the interpolation to begin and end in the middle of the lines. The writer had to produce a half-line, three full lines and then another half-line. That argues for him being a skillful writer of Syriac.

[7] My own translation, as yet unpublished.

[8] Or 'you are envious of what He does not envy'.

The Roman edition, however, presents the fool as saying the following, which includes an important addition:

The fool is angry: 'Why does God have a son? If the True One begot, (it was) willingly[9] or unwillingly. If He begot willingly, the one begotten was not God; and if (He begot) unwillingly, He slandered Himself (as being) despicable'.

And then the text continues as in Beck's edition with Ephraem's comments: 'Why is your eye evil?...'. The addition of the question of whether the generation of the Son is from the will of the Father rather than from the Father Himself, introduces a new theological issue that is not found in the text as Beck presents it. What are we to make of this divergence of points at issue? In order to appreciate the cause for the variation, we must look to the history of the Arian Controversy as it is known to us.

The inclusion of the will of the Father in considerations of the generation of the Son can be seen in various places in the writings of Eunomius as they survive for us[10]. If we accept Kopecek's dating of Eunomius' *Apology*, in which, as far as I know, the will of the Father is first spoken of in this context, we will allow that this connection of will to generation had entered the public realm of the Arian Controversy around the end of 359[11]. It is true that the connection of the Son to the Father by the will had been mentioned almost at the start of the controversy. Arius is recorded to have said that:

'The Son is not ungenerated, nor in any way part of the ungenerated, nor from that which underlies (that is, matter), but he has subsisted by (God's) pleasure and will before time and before ages as full God...'.

This however, along with Kopecek[12], I take to be intended to clarify a distinction between the Father's necessary existence and the Son's contingent existence. The dilemma addressed in the lines we are examining now, however, is meant to force a choice between admitting that the Father is not the supreme Being (presumed to be unthinkable) and admitting that the Son is separated from the Father by the exercise of the Father's will, thus emphasizing the Son's lower status.

[9] Literally: 'in accordance with (His) will'.

[10] For Eunomius' writings, see *Eunomius The Extant Works*, text and translation by Richard Paul Vaggione (Oxford, 1987). In his *Apology* 23.15-18 Eunomius calls the will of God '...sufficient to bring into existence and to redeem all things...'. In 24.2 he states clearly: '... the Only-begotten exists by virtue of the will of the Father...'. (This distinction between essence and will is reiterated at 28.13-14). He makes the relationship between the two depend on the will, too, as at 24.2-4 '...it is not with respect to the essence but with respect to the action (*energeia*) (which is what the will is) that the Son preserves his similarity to the Father' (Vaggione's translations).

[11] Cf. Thomas A. Kopecek, *A History of Neo-Arianism* (Philadelphia, 1979), vol. II, pp. 303-306. Hanson, op. cit., p. 612, allows for this date but wishes to hold Eunomius out of the limelight until his accession to the see of Cyzicus in 360. Presumably, he imagines the *Apology* as written in 359 but not immediately becoming widely known.

[12] Op. cit., vol. 1, p. 17. This quotation is provided by his bishop Alexander in his reporting of Arius' teaching.

Linking this topic to the publication of Eunomius' *Apology* would introduce the will of the Father into considerations of the Son's begetting almost 14 years before Ephraem's death in June of 373, which provides ample time for this point of contention to find its way to Ephraem's ear. However, the awkwardness of the strophe with the addition rules out his authorship of the lines. One conclusion we might draw is that this point involving the willing or unwilling generation of the Son was not present or prominent enough in Ephraem's circle, at least when this hymn was written, for it to call forth a comment from him.

This does not mean that we are left entirely in the dark about the source of those non-Ephraemian lines, though. They do not appear completely out of a void. There is another Nicene author whose well-known writings contain at least one passage that sounds quite like this addition.

The closest verbal echo of the wording of this interpolation that I can call to mind is found in Gregory Nazianzus' *Third Theological Oration*, section 6, where he says[13]:

Has the Father, they ask, *begotten the Son voluntarily, or involuntarily*? They now bind us round with what they think are strong cords, but are really feeble ones. *If* they say, *it was involuntary, he was in someone's power. Who exercised the power? How could God be under someone's power? But if it was voluntary, the Son is son to a will; so how can he stem from the Father?*[14] (my italicizing)

Here Gregory places the offending words in the mouths of his opponents, ties involuntary begetting to the degradation of the divine status of the Father and voluntary begetting to the degradation of the divine status of the Son. These are all three of the cardinal points of the non-Ephraemian interpolation.

This oration was given in the latter part of 380 AD in Constantinople[15]. Ephraem died in Edessa in 373. At least two prominent students of Gregory's orations, Frederick W. Norris and A.J. Mason[16], have credited him with the invention of these 'words from the mouths of the Arians' in order to illustrate what he took to be the logical consequences of their ideas. If that is so, we may suggest that this particular contrast found its way from Gregory's oration into

[13] Gregoire de Nazianze, *Discours 27-31* (Discours Théologiques), ed. Paul Gallay (SC 250; Paris, 1978), p. 186.

[14] The translation is that by Lionel Wickham and Frederick Williams found in *Faith gives Fullness to Reasoning: The Five Theological Orations of Gregory Nazianzen*, introduction and commentary by Frederick W. Norris (Leiden, 1991), p. 248.

[15] Cf. Gallay, op. cit., pp. 10-15.

[16] *The Five Theological Orations of Gregory of Nazianzus* edited by Arthur James Mason, D.D. (Cambridge, 1899) says, note 11 page 80, that ... 'Gregory's subsequent words ... suggest the doubt whether he did not himself invent this part of the argument for the Eunomians'. Norris, op. cit., p. 139, also states that this form of the question of the relation between the will of God the Father and the begetting of the Son does not occur in the surviving works of either Aetius or Eunomius. Norris also credits Gregory with the invention of this point as an example of '*reductio ad absurdum*'.

the text of Ephraem's hymn. What sequence of events would that leave us with if it were true?

We have mentioned that Ephraem's interest in the Arian Controversy was intense and is reflected by the scale of the body of writings dealing with that quarrel that still survive from his pen. Interest in the controversy did not die out in the Syriac-speaking Church with the death of Ephraem. How could it? The Council of Constantinople, which was a major factor in cementing the Nicene party's control of the official Church, of which the Syriac-speaking Church was a vigorous part, was still more than seven years away when he died. The writings of Ephraem against the Arians have continued to be read and sung in the churches of the Semitic world up to the present day. They remain active in the theological formation of those people who worship in Syriac. It seems a live possibility that, during the time when the Neo-Arian positions were being put forward and combated as a real alternative for Christian belief (therefore, probably quite close to Ephraem's own lifetime) some reader of Ephraem, seeing our Hymn 46 and desirous of enlisting the great name of Ephraem in this latest phase of the quarrel in which he had already taken such a prominent part, added these lines to make clear, what would surely have been true, that Ephraem would not have allowed that sort of a suggestion of a contrast between willing and unwilling generation to affect his picture of the relationship between God the Father and God the Son.

What useful conclusion can we draw from this small point?

We can see from this that the Syrians continued to be involved in a vital way with the changing scene in Christian Theology and responded to these changes, at least in this case, in a theological manner, by producing theological works, even if only four lines long, against them. The congruence of the thought in Gregory's oration and the interpolation show the close connection and awareness of the Syriac church to its fellows farther West. Ephraem's involvement in the quarrels of the great Church was not an anomaly, but a prominent instance of a concern that continued after his death.

More study of the textual tradition of Ephraem's works might reveal more instances of both Ephraemian and non-Ephraemian contributions to this controversy residing among the works passed down under the great theologian's name. My own research in this regard is in its infancy, but our knowledge of that period and of the true course of that formative doctrinal struggle can grow greatly if we learn to pursue knowledge outside our well-worn channels of common endeavor. Much of the past lies waiting to be rediscovered if we are only willing to set ourselves to the task. I hope that many other students will engage themselves in this work, so that our knowledge of this crucial period may continue to grow in breadth as well as depth.

George of Nicomedia: Convention and Originality in the Homily on Good Friday

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In the present paper I will examine the models used by George of Nicomedia (*fl.* c. 860) for the composition of his homily on Good Friday, the first homily which has come down to us that treats the subject from a mariological point of view. George of Nicomedia elaborates on the passage from the Gospel of St John (20:25): '*Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas and Mary Magdalene*'. The events of the Crucifixion are related through the eyes of the Virgin, who follows Christ from the court of Annas and Caiaphas to Calvary where He is crucified. The last part of the homily is devoted to the Deposition and Burial of the Lord. The homily of George of Nicomedia is characterised by a distinct dramatisation of the events related and by the extensive use of monologue and dialogue. These are the elements that I will try to trace back in the homiletic and hymnographic tradition of the Eastern Church until the 9th century. George wrote most of his homilies on the occasion of the feasts of the Mother of God. Although it can be attributed to an accident of the manuscript tradition the practice of focusing on an individual subject of interest was not unusual in the Byzantine homiletic tradition[1]. The preoccupation of the author with the Mother of God implies a theological interest that is expressed in his mariology. However, here I will refrain from developing mariological points and I will only examine texts that could have been used by the homilist for the composition of his work.

To my knowledge there is no single homily that can be proposed as George's sole, immediate source. The 'invention' of the theme of the lamentation of the Mother of God at the foot of the cross is found in the hymnographical tradition. The methodological problem that one faces when studying the hymns of the Orthodox Church is that, apart from a few hymns whose authorship is attested, the great majority of the liturgical texts are either unattributed and undated or — even worse — attributed incorrectly. Hymns, like icons, were important in themselves and the composers were not supposed to sign them, just like the

[1] For example, Proclus in the 5th century and Germanos of Constantinople in the 8th century were known for their mariological homilies, whereas Leontius of Constantinople found particularly appealing the theme of Job. A characteristic example is his homily on Good Friday in which he links the subject to the story of Job. See Pauline Allen with Cornelis Datema, *Leontius, Presbyter of Constantinople, Fourteen Homilies* (Brisbane, 1991), pp. 87-94.

artists who were not supposed to sign their icons. The problem is relevant to the subject because of the existence of a hymnographical text, the Lament of the Mother of God, which is read even today in the Eastern Church as part of the service of the Burial of the Lord. This text reproduces almost verbatim passages of the homily in question. Although its dating is uncertain, liturgiologists tend to consider it a composition that was incorporated in the service books towards the end of the middle Byzantine period[2]. Let me now turn to the background of marian devotion in order to trace the development of the theme.

Although very little is written about the Virgin either in the Gospel or in the Acts of the Apostles[3] it is clear that at every single stage of the development of Orthodox theology in Byzantium, the Mother of God preoccupied the Fathers and was made a model of behaviour. At the same time the faithful saw in her the human, yet, God-bearer protectress and mediatrix[4]. Basil the Great portrays the Mother of God as the protectress of virgins[5], of whom she becomes an archetype. Of the Cappadocian Fathers, Gregory of Nyssa worked most of all on the establishment of the typological references[6] of the Mother of God. The importance of homiletics for the formulation of doctrine as the establishment of the living experience of the Church may be attested in the example of the homily delivered by Proclus, Patriarch of Constantinople, in the presence of his adversary Nestorius, in the great church of Haghia Sophia, in 428 or 429, in which the Virgin is referred to as the All-Holy and Ever-Virgin Theotokos, the Mother of God[7].

Let us now turn to the hymnography where the subject of the lament of the Virgin at the foot of the cross seems to appear for the first time. In a poem attributed to the celebrated hymnographer Ephraem the Syrian, that was meant to be read during the Saturday verspers in Holy Week[8], the theme is elaborated. In this hymn the Virgin approaches the cross and speaks to the Lord without expecting a response. It is a silent lamentation, and one of the first attempts to

[2] I am grateful to Fr Michael Fortounatto and to Nicolas Ossorguine for their advice on the subject.

[3] Fr John Breck, 'Mary in the New Testament', *Pro Ecclesia* 2/4 (1993), pp. 460-472.

[4] Fr John Breck, 'Mary: Mother of Believers, Mother of God', *Pro Ecclesia* 4/1 (1995), pp. 105-111.

[5] Basil the Great, Πρὸς παρθένον ἐκπεσοῦσαν, ep. 135, PG 32, col. 372; see also Gregory of Nazianzus, PG 35, col. 1181A.

[6] Gregory of Nyssa, *Vita Moses* 2.21 (ed. Jean Daniélou, SC 1, Paris 1968, p. 118); Hilda Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion* (New York, 1963), pp. 64-5. Also with reference to the typological references employed by Proclus of Constantinople see Nicholas P. Constas, 'Weaving the Body of God: Proclus of Constantinople, the Theotokos and the Loom of the Flesh', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3:2 (1995), pp. 176-82.

[7] For the historical background and the mariological aspects of the homiletic work of Proclus see Constas, *op.cit.*, pp. 169-176.

[8] D. Caillau, *S. Patris nostri Ephraem Syri Opera*, IV (Paris, 1844), pp. 440-444; also introduction to the hymn by Romanos, *Marie à la Croix*, by Grosdidier de Matons, SC 128, p. 144.

reveal the human aspect of the salvific mystery. In the Syriac hymn of Jacob of Sarug on the Dormition of the Mother of God we read: '*Many sorrows has your mother borne for your sake, and all afflictions surrounded her at your crucifixion. How many sorrowing weeping and tears of suffering did not her eyes shed at your funeral... How many terrors did not the mother of Mercy experience when you were buried and the guards of the sepulchre turned her away, so that she could not approach you!*'[9] In the homily of George of Nicomedia we read: '*But who will enumerate the arrows that penetrated her heart at that time? Who will recount in words her pains that are beyond words?*'[10] The ineffable sorrow and pain of the Mother of God form the basic pattern upon which the events of Good Friday are recounted and each scene of the Passion of the Lord is introduced by a similar two-line exclamation.

Yet, the **dialogue** between the Mother of God and Jesus at the crucifixion, to our knowledge, was first used by Romanos the Melodos, the great 6th century Syrian hymnographer[11]. His well-known hymn on Mary at the Foot of the Cross[12] is the only one to appear in the actual *Triodion*[13]. The Mother of God pleads with him to address her a word of consolation: '*...Address me a word, Oh Word, do not pass in front of me in silence, you that preserved my purity, my son and my God*'[14] In the relevant passage George of Nicomedia writes: '*But you, say something as a farewell to your mother, ... say a sweet and life-giving word*'[15] and elsewhere: '*They pierced the limbs of the one that has preserved my undefiled chastity, the one who has retained unblemished the seals of virginity and purity*'[16].

[9] The hymn provides evidence for the introduction of the feast of the Dormition but most interestingly for the purpose of the present paper it introduces the lamentation of the Mother of God at the crucifixion and the burial of the Lord. Jacob of Sarug, *Hymn on the Dormition of the Mother of God*, ed. A. Baumstark (Oriens Christianus 5; 1905), pp. 91-9; also quoted by H. Graef, *op.cit.*, p. 122.

[10] George of Nicomedia, *Oratio in illud*: '*Stabant autem juxta crucem Jesu Mater ejus, et soror Matris ejus*' *atque in sepulturam divini corporis Domini nostri Jesu Christi, sancta ac magna die Parasceves* Λόγος εἰς τὸ 'εἱστήκεισαν δὲ παρὰ τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ ἀδελφὴ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ' καὶ εἰς τὴν θεόσωμον ταφὴν τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, τῇ ἁγίᾳ καὶ μεγάλῃ Παρασκευῇ, PG 100, cols. 1457A-1489D; citation in 1464C.

[11] For the literary genre of the kontakion and its background see E. Werner, *The Sacred Bridge* (London, 1959), pp. 226-231. For the feature of dialogue in hymnography see N. Tomadakis, *Ἡ Βυζαντινὴ Ὑμνογραφία καὶ Ποίησις*, vol. 2 (Θεσσαλονίκη, 1993), pp. 109-115 and for a different use of dialogue Averil Cameron, 'Disputations, Polemical Literature and the Formation of Opinion in the Early Byzantine Period' in G.J. Reinink and H.L.J. Vanstiphout (eds.), *Dispute Poems and Dialogues in the Ancient and Medieval Near East* (Leuven, 1991), pp. 106-7.

[12] Romanos le Mélode, *Hymnes*, Tome IV, ed. J. Grosdidier de Matons (SC 128; Paris, 1967), pp. 160-187.

[13] ibidem. introduction, p. 143; see also *Triodion*, Compline of Good Friday, Ikos of Tone Eight, Canticle 7 and elsewhere.

[14] Romanos, *op.cit.*, stanza 1, l.8.

[15] PG 100, col. 1473C-D.

[16] PG 100, col. 1472B.

The response of the Lord to his mother is also similar in the two texts; Romanos writes: '*Alleviate, mother, alleviate your grief: lamentations are not worthy of you who has been called the one full of grace*'[17] where in the text of George, Jesus replies: '*Calm the excess of the more severe pains mother; remit the heaviest despondency in your heart, by the grandeur of the benefit...*'[18]. But the Virgin is not consoled, despite the fact that the words of the Lord remind her of the reason he was sent to the world. The comparison of the two texts shows that George knew Romanos' hymn and that he uses the technique of dialogue in a similar way in order to achieve a similar end.

During the 8th and 9th centuries numerous hymns were composed for the Mother of God: Theotokia were written in the Eight Tones and although we cannot be sure of the exact date of their introduction in the services of the Church, their existence marks a distinct phase in the development of Marian devotion. Their authors were the distinguished iconophile preachers and hymnographers Germanos of Constantinople (d.733), Andrew of Crete (d.740), John of Damascus (d.c. 749) and Theodore the Studite (d.826), to name only the most important among them.

I have singled out the distinguished poet and patriarch of Constantinople, Germanos, for two reasons: the first is that George follows the style of his predecessor, both in the way of expression and in his treatment of the Mother of God. His admiration for the florid and elaborate style of Germanos lead him to the creation of his own embellished style of speech. The second is that in his homily *On the Bodily Burial of the Lord on Holy Saturday*[19], Germanos incorporates a lament of the Mother of God. After the eulogy of the feast that occupies the beginning of the sermon, Germanos dedicates the main part of his homily to the lament of the Mother of God, who voices her despair for the bereavement in short, rhythmical phrases. The prophecy of Symeon about the sword that would pierce her heart is interpreted not as doubt[20], but as the deplorable pain that ravages her heart. Her address to the Lord is reminiscent of the model of Ephrem the Syrian in that she expects no answer; but her lament is not 'silent'. On the contrary it is similar to the laments of ancient Greek tragedy[21]. The invitation to Nature and the world to participate in the wailing contrasts with the murmuring of sweet memories[22]. An antithetical pattern is used in order to show the changing attitude of the Jews towards

[17] Romanos, *op.cit.*, st.5, l.1-2.
[18] PG 100, col. 1476C.
[19] ibidem., *In Dominici Corporis Sepulturam*, cols. 244B-289B.
[20] For the interpretation of the prophecy of Symeon by the Alexandrian exegetical school see Graef H., *op.cit., passim.*
[21] Gail Holst-Warhaft, *Dangerous Voices, Women's Laments and Greek Literature* (London and New York, 1992), pp. 144-149; Margaret Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition* (Cambridge, 1974), *passim.*
[22] Henry Maguire, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium* (Princeton, 1981), pp. 91-108.

Jesus, who are addressed in a variety of terms that derive from the stock of the *topoi* of anti-Jewish polemic[23].

The treatment of the lament of the Mother of God by Germanos suggests that his work could have been used as a source by George of Nicomedia in the composition of his homily on Good Friday, although it has to be noted that neither dialogue nor dramatisation are fully explored by Germanos. However, he opened a way by introducing the subject of the lament, which as we have seen derives from the hymnographical tradition, to the domain of homiletics.

Finally I would like to refer briefly to the Theotokia written by Theodore, the abbot of the Studion monastery, which refer to the lament of the Mother of God at the Foot of the Cross. Very laconic, the Stavrotheotokia do not occupy more than a few lines. In the matins of the Friday in the first week of Lent the Stavrotheotokion reads: '*Beholding Thee, O Christ, stretched dead upon the Tree, Thy Virgin Mother cried aloud with bitter tears: 'O my Son what is this fearful mystery? How dost Thou who givest life eternal unto all, suffer willingly a shameful death upon the Cross?*'[24] Although George does not use the imagery of the Tree for the cross, the Virgin laments her dead son in the same way and the idea of the willing death of the Lord who gives life to the whole creation occurs regularly in the homily[25]. The lamentation of the Virgin also appears in the Stavrotheotokion of the Vespers of Friday[26]: the Mother of God together with the whole of creation wonders at the strange and marvellous sight of the crucified Lord. Nature is evoked in the lament of the Virgin in the homily on Good Friday: '*Set sun, seeing my and the world's light setting bodily. Shudder sky, and in your grievous appearance share my lament; mourn as you perceive the slaughter of the universal Lord*'[27]. George of Nicomedia offers an interesting example of a synthesis of the homiletic and the hymnographical tradition, combining his sources in order to achieve the dramatisation of the subject-matter which — we may well suppose — was the feature that enthralled his audience and earned him the title of 'great rhetor'.

[23] col. 273B-D.
[24] *Lenten Triodion*, Engl. transl. by Archimandrite Kallistos Ware and Mother Mary (London, 1978), p. 268.
[25] See PG 100, col. 1469A and1476C.
[26] Friday in the First Week of Lent, Stavrotheotokion in the Eighth Tone, *op.cit.*, p. 272.
[27] PG 100, col. 1472C.

The Aphthartodocetic Edict of Justinian and its Armenian Background

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The idea that the great Emperor, who was also a theologian, should have ended his earthly life approving a heretical position, has not been universally accepted by authors. One typical position was to treat it as the autocratic caprice of an old monarch[1]. In 1897, M. Hutton was inclined to attach more importance to the testimony of John of Nikiu than to the brief account of Evagrius Scholasticus in chapter 39, and dismissed the Life of Patriarch Eutychius by Eustratios as a mere hagiographical work[2]. This position was refuted in 1925 by M. Jugie, who stressed the fact, that the long answer of Anastasius of Antioch, which according to Evagrius was addressed to the Emperor, had also been transmitted by John of Ephesus, whose Syriac text has been fully quoted by Michael the Syrian[3]. It is therefore quite impossible to deny the historicity of this extremely important testimony.

In 1984, Filippo Carcione reconsidered Hutton's thesis with other considerations[4]. According to his analysis, the reaction of Antioch reflects the impossibility of open contestation towards the politics of the old Emperor. In the Egyptian area, for instance, Justinian would not have deposed the Julianist Bishop Elpidius if his aphthartodocetic convictions had been generally accepted. The only justification for Justinian's initiative would be his search for peace with the monophysite party. His enemy were Eustochios of Jerusalem who, according to Carcione following Michael the Syrian, was deposed at the end of 562[5]. We shall contest that date. E.Stein already observed that it was in 563[6]. A draft of Carcione's position has been given in the Christology of A. Grillmeier, who

[1] So for instance J. Pargoire, *L'Église byzantine de 527 à 847* (Paris, 1905), pp. 41-42. More old references are collected by F. Carcione, 'L''Aftartodocetismo' di Giustiniano: una mistificazione strumentale del dissenso politico-religioso', in *Studi i ricerche sull'Oriente Cristiano*, 7 (1984), p. 71, n. 1.

[2] M. Hutton, *The Church of the Sixth Century* (London, 1897), pp. 303-309.

[3] M. Jugie, 'L'empereur Justinien a-t-il été aphtartodocète?', in *Échos d'Orient*, 31 (1932), p. 399-402.

[4] Ibid., pp. 71-78.

[5] Ibid., p. 72, and n. 2.

[6] E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, t. 2 (Paris-Amsterdam, 1949), p. 685. A. Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, Band 2/2. *Die Kirche von Konstantinopel im 6. Jahrhundert* (Freiburg, 1989), p. 491.

nevertheless stressed that the question remains open to further inquiries. P. van den Ven showed that the edict was never explicitly promulgated as law. From the dogmatic point of view, the sense of ἕνωσις in the dogmatic account of Eustratios could be an approach to a Chalcedonian form of Julianism, as R. Draguet has stated it in the extant quotations from Julian[7].

However Carcione did not take into account the position of E. Stein, who stressed the importance of the deposition of the Patriarch Eustochios of Jerusalem, the contacts he had with the defunct Theodore Askidas and his friend, the anonymous Bishop of Jaffa, whose influence on Justinian is attested by Michael the Syrian. Moreover, Stein or J. Palanque after him, noted the very important remarks which were made by Fr. Diekamp in 1898 on the use of the excerpts of Theophanes in Cramer's *Anecdota* for the current edition of de Boor[8]. The chronology by Theophanes should be taken with some caution. Stein also remarked that the deposition or the patriarch Elpidius of Alexandria was the consequence of a very strong Diphysite edict in December 562, as is attested by Malalas and Jacob of Edessa[9]. With Stein one has to consider that contacts between Origenism and Aphthardocetism in Jerusalem have to be taken into account in the aphthartodocetic volte-face of Justinian.

The Armenian tradition here still preserves two documents, which throw some light on the events. They involve both Eustochios and even more the Patriarch Makarios II, who has been his predecessor for a short period of two months in 552, but who also became his successor in 564. This is the purpose of our communication.

I will deal first with the description of the two major texts. The first is included in the anonymous Chronicle to the end of the 8th century, which was twice published, once under the name of Anania Širakatsi[10]. The second text was first published in 1963 by Bishop Norayr Bogharian, under his pseudonym Tsovakan[11]. This latter document is none other than the source of the anonymous Chronicle.

The anonymous Armenian Chronicle describes a number of facts for the reign of every emperor. The national theology is everywhere evident, Julian of Halicarnassus is positively quoted as having collaborated in refuting the Tome of Leo in the 14 points[12], which are preserved in the Armenian translation of

[7] Ibid., pp. 492-495.

[8] F. Diekamp, *Die origenistischen Streitigkeiten im sechsten Jahrhundert* (Münster, 1899), pp. 30-31.

[9] E. Stein, op.cit., p. 686, note 2.

[10] B. Sarkisean, *Անանիա ժամանակագրութիւն* (Venice, 1904), 106 pp. A. Abrahamyan, *Անանիա Շիրակացու մատենագրութիւն* (Yerevan, 1944), p. 357-399. The ms. Mat. 2679 is dated A.D.971.

[11] N.eps.Tsovakan, '*Թուղթ յերուսաղէմ ի Հայս վասն Տեառնընդառաջին*', in *Sion*, 37 (1963), pp. 33-36. A French translation in M.van Esbroeck, 'Barsabée de Jérusalem sur le Christ et les Églises', in *PO*, 41(1982), pp. 164-167.

[12] Sarkisean, op.cit., p. 70, lines 1-4, where curiously Julian is made bishop of Halicarnassus in Cyprus.

Timothy Aeluros[13]. Zeno and Anastasios are 'good' emperors. In the case of Justinian, more than the half of the notice is devoted to the circumstances by which Grigor Artsruni wrote a letter of consolation from Jerusalem to the Bishops of Armenia. I quote a rather lengthy excerpt.

'(The emperor) sent to the holy city of Jerusalem in order to change the fortieth day which was devoted to the feast of the Hypapante of our Saviour in the Temple, so that they should observe the order of the emperor. It has been recorded in the history of Jerusalem as follows: We, who dwell in Jerusalem, we tell to You who are living in Armenia the wonders we saw. In the 34th year of Justinian[14], Satan started to fight against the truth. They perverted the holy faith and and modified the order of the law and the feast which had been given by James the brother of the Lord[15]. Indeed a certain Jew[16] who was a heretic entered near to the Emperor, and provoked him about the Hypapantè. It should not have been allowed for the Hierosolymitans to celebrate in another way the sacred liturgy of the Nativity and the Hypapantè, but they have to celebrate according to the Church of the Roman territory. The Emperor heard him and immediately sent an imperial decree to Eustochios[17] the Patriarch of the city, and to all the clerics of the city, that they had to celebrate the Hypapantè according to the Nativity on the 2nd of February. Then the Patriarch with the population of the city fell into a torrent of tears with fasting and prayers, and cried to God. Then a sign suddenly appeared before the bearers of the imperial 'sacra', who came in order to carry out the order of the emperor. The holy column in the Saint-Sion, a place where all the crowds were gathered, poured out water, in order to discredit the impious order of the Emperor. Everybody saw it and praised God. This occured in the time of Eustochios.

Then a second time under Makarios that same day, the Emperor sent another heavy force in order to complete the false celebration and to destroy all those who did not carry out the imperial order. Then, the crowds in the city, filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit, offered themselves to die at the hands of the police, who executed the imperial order and ravaged the town with the sword. But in the Church of the Holy Sion, where the people was gathered, another wonderful and awe-inspiring sign suddenly appeared. The Virgin Mary with the Saviour in her arms, was seen in the same column, and in the right arm of the Lord there was a purple cross. Both pious and sinners saw it, and still many were healed. The first miracle of healing occurred in favour of Armenia: a cancersufferer woman from Mokk', called Salomè, who was suffering from cancer and had been crippled for twenty-five years, first obtained relief at the very moment of the miracle. The forces having seen the miracle returned to the emperor'.

[13] Dr. Karapet Ter-Mekerttschian und Erwand Ter-Minassiantz, *Timotheus Älurus' des Patriarchen von Alexandrien Widerlegung der auf der Synode zu Chalcedon festgesetzten Lehre* (Leipzig, 1908), pp. XXV-XXI, where the XIV capitula from Leo's Tomos are copied with figures.

[14] This figure perhaps signifies that there is a difference between the Letter of Justinian and the edict, which has been dated from the 35th year of Justinian by the three soures: Cramer, Jacob of Edessa and Malalas. See below.

[15] On the common liturgical and homiletical tradition received by James and Cyrillus, see M.van Esbroeck, 'La structure de l'Homéliaire de Mush', in *International Symposium on Armenian Linguistics, Yerevan 21-21 september 1982* (Yerevan, 1984), p. 289.

[16] Such denomination is currently given by Monophysites to 'Nestorians', the Chalcedonians being included in this category. Most probably this is the Bishop of Jaffa, mentioned by Michael the Syrian.

[17] Here Sarkisean added *(Yostos)* in the text. Cf. M.van Esbroeck, 'La lettre de Justinien pour la fête de l'Hypapante en 562', in *Analecta Bollandiana*, 112 (1994), p. 75.

After this narrative, the author of the chronicle remarks that afterwards, 'under Makarios', Jerusalem had been forced by Justinian or 'Youstianos' to accept the universal celebration of Nativity and Hypapantè. This addition is only a consequence of the fact that, in the time of the redactor of the Chronicle, the old date of the 6 January for the Nativity had disappeared in Jerusalem, but not in Armenia.

For the Armenians, the celebration of the Nativity on the 6th January was not only an old Hierosolymitan practice. The celestial voice of the Epiphany, which proclaims 'Thou art my beloved Son' had to be celebrated at the same time, for it was the symbol of the unification of both natures in the one Word of God or Word God Jesus Christ[18]. In the first period of his mandate, between 557 and 570, the Catholicos Johannes of Gabeghiants wrote a letter just on this very topic[19].

It is not necessary to give here the full text of the Letter of Gregor Artsruni, which is very long and has already been translated from the Armenian[20]. Some major points must suffice. First, there is no mention of Eustochios. The first miracle occurs under the rule of Youstos or Yostos. Second, the other miracle occurs on the 29th of the mobile Armenian month Mehekan. This includes a synchronism for the year 560-564, and as the text speaks of a following Sunday, this must be the 3rd of February 564.

Although no Patriarch named Justos appears in the lists of Jerusalem, apart from the third Judeo-christian Symeon-Justos mentioned by the *Chronicon Paschale*, there are some Armenian texts and one Georgian text attributed to Justos of Jerusalem[21]. The name must be ascribed to some apocryphal necessity. It is much more acceptable to take Makarios II as the bearer of that name, at the time when he was officially moved from his throne by the foreign Eustochios, between 552 and 563. The discrepancy between Eustochios and Makarios has been clearly put forward by Theophanes the Chronographer. He says: 'Eustochios went to Jerusalem for he hated Apollinarios, Agathon and Makarios. He dismissed the monks of the new Lavra as Origenists, and therefore he was himself removed and Makarios was again placed on the throne'[22]. Again through the excerpts of Cramer, we know that Agathon was the brother of the Patriarch of Alexandria Apollinarios, that he came from Palestine in order to

[18] On this topic, see M.van Esbroeck, 'Impact de l'Écriture sur le Concile de Dwin de 555', in *Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum* 18 (1986), pp. 301-308. Now also in *Aux origines de la Dormition de la Vierge*, (Aldershot 1995) n° IX.

[19] Ibid., pp. 313-315 in a French translation.

[20] Cf. note 11.

[21] Ibid., pp. 155-168.

[22] Theophanes, ed. De Boor, p. 242.

challenge the fiscal responsibility of the great Oikonomos Eustochios. Eustochios fled through the roof of the house, and reached Constantinople, where he was given the see of Jerusalem[23]. Evagrius also writes about the aphthartodocetic edict, that it came when 'Makarios again received his own see, for he anathematized Origen, Didymos and Evagrios (Ponticos) after the removal of Eustochios'[24].

We have therefore to assume a certain continuity with the struggle between the Lavra of Firmin and the Nea Lavra in Palestine at the time of Petrus of Jerusalem. He was a converted Origenist from the party of the Protoctists just as Makarios came from the Isochrists[25]. The same hostility according to the excerpts of Theophanes extended between Eustochios and Makarios. It is most improbable that both reacted in the same way to the edict on the feasts.

On another side, Justinian clearly had shown his personal interest in the Liturgy of Jerusalem by several initiatives. In 543, he inaugurates the Nea Maria, which lies just between the Church of Gethsemane and the Holy Sion[26]. He looked for the relics of Matthew in Antioch in order to place the four evangelists in Jerusalem[27]. The Georgians preserve his Letter on the celebration of the Epiphany in Jerusalem which fits in completely with the circumstances of the two Armenian texts[28]. As H.Brakmann remarked, an echo of this is also preserved in the excerpts of Cramer where the change of the celebration is put in the 35th year of Justinian, this is between 1st April 561 and 31st March 562[29]. This Greek account is exactly parallel to Malalas and Jacob of Edessa. In the Georgian letter the theology of the incarnation is quite close to the apthartodectic view of the miraculous conception of Christ in the womb of the Virgin Mary, for the demonstration starts with the Annunciation on the 25th March. If Eustochios were to be taken as the veiled Justos in the Armenian Letter, he would have had just the same position as Makarios towards Justinian; moreover he would have celebrated in the Holy Sion and not in the Nea Maria.

[23] F. Diekamp (quoted note 8), pp. 30-31.

[24] Evagrius, ed. J. Bidez and L. Parmentier (London, 1898), p. 190, lines 10-16.

[25] M. van Esbroeck, 'L'homélie de Pierre de Jérusalem et la fin de l'origénisme palestinien', in *OCP*, 51 (1985), pp. 33-59. P. 58, I wrote erroneously 'la mort d'Eustochius' instead of 'la déposition d'E.'.

[26] M. van Esbroeck, 'Les textes littéraires sur l'Assomption avant le Xème siècle', in F. Bovon *et alii, Les Actes apocryphes des apôtres: christianisme et monde païen* (Genève, 1981), p. 285, où nous considérions encore Eustochios comme identique à Yostos. Repris dans Id., *Aux origines de la dormition de la Vierge*, cf. note 18.

[27] M. van Esbroeck, 'Primauté, Patriarcats, Catholicossats, Autocéphalies en Orient', in M. Maccarrone, *Il primato des Vescovo di Roma nel primo millenio. Ricerche e testimonianze* (Città del Vaticano, 1991), pp. 511-513.

[28] M. van Esbroeck, 'La lettre de l'empereur Justinien sur l'Annonciation et la Noël en 561', dans *AnalBoll* 86 (1968), pp. 351-371,where the Georgian Letter is translated into French.

[29] H. Brakmann, 'Ein unbeachtetes Echo des Hypapante-Briefes Kaiser Justinians', in *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*, 34 (1961), pp. 104-106. The genuineness of the Letter have been contested by A. de Halleux, 'Un discours héortologique de Justinien?' in *AnalBoll* 110 (1992), pp. 311-328. The answer lies in the article quoted note 17.

It is therefore more likely to assume that Makarios was always receiving the crowds in the Holy Sion, at the moment when Eustochios was celebrating in the Nea Maria.

Now the Armenian letter insists on the fact that twice, on 2nd of February 563 and 2nd of February 564, the soldiers went back to the Emperor to tell him what had gone on. Theophanes tells us that in the month of October 564 Justinian made a pilgrimage at the Michaelion of Germai in Galatia[30]. We have a parallel here of the anxiety of an old emperor before his death when Theodosios the Younger went to Ephesus in 449, for the cult of the seven Sleepers, an episode which has been definitively explained by E.Honigmann[31]. Shortly after his journey, Justinian published his Aphthartodocetic edict.

On this topic we have to stress that the words used to describe the Emperor's position by Evagrius Scholasticus and Eustratios strongly agree with Julianism and Armenian theology. We cannot here analyse in detail their emotional reaction according to the letter of Anastasius of Antioch[32]. Their reaction is that Christ would not personally have suffered on the Cross, so that the redemption could not have occurred. Everywhere Christ had only apparently been a man. The words of Evagrius are very clear: 'He declared that the body of Christ is uncorruptible, and unable to endure the physical and inevitable sufferings, that the Lord did eat before the resurrection just as after the resurrection, for he did not endure any modification or change from the very moment of its having been formed in the womb, neither in the free and physical sufferings nor after the resurrection of His almost saintly body'[33]. In this formula, the word 'inevitable ἀδιάβλητος' is the most central concept in the controversy between Julian and Severus. But as Draguet already reminded us, Julian said 'We say passible in the way he suffered, and not according to his ability to undergo the sufferings: Παθητὸν δὲ λέγομεν καθὼς ἔπαθεν καὶ οὐ καθὼς δεκτικὸς ἦν τῶν πάθων':[34] In other words Christ never suffered simply because of bodily necessities as we do, but only because he agreed to undergo these human necessities, and in this way of course he did really suffer. This is also exactly the theology which can be traced in a wide spectrum of Armenian sources.

[30] Theophanes, ed. de Boor, *A.M.* 6056, p. 240.

[31] E. Honigmann, 'Stephen of Ephesus and the Legend of the Seven Sleepers', in *Patristic Studies* (Vatican, 1953), pp. 125-168.

[32] This very long chapter of Michael the Syrian, 9,39, translation of J.B. Chabot, op.cit., pp. 272-281 would have to be analysed; also *Eustratii vita Eutychii Patriarchae Constantinopolitani*, ed. C. Laga (Turnhout, 1992), pp. 32-33 gives a clear glimpse into the theological reactions of Antioch. Eutychius was deposed on 22th January 565. His work on the *Distinction between Person and Nature* is naturally not independent of the way the Aphthartodocetes looked at the Person in the hypostatic union. It is preserved in Armenian and was published by P. Ananian, in *Armeniaca. Mélanges d'études arméniennes* (Venise, 1969), pp. 330-354, with an Italian translation. This too cannot be included in the present communication.

[33] Evagrius, op cit. (quoted note 24), lines 17-24.

[34] J. Draguet, *Julien d'Halicarnasse* (Louvain, 1924), p. 73*, n° 129.

That doctrine is already clear in the refutation of Chalcedon by Timothy Aeluros: the adversaries 'deny the lifegiving and uncorrupted body of Christ and consider separately God and man, dividing the economy and the divinely fitting activity and thaumaturgy'[35]. In the Florilegium 'Seal of the Faith' which was compiled at the time of the Catholicos Komitas (615-628), the fourth section, which unfortunately disappeared in the manuscript, was entitled 'That the incarnate son of God really has been circumcised and that one has not to consider the body of Christ as corruptible according to his circumcision, his eating, his drinking and his sufferings'[36].

That theological concept was not regarded as contradicting the Council of Chalcedon. As Carcione has pointed out, it is practically evident that for Justinian himself there was no conflict in this view. When from Catholicos Ezr in 630 to Catholikos Eghia in 717, the whole of the Armenian Church was officially accepting the Council of Chalcedon, even if with monothelism and monoenergism, a series of strong aphthartodocetic works was still composed. For example, the answer of David Harketsi to Katholikos Anastas (661-667)[37], the aphthartodocetic Florilegium under the name of Stephan Siunetsi[38], and above all the Dogmatic letter of Sahak Dzoroporetsi in 691, where several quotations come from the documents of the opposite party at the Council of 680[39]. In 1903, Erwand Ter-Minassian could not believe that those extreme assertions could have taken place in an official period of unity with Constantinople[40]. The highpoint of this opinion was expressed at the council of Theodosiopolis or Karin which according to the Armenian tradition was called by Justinian II around 693[41]. The explicit condemnation of Chalcedon alone is lacking in the greater part of the manuscripts, but was added in some others.

However at the same time, this aphthartodocetism always has to be distinguished from pure docetism. Komitas himself gathered a council in Dwin in 617, in the presence of the Syrians Mayroutha and Peter (the date is discussed by Karapet ep., p. XXI). They expelled from the church three bishops, Zacharia, Sabas and George, who said that Jesus received his body from heaven[42]. However, in his Letter to the Persians, the same Komitas was able to write: 'He assumed his body from the Virgin Mary the Theotokos and united

[35] Timotheus Aelurus (cf.n.13), p. 341.

[36] Karapet Episkoposi, *Կնիք Հաւատոյ* (Etchmiadzine, 1914), p. 1.

[37] G.V. Yovsephean, '*Դաւթի Փիլոսոփայի Բան Հաւատոյ ընդդէմ Հերձուածոցաց*', in *Ararat*, 39 (1906), pp. 261-271.

[38] Pierre de Siounie, '*Վասն անապականութեան մարմնոյն*', in *Ararat*, 35 (1903), pp. 183-202.

[39] M.van Esbroeck, 'Citations apollinaristes conservées en arménien dans la Lettre de Sahak III Dzoroporetsi (691)', in *OCP*, 60 (1994), pp. 41-67.

[40] E. Ter-Minassiantz, *Die armenische Kirche in ihren Beziehungen zu den syrischen Kirchen* (Leipzig, 1904), pp. 138-141.

[41] A. Hakobyan, '*Կանոնագիրք Հայոց*', t. 2 (Yerevan, 1971), pp. 244-257.

[42] Printed in *Ararat* (1896), p. 536, in Samuel of Ani (Vałaršapat 1893), p. 290 and by N. Akinian, in *Avétik'* 13 (1944), p. 84. The document is dated from the 27th year of Chosroes Aparwez.

the immortal with the mortal, and mixed the corruptible and the mortal with the immortal of the Godhead, he made it one and uncorruptible'. And among the anathemas, we read': We anathematize and dismiss from the Catholic and Apostolic Church Paul of Samosata, the Tome of Leo and the Council of Chalcedon, for their saying that there are two natures and two forms in Christ Jesus after the unification of the 'economy' from the holy Virgin, for they obviously are two personalities. We anathematize Severos who said that the body of Christ was corruptible till the Resurrection, and that he made it uncorruptible after the resurrection'[43] Moreover, we find a strange anathema against Gaianos: 'We anathematize the Gaianites, who say of the human nature that it is stamped like wax by the seal, and that the spirits descend on it with mutual mutations and desires'[44]. No better illustration can been given for the distance between Justinian and the Gaianites. And at the same time, it is evident that such theological positions in the camp of Julian of Halicarnassus must have provoked the reaction of Eutychius and Anastasius of Antioch when they showed their opposition to the emperor.

Again in 719 and at Manazkert in 727, John Odznetsi attacked the Phantasiasts[45], although he at the same time did officially reject the Council of Chalcedon as a clear sign of no collaboration with Byzantium. It is a paradox that afterwards, after Odznetsi, in the period of open anti-Chalcedonism of the official Church, almost in order to preserve the unity with the Syrian Church, new violent aphthartodocetic expressions appear no more. In any case, one may infer from the attitude of Justinian I that the whole 7th century in Armenia has been able to reconcile so intimately the uncorruptible body of Christ with the acceptance of Chalcedon. In this respect, the history of the Eastern Church seems easier to understand than it ordinarily has appeared in several developed studies.

[43] The complete text of that letter in A. Ter Mik'elean, *Յաճախապատում ճառք* (Echmiadzin, 1894), pp. 300-310. The first quotation p. 303, the second p. 307. The document is acephalous in A. Izmireants, *Գիրք թղթոց* (Tiflis, 1901), p. 212-219, quotations p. 213 and 216.

[44] Ibid., p. 307 (1894) or 217(1901).

[45] For a synthetic presentation of Odznetsi: J.-P-Mahé, 'L'Église arménienne de 611 à 1066', in J.-M. Mayeur et alii, *Histoire du Christianisme*, t.4 (Paris 1993), pp. 478-486.

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