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LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE NOUS L'AVONS REÇUE.
THE COMPOSITION AND ORIGIN
OF WISCONSINAN TILL IN MAINLAND
NOVA SCOTIA

by

ERIK NIELSEN

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Dalhousie University,

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to show that *Confessions*, I.vi,7 - VII, xvi,22 forms a single coherent argument (and thus constitutes the first division of the text according to its subject matter), in which Augustine, by showing the universal significance of which his own peculiar history is but a particular instance, demonstrates all the stages or moments through which every man must pass who moves from birth to the direct and unmistakeable vision or knowledge of the single, objective, universal Truth by which the universe is both created and governed. We proceed by means of a detailed commentary on the text.
FORMS OF CITATION

The following is a complete list of all the works directly referred to in the thesis. Abbreviated designations (where applicable) are also indicated.

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INTRODUCTION

The Problem and the Thesis

In general, the difficulty in interpreting the Confessions arises from the fact that it presents itself; on the one hand as a unity, in the sense that for Augustine the thirteen books are regarded as a single work, while on the other hand it is evidently divided by Augustine in its content into three parts, (Books I - IX, Book X, and Books XI - XIII), which are so distinct as to raise a serious question about the unity. Both the unity and the division seem to have an equally solid footing in the text, yet they also appear to be mutually exclusive. Modern interpretation tends to fall on the one side or the other of this difficulty. Those who have an eye to the unity seek to discover a single thread, more or less plausible, which runs through the three parts, but in so doing they appear somehow to ignore the fullness of the distinctions. Those who have an eye to the division of the parts are forced by the strength of these very divisions to give up the unity, in sometimes fantastic ways, as anything other than an accidental and external connection. The difficulty is intense: if we insist on the unity, we lose the separation and if we insist on the separation, we lose the unity - yet both must somehow be maintained.
This thesis has its origin in the view that the only solution to this problem lies in a Trinitarian interpretation of the Confessions. According to this view, the unity of the whole and the division of the parts may both be maintained if we can regard the work as a very carefully constructed analogy of the divine Trinity in which Augustine develops his understanding both of the Trinity itself and of creation as an image of that Trinity. Thus, what we maintain with regard to the division is that the three parts correspond in their content as analogies to the three persons of the Trinity—and likewise, with regard to the unity, that the movement between the parts and their connection is analogous to the movement and relation of the persons within the Trinity. Furthermore, according to this view, the same Trinitarian structure is to be found again within each of the major divisions when they are looked at by themselves. Thus, in each, we discern three parts whose distinction and unity is parallel to that which obtains within the whole work.

To establish the sense and adequacy of this position with respect to the entire work will be a very large undertaking and although the present thesis is intended as a substantial contribution towards this goal, in itself it does not show the justice of this interpretation either with regard to the work as a whole nor even with respect to the Trinitarian logic which we claim to discern in the internal
structure of the first part of the work. The reason for this is that although we here provide a commentary on approximately half of the thirteen books of the Confessions, these books only constitute the first part of the first part of this Trinitarian structure and as such they do not in themselves reveal the argument by which such a structure can be established.

Now although the present thesis is conceived in relation to this larger project, it has as its own immediate aim the effort to establish our first division of the Confessions as a division through the discovery of its peculiar content. To this end we proceed by means of a commentary on the text - Conf. I, vi, 7 - VII, xvi, 22 - which aims to show that all the material which Augustine treats in this section of the Confessions forms part of a single, sustained argument in which he demonstrates all the moments through which any man must pass from his birth on the way to the direct and unmistakable vision or knowledge of the objective, universal Truth by which the universe is created and governed.
NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. See Retractions II,vii,33 "..."

2. This general tripartite division in respect to content is well recognized and is indicated by Augustine in the text (X,ii,2 and XI,ii,2) as the two moments when his Confessions take on a new form and object.

3. As will be seen, our commentary treats of the first book in its entirety, with the exception of the general introduction to the whole of the Confessions which Augustine gives to his readers in the first five chapters of this book, (Conf., I,1,1 - I,v,6). These will be dealt with elsewhere in the larger work which we have described, but just because they are a general introduction to the whole, their omission here does not impair our treatment of the substance of the first division which we are attempting to establish and which begins with the discussion of Augustine's infancy in Conf., I,v,7.
CHAPTER ONE

COMMENTARY ON THE FIRST BOOK OF AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS

(I,v.1,7 - I,xx,31)

Method

We start our treatment of the first book from the vision of the Truth which Augustine describes in Book VII. For here, standing in the brilliance of the new light by which he has begun to see, he can look back over the events which led up to this vision and he discerns in their universal form the principal difficulties which had to be overcome at each stage of his life on the way to apprehending this Truth. These stages are therefore both a summary of what is essential in Augustine's particular circumstances and also, because universal, a statement of those steps through which we must ourselves approach the same Truth whatever our circumstances. He distinguishes as follows four moments which precede the vision of the Truth.1

"I. There is no sound reason in those to whom some part or other of your creature is displeasing, just as there was none in me, when many of the things which you have made were displeasing.
II. And because my soul did not dare to allow that my god should be displeasing to it, it would not allow that anything which was displeasing to it should be yours.

III. And from there it had gone to the opinion of the two substances but it found no rest and was raving.

IV. And coming back from there it made for itself a god spread throughout the infinite spaces of all places and him it had supposed to be you, and him it had set up in its own heart and again it had become the temple of its own idol, abominable to you.

But after that you ministered to the needs of my head, unbeknownst to me and you closed my eyes so that they might not see vanity, and I rested from myself somewhat and my insanity was put to sleep; and I awoke in you and saw you to be infinite in another way, and this sight was not derived from the flesh. 3

(VII, xiv, 20)

As these stages correspond to the four ages of Augustine's life through which he moves in the narrative of the Confessions, we shall treat of them respectively as the fault of infancy.
And although it is
by no means necessary that any man discover these obstacles,
how if he does, at the same period of his life as did
Augustine, they do constitute all the same a statement of
the order, number and nature of the fundamental difficulties
to which every man is subject and through which he must pass
at some time or other before he comes to see the Truth. For
while they are presented here as a summary of those difficul-
ties which Augustine encountered in himself and known to
have been the stumbling-blocks on his own way to the Truth,
they will have also a universal significance and application
if they can be shown to belong to his nature as a man rather
than to any private or accidental circumstance. To this
end we must examine the particulars of Augustine's life
as they are recorded in the first seven books to discover
whether he has drawn this statement from phenomena which
are altogether peculiar to himself or which are rather
particular instances of certain universal conditions.
Insofar as the latter can be demonstrated we shall our-
selves be moved to the same vision since in these matters
we are bound only by those difficulties which we have not
yet recognized.

1. The fault in first beginnings and infancy, (De gen.
it Infantis). 5
In the first book Augustine proposes a statement of the problem as it makes its original appearance in the life of the individual. There are certain grave difficulties in properly appreciating Augustine's treatment of his infancy and the task of interpretation is to overcome those moments in which it appears to the reader either unintelligible or arbitrary. The recognition of the difficulties is therefore the starting-point of our inquiry, and of these, the first, because the most pervasive, has to do with the general representation which he gives to this period of his life. For, where one might expect a wealth of particulars as the only remarkable feature of this early age - born in Thagaste, date, of what parents and so on - we rather find Augustine labouring the obvious. In the two chapters of the first book where he speaks directly of his infancy he tells us nothing more than what we already know to be true of all children since he reveals only such things as, that he could then both suck and cry. But because these things were undoubtedly as well known to his contemporaries as they are to us we must therefore conclude that it is just the universal rather than the particular to which he intends to draw the reader's attention.

His purpose, as we can discover from the use to which he puts this otherwise insignificant observation, is to provide the evidence from which he can demonstrate the
nature and condition of man as it may be deduced already from
the scant indications of infancy. To this end it is precisely
the universal phenomena and these alone that constitute an
adequate starting-point and his argument moves through the
following considerations in which he establishes the nature
of the infant by drawing out what is presupposed and
revealed by these capacities.

1. The infant as a sensitive animal: (1, vi, 7). Augustine
begins the account of his life from the observation that
all children — and thus both he and ourselves — may be seen
to suck and cry from the moment of birth.7 "For at that
time I knew how to suck and to be contented with the
pleasures of my flesh and to cry at the offences against it,
nothing more."8 (I, vi, 7).

Now in these activities the infant at once reveals him-
self to be a sensitive animal as distinguished from an
inanimate object or a vegetative creature. For, as both
sucking and crying are conscious intentional activities
initiated by the infant, they presuppose at the very least the
sensible perception by their author of a separation between
itself and the object of its desire. For only where the
distinction between subject and object is present to a
creature, (i.e., perceived), do subject and object appear in
the form of desiring subject and object of appetite. And
only where this is first the case can there be conscious intentional activity such as Augustine observes, by means of which the infant is able to overcome just this separation which it perceives between itself and the object of its desire.

But, however much such a creature is separated from the world by its perception of it, and whatever the corresponding freedom which it enjoys in its activity towards the world, it remains all the same in an essential unity with the entire universe into which it was born. For the only distinction which it knows, \( \text{\ldots} \), between itself and the world is the distinction which can be perceived by any or all of the senses, \( \text{\ldots} \). And as these are limited in their apprehension of the world to whatever is immediately and particularly present to them, such a creature cannot be opposed in its nature to the universe but is rather directly and positively sustained by it. 9

Thus, as Augustine observes, the food which the infant requires from the external world is immediately provided by the same universal order from which this very need arises. For wherever there is an infant, there too is a mother with milk to feed it. And likewise, internally, the healthy infant requires and desires no more than a healthy mother has to provide. And yet neither does the mother fill her breasts, nor does the infant determine the bounds of his desire which
is limited to just so much milk as his mother possesses. 

Considered simply as a sensitive animal, the infant therefore belongs entirely within an already established, universal order of things, in which moreover the various parts work together in peace and concord for their mutual benefit. For the same milk that the infant desires from its mother, the mother also desires to give up to the child. And thus each works for the benefit of the other in pursuing their own particular desires and each is sustained in this harmony by the universal order of things which informs both alike. 

11. The infant as a rational animal: (I,v1,8 - I,v11,12).

Beyond this limited and pathetic cry which belongs to the infant, considered solely as a sensitive animal, Augustine introduces a further evidence when he observes that the human child may also be seen to cry after those things for which it has no particular or immediate need and which, being given, would only harm both itself and those others to whom these things properly belong in the established order into which it was born.

Now the ability to cry after these things presupposes a further capacity in the infant beyond the mere powers of sensation. For the activity of a sensitive animal, including its ability to cry, must and can only be directed towards the satisfaction of those limited desires which arise
from its bodily needs. So long as these have been fulfilled, the sensation of a separation between itself and the object of its desire is overcome and with this its capacity to act.

To use Augustine's example, we see that a sensitive animal, when it cries from hunger, does not cry after food in general, abstract from the requirements of its flesh, but only for that food of which it has an immediate and particular need since it stops its crying as soon as this much has been obtained. To express a desire for more by crying, once this much has been received, is only possible on the assumption that we have here either a diseased animal or else a creature of another sort. But just because this kind of crying can be observed in all children, it cannot be understood as a defect in any one of them and so demands that we recognize in the infant a nature quite different from that of a sensitive animal. In short, it is the cry of a rational animal, whose nature is revealed to us through this activity which is peculiar to it.

As against the limited and pathetic cry of a sensitive animal, this other is altogether distinct, for we see that it is both unlimited in regard to its object and aggressive in intention. It is unlimited in the sense that it does not express a desire for any particular object since it appears in the infant precisely at the point where his particular desires have for the moment been satisfied. And yet,
because it is a cry and not mere sound, it voices a desire. As such it must be directed towards some object, for it is not possible to desire that of which one has no consciousness whatsoever. But in this case its object cannot be any of those particular things of which the infant may be sensibly conscious, for the senses are already satisfied and at rest. The infant must, therefore possess a power of another order than the sensitive which is able to apprehend its objects in their universality and thus a cry which is unlimited in this way presupposes that its author must, at least implicitly, both recognize and desire the universal. In the example, one might say that the infant here recognizes 'milk' or 'food' in general, since it is desired quite apart from any relation which it has to his immediate and particular needs.

Now insofar as the infant recognizes anything according to a universal determination, his own nature is reciprocally determined by its distinction from the same universal, since this is an object for him. That is; as a conscious creature, his own nature is immediately though negatively defined by its distinction from whatever he knows as an object: he is, primarily, not the object of which he is conscious. But since he possesses this power, of apprehending the world in its universality, the specific nature of the human child is consequently determined,
potentially if not yet actually, by its separation from the entire universe into which he was born. And unlike the sensitive animal, which is merely conscious of itself within the universe, the human child is conscious of himself precisely as he is set apart from and over against the whole. He is, in other words, self-conscious, having an identity which is in this way independent of the universe.

We are now in a position to understand the second characteristic that can be observed in this cry, which is to say, its aggressive intention. Through this, the other moment of a rational nature is revealed to us. For while on the one hand the nature of a conscious creature is initially defined by its separation from the object of which he is conscious, as such it has only an abstract identity, being merely the negation of its object. However, precisely because he is conscious of the object by which has nature is defined, this object is recognized as an end so long as he is separated from it. In other words, the infant desires the universal of which he is conscious. From this his nature derives a positive determination in relation to the same universal from which it is originally distinguished and in this way his identity is in the end dependent upon and identical with the whole universe into which he was born. For, as a desirous creature his nature is positively, though remotely, determined by its identity with the object of his desire: he is, finally, as he desires.
The infant whose nature is therefore incomplete as long as its content is outside of itself cannot merely rest in the negative moment but is bound to preserve and fulfill that nature by striving to overcome his initial separation from the universe of which he is conscious. This he achieves by means of the power of rational self-conscious activity which is generated from the prior distinction of the rational subject and its universal object.

Such a cry, although as yet incoherent, is the first expression of this activity and from it we can see how the infant is placed of necessity in an absolute opposition to the entire universe into which he was born since he aims to appropriate the universal for himself. For this desire of an object, apprehended in its universality, can only be satisfied by denying to others what is provided for their particular needs by the established order of things. In this cry the infant therefore reveals a nature which is, from the very moment of birth, in an aggressive and hostile relation to the totality of creation.

Finally, we notice that although in the infant it may not be possible to distinguish by their sound alone between the cry which belongs to his sensitive nature on the one hand and his rational nature on the other, the latter must develop in time into rationally informed sound or speech. In the case of the sensitive animal, the mere
capacity to initiate a sound, (to cry), is adequate to the full expression of its desires. For such a creature it is sufficient if, by sounding, it express at any particular moment, that it desires, since the object of its desire is already ordained and limited by the universal order of things which informs both author and auditor alike.  

But the desires of a rational animal, having no place within the universal order, require that he express to his auditor not only, that he desires, but also what the object of his desire might be. And since his desire can potentially embrace any object, he must have a means of expressing every object. In order to signify the object of his desire the rational animal is therefore bound to develop speech. For, by informing as well as initiating the sound that he utters he reproduces the external world in a rational form - that is, according to the universal manner in which he apprehends the object. And only by means of this rationally informed sound, (the word), is he able to signify to his auditor the object of his desire which must otherwise remain obscure even to himself as no doubt it is to the infant before he learns to speak.

Although Augustine distinguishes the infant from the child, by the capacity of the latter to speak, he recognizes all the same in the unlimited and aggressive cry of the infant the first evidence of this informing
activity which belongs to the very nature of man.\textsuperscript{18}

Here also we may look for a connection between infancy and the other 'ages' of a man's life which appear to have only an external relation to this first period of which nothing can be remembered,\textsuperscript{19} but of this, more later.\textsuperscript{20}

We have now come to another difficulty in the text which turns about Augustine's teaching on innocence. In itself this is straightforward enough, but for us who stand under almost two thousand years of Christian history while perhaps at the same time trying also to free ourselves from it, this word, in such a context, has become so associated with the doctrine of original sin that we may too easily accept or reject his teaching in this matter simply according to our understanding of the doctrine. This is however a serious error and quite the opposite of Augustine's method and intention. For, as he begins here, 'innocence' is used in a strictly secular sense, as we may appreciate if we ask ourselves, "Of what does he hold the infant guilty?" The answer to this question is just that he finds him already in a disordered and harmful relation to the totality of creation on the evidence of his manifest displeasure with many of its parts as revealed by this unlimited and aggressive cry. For however ineffectual the infant may be in realizing his desires,
the weakness lies rather in his members than in his mind or intention, *virimur*, and in these he is altogether hostile to the rest of creation. It is precisely for this reason and in this sense that even the child of a single day cannot be counted innocent.

In making this judgement Augustine draws on the direct sense of the Latin word, *in-noeas*, which means, 'that does no harm'. But as we have seen this harm is exactly what is unavoidable in the separation of any part from what is actually a whole, as, from a separated perspective, the whole must inevitably appear hostile just because it does not accord with the independent desires of the part. Such a harmful relationship is therefore both the consequence of this rational separation which strives to pervert the whole to particular ends and an index of the want of innocence.

And yet, just because the infant is a rational animal, having a nature that is at once both sensitive and rational, he cannot absolutely subvert the order of the whole to the designs of his rational nature. For despite the dominion which such a creature can potentially exercise over the universe in all its parts to order them as he sees fit, he remains quite unable either in the weakness of infancy or in the strength of maturity to disturb the fundamental order of the whole.

In man this order is immediately present in his sensitive nature and of this order we have already seen an evidence in
the harmonious relation that obtains between the infant's desire to suck and the mother's to nurse, where these distinct parts are joined together in peace and concord for their mutual benefit. And although by his rational activity the man can only disturb the established order of the universe, in so doing he brings about the destruction of his sensitive nature which sustains the very power by which he would destroy that order. For his rational powers are supported by his sensitive nature at every moment of his life in at least this sense, that he is a rational animal only so long as and because he is first of all a mere animal.

The primary and fundamental unity of the whole therefore continues unshakeably present at the base of all things, in spite of and indeed supporting even the separation of man's rational nature and the harm that may be wrought on all the parts of the universe by the exercise of this power. And man, who remains unable to disturb the order of the whole, can therefore harm the whole only in its parts, which is to say, primarily, in harming himself.

This brings to light the necessary connection between death and the want of innocence. For, if Life belongs properly to the whole, as indeed it must, since its origin is not in the part, then any part that is separated from the whole in this way is therefore subject even in birth to
a fatal hurt or sickness for which it can have no cure. Thus, while on the one hand, man immediately derives such life and being as he enjoys from the universe through his sensitive nature, insofar as he is also separated from the whole by his rational nature, so is he thereby separated from its life. In other words, as his rational nature, even in its separation from the whole, depends immediately on his particular sensitive nature and as this is but a limited moment in the life of the universe having its beginning and end according to the order of the whole, in the dissolution of the unity and identity of his sensitive nature man is thereby finally cut off from the source of his life and so also loses his active relation to the life of the whole— which is to say that he knows death.

In this sense too the infant cannot be counted innocent; 'innocent' that is of death, which is just the inevitable consequence of his rational separation from the whole, in which nothing can die apart from the whole itself precisely so long as and because none of its moments are separated from it. Thus, as we see, the infant, on account of his rational nature, is in a way already dead and no doubt this is just what Augustine had in mind in the opening lines of these chapters on infancy when he speaks of the human condition as a "...dying life or living death."
Finally, let us return to our text in the seventh book. There he begins from the certain knowledge which has been discovered to him in his vision that, as a thing in respect of Being, so it is in respect of the Truth and from this certain principle he determines that, "There is no sound reason in those to whom some part or other of your creature is displeasing ...", (VII,xiv, 20), for Truth and Being are here known to be related in such a way that displeasure with any part of creation is also, at the same time a departure from the Truth. Then, recalling the description of his infancy with its irrational tantrums and jealousies from the first book, he recognizes that such displeasure was manifestly present even from his birth and so concludes, with regard to the Truth, that he has been in error, (or more laterally, in-sane), from his very earliest beginnings; "... just as there was none in me when many of the things which you have made were displeasing." (VII,xiv,20).

Now inasmuch as the infant has not come to speech, (although as we have seen he is bound to do so in the course of his development), his rational powers remain implicit and inchoate so that he has as yet only a potential relation to the Truth whereas, as a sensitive animal, he is already actually related to both Life and Being. In other words, there is no evidence in the infant from which one could
deduce his separation from the Truth since he has not yet realized his relation to it. For the moment we shall therefore have to accept Augustine's conclusion regarding the infant's separation from the Truth on his authority alone since, as we have it in our text from the seventh book this conclusion depends on a knowledge of the identity of Truth and Being which has yet to be established. However it is clear even now that if this identity can indeed be discovered in the course of the argument, then just this conclusion will follow from it.

If we now review these findings we can see that Augustine, without developing the origin of this disorder itself, (since this would involve the doctrine of original sin at a point where it has not yet become explicit), has nevertheless made it most forcefully apparent to a secular consciousness that, whatever may be the reason, all men suffer in their first beginnings from a defective condition in which, by their nature, they are in an imperfect relation to Being and Life, and from which they must all suffer and perish. And finally, inasmuch as Truth and Being are one, the infant is subject also to the same imperfection in his relation to the Truth - which error will manifest itself once this relation becomes established when the infant comes to the power of speech, as we shall see in the sequel.
Il. The fault of childhood.

Cut off already in its first beginnings from an immediate unity with the Being, Life and Truth of the whole of the rest of creation, the soul is inexorably moved by its own nature into an ever more manifest realization of this disjunction. In infancy, the rational powers from which this disjunction arises are merely present implicitly, for they have only an inchoate expression, (which makes them difficult to discern), and as a result the infant is as yet actually little more than a sensitive animal. And so indeed he must remain unless and until these powers come to realize themselves.

Now childhood is that period of a man’s life in which he initially comes to realize his potency for rational self-consciousness through the development of speech and from this he also comes to realize his opposition to the rest of creation, which is to say that he now realizes the capacity to sin which was merely implicit during his infancy. On the other hand, as childhood is distinguished from adolescence inasmuch as the child has not yet come to recognize the universal as such, he is so far unable to sin explicitly against the universal itself and the activity of this age is therefore limited, in its opposition to the whole, to opposing some particular authority as we shall see in
what follows. The fault of childhood then, while it takes its rise in the general condition that preceded it, is now distinguished as the confirmation of what was in infancy a more condition.

Augustine begins by examining the move to a rational self-consciousness as this is realized through the development of the power of speech and then he brings out the consequences of this new moment especially in his discussion of the theft of pears in the second book which is taken as an exemplary instance of the wrong which is committed by this age. And once again, although Augustine treats of events and circumstances peculiar to his own life, he everywhere aims to interpret them according to the universal significance and application which they can be shown to possess.

As we have already seen, the infant is bound by his very nature to develop the power of speech which is the natural consequence of his rational powers and Augustine now provides an evidence of this conclusion in the observation that the infant is not taught to speak, but rather comes to it from within as the natural expression of his own proper powers. The logic which informs this phenomenon has been discovered in the necessity that the world be actually presented to these powers as object if they are to realize themselves and this they accomplish in language, which transforms the world into word and thus renders it into a
universal form which is adequate to reason.

In the necessity that the infant come to speech in the proper course of his development, Augustine has therefore discovered an essential connection between infancy and childhood which have otherwise a merely external and accidental relation to one another inasmuch as the former period cannot be recollected. At the same time it also provides a universal starting-point for his discussion of childhood, for whatever is deduced from this power will be true of all those who have come to the power of speech.

From what has been said above it follows that until the infant comes to speak, he can be explicitly conscious of himself only as he is distinguished from the world by his sensitive powers even though a rational self-consciousness is implicitly presupposed, as for example in his unlimited and aggressive cry. However, it is precisely from the development of speech in which the world is actually given a rational form by the informed sound of the word and so presented as a proper object to his rational powers that the breach with the immediate and particular which is implicit in those powers in infancy now becomes actual. And, having come to speech, as he is now explicitly separated from the world by the rational distinction of the expressed word, the child is thereby moved to a rational self-consciousness.
Through language the child is therefore freed from that immediate relation to nature to which he is subject as a sensitive animal. For as through the mediation of the word, he has actually come to apprehend the world remotely and according to a universal determination, he is no longer exclusively bound to nature by the immediate and particular perception of the senses, but acquires instead a certain dominion over it.

As a result of this ability to formulate and express his desires rationally, the child is now decisively moved from the instinctive society of animal life in which he is subject to the order of the whole and enters more deeply into the rational society of human life which is governed by an order of a different kind.

For man, having once broken with the absolute and sovereign order of nature must now create and maintain his own order in which he has both to rule and be ruled by authority unless and until his unity with the whole be somehow restored. And thus, although the child has in this way escaped from the immediate control of nature by the exercise of his rational powers, precisely thereby is he delivered into the turbulent society of man and subjected to its government.
This appears first in his dependence on the authority of his parents and elders, to which the child is naturally and immediately subjected as soon as he comes to a rational self-consciousness. And by this authority, once recognized, Augustine was soon sent to school and compelled to his studies under the threat of dreadful punishments. For, as the authority of man lacks the immediate and absolute control with which nature maintains her sovereignty, since it is both remote and partial, it depends instead on the obedience of the subject which must be learned. And this is accomplished by means of those punishments which have recommended themselves to countless generations of men as a kind of imitation of the 'punishment' which nature inflicts on her children for transgressing the order of the whole. And thus indeed, as Augustine says, is the sorrow and labour of the sons of Adam, (i.e., the rational animal), multiplied, for his entry on this wretched and toilsome course is the direct and inescapable consequence of the realization of his rational powers.

But where order is constituted by authority, there some must rule and others be ruled. And although on the one hand it is by these rational powers that the child comes to recognize authority and so becomes subject to it,
on the other hand, by these same powers he also desires authority and is thus constrained to disobedience. For precisely where there is the possibility of obedience, there also is the opposite capacity for disobedience. And thus in spite of, or rather because of, the punishments with which parents and teachers strive to maintain their authority, Augustine observes that he too sought constantly to avoid it, neglecting his studies out of a desire to play and an idle delight in the tales and stage-plays of his elders. And in these activities not only does he escape from the authority of his parents by disobeying their commandments, but he also imitates their power according to the capacities of his age. For the competition of sports and childish games is a kind of imitation of adult life in which the child has the possibility of exercising the authority he desires, while in the tales and stage-plays of his elders he can vicariously enjoy the adult life of which they are a representation.

Because of the weakness of his age the child has not yet the power to extend his authority much beyond these limited imitations of the wider society in which human life is conducted. But while in this limited way he does escape from the particular authority of his parents and teachers, he by no means escapes from authority itself as
the fundamental condition of the life of human society. For although it is a matter of consequence to the particular individual if he exercises authority or is subjected to it, in either case, whether he rules over others or is ruled by them in obedient submission or else in disobedient rebellion - in which rebellion he negates, (dis-obey), those particular authorities to which he is subject only to exercise his own in their stead - authority itself continues to be the fundamental principle by which the society of rational animals is ordered. In other words, regardless of which particular individuals exercise authority and which are subjected to it, the government of man is, at any rate, initially both for the individual and no doubt also for the race, a government by authority.

Now although it is inevitable in this way from the exercise of his rational powers that the child enter into a society which is governed by authority, the authorities to which he is actually subjected, (immediately, those of his parents and elders), are false because vain and contradictory. For all authority is vain if it is not informed by the order of the whole and consequently as we have discovered here, it must be maintained by force. And for the same reason it is also contradictory as we see when the child is punished for attempting the very things which are done by the adults who punish him and which moreover they hope the child himself will grow up to do.
However, while the authorities to which Augustine was actually subject are false in this way, it is not necessarily the case that all authority is false, since that authority would be true which is informed by the order of the whole. Such authority, which is neither vain nor contradictory, Augustine understands to be present in the Church and Scriptures. For, in the discussion of his deferred baptism which he introduces at this point, he opposes the false authorities to which he was actually subjected to that true authority under whose protection he might have been placed had he then entered the Church by receiving its baptism. For the moment we can only take note of the possibility that there is a true authority, since the reasons which led Augustine to the conclusion that the authority of Church and Scripture is neither vain nor contradictory are not developed until somewhat further on in the argument of the Confessions.

And yet, even though his baptism was deferred and he remained subject to a false authority, Augustine judges that as a child he nevertheless did wrong in disobeying the command of his parents and teachers. For although they forced him to his studies for vain and contradictory reasons, his disobedience, as we have already seen, was not moved by a desire for better things, but rather that he might
the better imitate them precisely in respect of these faults. 47

And furthermore, as he progressed beyond the elements of reading, writing and arithmetic 48 to the literature which was taught in Grammar Schools, 49 the same vanity which had first led him to try and escape from those basic studies by playing, now found its satisfaction in these later studies from which he could no longer be dissuaded. 50 And although he was still compelled to the elementary studies by his teachers, 51 their purpose in this was simply to bring him to the study of the poets, deemed necessary to the acquisition of that eloquence by which a man may flourish and grow powerful in the world. 52 And since this is exactly what the child desires from the moment that he enters the society of man, Augustine needed no urging to these higher studies but rather willingly learned them. 53

And yet, by his delight in these studies, commended to him by his teachers, he and they once again both do wrong. 54 For while he despised to learn the elementary business of reading, writing and arithmetic, which moreover his teachers forced on him for the wrong reasons, in them the child develops, as an extension of the power of speech, his potency for expressing those rational powers which are his by nature. As such, these studies are far more valuable than any particular content which they may contain, 55 for
by them he will more adequately, (than with mere speech), be enabled to arrive at whatever end his nature is capable of attaining. And yet, precisely because they are devoid of any particular content, (being essentially studies in grammar and number), they may be filled, either with truth or with the wine of error. And this latter is just what is provided for his willing consumption in the higher studies to which he has graduated, where his newly acquired capacity to read and write is now directed towards and realized in an end which is once again corrupt because both vain and contradictory.

Now the reason why this is the case in respect of these studies and the delight which he took in them is of the utmost importance to Augustine's argument and we may state the matter as follows. On the one hand the tales of the poets which are the object of these studies and which we must remember have a kind of canonical authority for the ancient world, are themselves filled with contradictions from which as Augustine says, a man may derive the authority to pursue his own particular, (i.e., vain), desires in opposition to the rest of creation. And on the other hand, the purpose in pursuing these studies is itself moved by an equally vain and contradictory spirit. For, as he again says, he was encouraged and did willingly imitate his teachers and elders whose end in this work was not at all to find their unity with the totality of the universe, (i.e., God), but
rather to develop that eloquence by which a man may flourish and come to exercise authority in the society of man.\textsuperscript{58}

The reason why \textit{eloquentia} \textsuperscript{59} is the means to power in the society of man follows directly from the argument which has already been developed. For as every individual properly enters this society through the exercise of the power of speech, the unity of such a society and therefore power in it, is ultimately to be found in the word - insofar that is, as it is a society of rational \textit{animals}, although of course as it is also a society of rational \textit{animals}, power and authority derive more immediately from brute force.

But in this pursuit of the \textit{arbor linguosæ} \textsuperscript{60} both Augustine and his teachers oppose themselves to the order of the whole and suffer the consequences of this action. For, as he says:

"Behold, O Lord my God, and patiently, as you do see, behold, how the sons of men diligently observe the covenants of letters and syllables received from former speakers,\textsuperscript{61} while they neglect the eternal covenants of everlasting salvation received from you: so that he who holds or teaches the ancient agreements concerning sounds, if, contrary to the teaching of grammar, he shall say the first syllable of \textit{hominem} without aspiration, more greatly displeases men than if, against your precept he
shall hate a man, although he be a man."^62
(I,xvii,11,29)

We have already seen how it is that man, insofar as he
is rational, is on this account freed from the immediate
control of nature, and yet here we find Augustine introducing
another order to which man is subject precisely in respect
of his rationality but which is nevertheless not of his own
making. For, against the rules of language and grammar which
are clearly a human creation received from former genera-
tions^63 and which men desire in order that they may thereby
subjugate others, Augustine now opposes the "eternal rules
of everlasting salvation" which, as he maintains, men have
certainly received from God and which they neglect in the
pursuit of finite ends to their own harm and ruin.^64

What then is this divine order or rule to which the
rational animal is subject and how is it known to him? Con-
tinuing from the same text, Augustine says:

"And certainly, the knowledge of letters is no more
inwardly present than is that which is written in
conscience, that one is doing to another what one
would be unwilling to suffer."^65 (I,xvii,11,29)

Now in this teaching we find it asserted that by the
very same powers in virtue of which a man comes to the
knowledge of letters, he is of necessity brought also to
the inward recognition that he does to another what he would be unwilling to suffer from him - whenever this is indeed the case.

Behind this doctrine lies the following logic. That very reason in virtue of which a man recognizes the science of language and desires it as a means of establishing his own authority in the society of men, must also recognize of necessity a like reason in those to whom he is related in this way. That is, the eloquence which comes from a grasp of the rules of grammar and speech can have weight and authority only amongst those who also recognize and desire the same science and who must therefore be possessed of the same rational powers. And thus, where men are explicitly related to one another in the mutual recognition of some science or rationally ordered body of knowledge, (in this case the scientia literarum), there also they know one another according to an essential identity which transcends their immediate and particular differences. Of course it is not necessary that one come first to recognize the essential identity of man through this particular science as did Augustine, but it is necessary if this identity is to be recognized, that men share some common knowledge, (scientiae). And although all those who have come so far as the power of speech implicitly share a common rationality, this identity cannot be recognized until they are related to one another in terms of the joint perception of a single, rational order. But this is not
present in the mere words of any particular language until these are explicitly related to a principle and known as belonging to a rationally ordered whole—precisely what is discovered in the science of grammar and speech. And from this identity, once recognized, comes the knowledge that one is doing to another what one would be unwilling to suffer from him, where, as in this case, the man desires the science in order to establish his authority and dominion over others, being all the while unwilling to submit to theirs.

But, having once come to this knowledge, reason has also come to the fundamental law of its own nature, (logico-semantic). For, in the self-contradiction which occurs here, reason has come upon its own natural limits since it cannot tolerate such a contradiction without destroying its very nature. For reason, which realizes its nature precisely in the expressed word, (diction), destroys that same nature in contradicting itself.

Now so long as men are merely related to each other through the common possession of a particular language, it is of course possible for one man to contradict the expressed desires of another as indeed often happens for example in the relations of parents and children. But once these two come to be related in terms of a common knowledge, then their essential identity becomes explicitly recognized and contradiction is transformed thereby into self-contradiction so that in harming another with whom
he knows himself to be identical in this respect, the man thereby harms himself as well.66

And thus it is that man's rational powers which can potentially exercise dominion over the whole of nature and human society to order them as he sees fit, are themselves subject to a law and order not of their own devising which they contradict and ignore to their own ruin. For while by his reason man is freed from the immediate control of nature, in the necessity, (the law), that his reason not contradict itself if it is to remain rational he continues subject to a divine order as surely as does every other created power and being.67 And in this way the disordered and contradictory pursuit of his particular desires constitutes its own punishment,68 for all such activity must ultimately tend to the destruction of the same rational powers by which he would realize these desires. And so, when Augustine speaks of God, dispensing blindness by unfailing law on the unlawful desires of man,69 this is not understood as an arbitrary imposition of divine authority in the manner of partial, finite human authority, but belongs rather to the very nature of things. For, by the law of its own nature, reason inevitably blinds itself, (i.e., destroys the power of discrimination which is its particular virtue), in the irrational, (i.e., contradictory), pursuit of its ends.
As a child Augustine stood on the threshold of such customs, and although he could not yet realize his desire for authority except in the limited world of his childish cares and activities (wherefore Augustine says that he was less feared as a child than as an adolescent), nevertheless as he grows in power and knowledge he will move from the imitation of adult life to adult life itself, where the very same things which are done by the child in respect of tutors and masters, nuts, balls and birds, are there done with respect to kings and governors, gold, mansions and slaves. For, whether as a child or as an adult, having once come to a rational self-consciousness, man is bound by his nature to desire power and authority for himself in the world since this is the necessary expression of his rational powers which, in their separation from the rest of the universe can immediately realize themselves only by striving to arrogate the whole to themselves in these ways.

But, no more than the infant, can the child or adult pursue his particular desires without harming both himself and those others to whom he is related. Although, the infant, whose rational powers are merely implicit, could on this account harm things only in their sensitive nature, the child or adult who has come to an explicit rational
self-consciousness now harms both himself and others in their rational nature. For the authority which he desires, (i.e., the immediate form of rule in the society of rational animals), is only acquired by negating another's authority, whether rightfully held or not; and this in turn involves the man in a contradiction inasmuch as he strives to subject them to his own authority, being all the while unwilling to submit to theirs.

Yet, as we have seen above, this contradiction is ultimately destructive of man's rational powers. And thus the child or adult, like the infant before, remains quite unable to disturb the fundamental order of the universe which was there present in his sensitive nature, and is now also discovered to be present in this the most basic principle of human reason itself - that reason cannot contradict itself and remain rational.

Now, since reason is limited in this way by the universal order of things we can see that it is not man's rational nature in itself which is in a harmful relation to that order - as if reason itself were the source of all evil and wickedness and the only way to return to peace and harmony with the whole would be through the destruction of man's rational nature and the return to a purely sensitive existence. For, as rational, man is related to the Truth which itself belongs to the universal order and as such his
reason is both a product of that order and is necessarily related to the Truth as to its end. Thus, in the destruction of reason which is, immediately, the inevitable consequence of its connection in man with his particular sensitive nature, man is involved in the same harmful relation to the universe as when he perverts its sensitive nature to his own particular ends by means of his rational powers. The want of innocence then derives neither from man's sensitive or rational natures in themselves but rather from the necessary confusion of the universal and the particular which belongs to man's nature as a rational animal.

However, in spite of this want of innocence, Augustine concludes in the last chapter of the first book by praising God for the benefits which he possessed even as a child. For although in exercising his rational powers the child is bound to prefer his own particular ends to those of the whole, and is consequently opposed to the good of the whole from which he is separated by his nature as a rational animal, yet even as a child he had Being and Life and had then also realized his relation to the Truth. And since he did not confer these things upon himself, (such Being and Life as he does possess, and the Truth to which he is related), he must therefore have received them from the universe. And since they derive from and belong to the unity of the whole they cannot in any way be opposed to it.
And so, in the last sentences of this first book, Augustine prays that these gifts may be preserved and increased in him so that he may in the end return to that unity and wholeness from which he is initially separated and towards which his nature aspires. 80
NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. In the *Confessions* Augustine follows the general Latin division of the ages or periods of life, *(actas)*, which he distinguishes as follows: 

1 - *primordia*, *(Conf., I, vi, 10)*, for his life in the womb from conception until;

2 - *perinata*, *(Conf., I, vi, 10)*, from birth until;

3 - *adulta*, *(Conf., I, vii, 13)*, from the acquisition of speech until;

4 - *adolescente*, *(Conf., II, iii, 6)*, from puberty until;

5 - *juvenis*, *(Conf., VI, i, 1)*, from the youthful maturity of his early thirties. These are the four ages through which Augustine moves in the *Confessions*. The other two generally recognized periods are: 

6 - *continges*, from the 40th or 45th year to the 60th, and 

7 - *senesces*, from the latter age until death. See Lewis and Short, *A Latin Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, 1897, art. 'actas'.

2. The numbering of the first four sentences in this chapter by which we distinguish these four moments is of course our own.

J. J. O'Leary in The New Augustine, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1934, has also noted that R. J. O'Connell in Saint Augustine's Confessions: The Odyssey of the Soul, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1969, p. 9, hereafter cited as Confessions, speaks of as the "... penetrating observation that the Confessions was at no point meant as a 'purely personal history,' but as one which is in part at least 'typical.' ... In short, the 'story of Augustine's own conversion ... is to some extent the story of a typical conversion ... the story of everyman.'"

Ps 37:4,8

3. Conf., VII,xiv,20 "Non est sanctas cec, quibus displicet alicuiii creaturae tuae, siquit minvi non erav, cum displicerent multa, quae facisti. Et quia non audiebat anima mea, ut ei displiceret dei meus, olatiebat esse tueum timidum et displicechat. Et inde ierat in opinionem duorum substantiarum ev non requiescebat et alienas utquebatur. Et inde medias fecerat cibi ducem per infinita spatii locorum omnium et eum putaverat esse te et eum collocaverat in corde ovo et facta erat versus templum idoli sui abominandum iibi. Sed procequam fecisti caput, nesciebatis et clausisti oculos meos, no vidarente sanitatem, occasiavi de mortuam, et consopita est insaniam meo; it avigilavi in te et vidi te infinitum olivae, et visum iste non a carne transibatur."

Ps 118:37
Unless otherwise indicated, the translations from the Confessions are our own and in every case the Latin text we used is that of M. Skutella in the Bibliothèque Augustienne, (hereafter EA), edition of the Confessions, Oeuvres de saint Augustin, Volumes 13 & 14, Desclee de Brouwer, 1962. For the sake of convenience we have reproduced, beside the text, the references for direct quotations given in the EA edition and underlined the appropriate section of both text and translation. Occasional corrections or additions to these references, where necessary, have been noted.

4. See above n.1.

5. Augustine treats here of primordia and infantia as if they constituted a single period, (see Conf.,I,vi,10) since he has no memory of either, (see Conf.,I,vii,12). See below, n.31, for a discussion of the distinction which he observes between these two in spite of their identity in this respect.


7. Augustine of course mentions other capacities of the infant in these chapters on infancy - laughing, sleeping, waking and so on - but he distinguishes these from his original activities, (presumably those of the first hours
of life), which he observes to be limited to sucking and crying. See Confi. i, vi, 7 & 8, "Nam tune nascitur uterum et adquiruntur
viatae onibus, postea autem ossificationem
existimur, nihil impliunt. 8. Nondum utrique corp.,
imam nimirum, litterae vigilias.

As we shall show, the point of this distinction between
these first, (in I, vi, 7), and the latter activities of the
infant, (in I, vi, 8ff), which latter includes the
intermediate cry of the child, is simply the distinction be-
tween merely instinctive activities which belong to and
reveal man's sensitive nature and those others which, while
no doubt still fundamentally instinctive, nevertheless
already manifest man's rational nature. See below, 11. The
infant as a rational animal.

8. Confi. i, vi, 7 "Nondum nascitur uterum et adquiruntur
viatae onibus, postea autem ossificationem earnis moem,
nihil impliunt."

9. Confi. i, vi, 7 "Et susceperunt nos consolationes
miscerationum tuarum ... consolationes lactis humani ..."
11. **Conf., I, vi, 7** "... o sanctissimis viribus, ut his, a communi et ordinarii societate.

12. **Conf., I, vi, 7** "... hiserit illa idque motus etiam, ut evincat quisque quod eum operi petitur velamorem et laborem qui abhinc aut sive ab hinc hominem vel caelo, quod eum vel nisi, et per eum eam vel de quidque homo eam, deum, et de hominum et deo istam antrope, quod est vel est, possumus et simul et eum vel eam habere, quem invenit simul vel spectabilis.

13. "Pathetic", in the sense that the infant, insofar as he is regarded simply as a sensitive animal, does not determine the desires and necessities of his flesh, but rather suffers them.

14. **Conf., I, vii, 11** "... fendo petere eitam nono damnum ...", and "Nam vero est ista innocentia vest, in fornicatur uberrim manifesta data abundante, opus omniis simul et illo adhibe uno alimento vitam autem consortem non patri.

15. Because the infant desires an object apprehended according to its universal determination his cry ought also to be unlimited in the sense that the infant does not cease from this activity until he obtains the object.
of his desire, which, of course, cannot be given. That the infant does not continue to cry indefinitely does not destroy the argument for, as Augustine observes, mothers and nurses have ways of distracting the child from these universal ends to a sensible object. See *Conf.*, I, viii, 11, "*Sequentur aut devarit notarum opera utvices quaevio quinam removit.*"

However, as soon as the infant develops the power of speech and comes to the next stage of his life, he can no longer be diverted in this way from his rationality. For thenceforward even the desires of his sensitive nature are then pursued by rational self-conscious activity. And although this rational activity no longer appears in the form of a cry, in whatever form it does appear, it is unlimited in just this sense that the natural man never ceases from it so long as he lives.

16. Augustine would of course recognize that the sensitive animal may possess a considerable repertoire of sounds, (a different cry for mating, hunger, pain and pleasure, etc.), and also that these may be learned, but insofar as they are not rationally informed by their author but rather various sounds initiated in response to different sensations in a manner that is established by nature rather than by the creature himself independent of nature, they are not properly speaking, speech.
17. *Conf.*, I, viii, 13 "Non igitur, sed infans, et non adultus, sed meus legerum est, mea est. See also above, n. 1 on the distinctions which Augustine draws between the several 'ages' of man's life.

13. *Conf.*, I, vi, 8 "...et quidem nunc nobis ostendere deus, quod quidam numquam, quod ille fuit Deus, fiat. Nunc est Deus, ostendente deo; fuit Deus, ostendente illo. In alio loco unde vitam et salutem, simplicissime minime notum, nomen et gloriam non habebant, quaeque per se non erant Deus; et nunc est Deus, sicut est, et nunc est Deus, sicut erat, et nunc est Deus, sicut erit Deus, et nunc est Deus, sicut est Deus.

19. *Conf.*, I, vii, 12 "Sed ecce autem Illud tempus: et quid nisi hic enim es, ueste nulle veste be possello?"

20. See below, II. The fault of childhood, especially n. 36.

21. *Conf.*, I, vii, 11 "Ita indecilitas membrorum infantilium humanum est, non anima infantilium."

22. See above, I. The infant as a sensitive animal.

23. Augustine speaks of this fundamental unity in *Conf.*, I, vi, 7 as, "... institutionem tuam et divinitas tuaque ad fundum
24. This connection is reflected in the etymology of the Latin word *mors*, which, in its Greek root is connected with, οἵς, 'corpse' and, νεκρός, 'dead' - and behind this to the Sanskrit, nasci, 'perish', 'disappear'.

25. Conf., I, vi, 10. "unde non sola mortis, sed et insaniae, et etiam in "we do not alone mean death, but also madness, and even insanity in nos, precibus omnes quod et facta nec, sodae aut esse et viene nos utibil ut vivam, aliquis alibi, quia omnium nec e' omnes viveo ut inveniam eos?"

26. See our text in Conf., VII, xiv, 20 (above pp. 1-2) where, referring to infancy, Augustine says, "nec est sanitas illis ...". We have already translated this as, "There is no sound reason ...", in order to bring out the separation of the infant from the Truth. The Latin can however equally be translated as, "There is no health ...", which brings out the separation from Life and thus provides a more suitable rendering in the present context. The two senses of sanitate are of course complementary.

27. Conf., I, vi, 9 "... tu autem, domine, qui co aequa viris et nihil moritur in te, quoniam ante permordie sanitatem et ante omne, quod vel ante dies postest, tu es et Deus omni dominusque omnium; quae ercasti, et apud te perum omnium
..."; See also Conf., I, vi, 16.

28. Conf., I, vi, 7 "... non obsecro currem..."

This phrase, 'dying life or living death' which occurs in various forms throughout is of course ambiguous and no doubt intentionally so. For on the one hand as death is the consequence of man's rational separation from the universe and its life, the phrase can mean initially, as we have shown here, that even in the first flush of animal life man is already dead since he is inescapably subject to the fatal consequences of his rational nature. But on the other hand, just because his rational nature is separated from the universe, neither can this nature be a passing, (dying), moment in the life of the universe as is the case with his sensitive nature - and in this sense a man cannot die. That is, his rational nature, insofar as it is separated from the whole cannot, on the dissolution of his sensitive nature, immediately return to the whole or lose its identity in it. The sense in which this separated reason can be considered to live or die is only developed by Augustine later on in the work.
29. The ultimate unity of the Being and Truth of all things is the sense of Augustine's vision in Book VII, but see especially, Conf., VII, xv, 21.

30. See Conf., I, vi, 10 where Augustine clearly recognizes that while the infant has both Life and Being, he is as yet only potentially related to the Truth. "... sapienti..." etc., in addition to Life and Being, "... in arte sive quidam sive quique simplici..." etc., ineluctum, posticium quae etiam...". At the end of this first book in Conf., I, xx, 31 in a catalogue of the gifts which the child, sapientia, possesses, Augustine there includes the recognition of the Truth, "... sapientiae sapientia..." in addition to Life and Being, "... in arte sive quidam sive quique simplici..." etc., ineluctum, posticium quae etiam...". For, as we shall see below in, II. The fault of childhood, it is only in childhood as the infant comes to the power of speech that he realizes his relation to the Truth.

31. Augustine treats primum and infancia as a single period, (Conf., I, vi, 10), inasmuch as he has no memory of either, (Conf., I, vii, 12). He is however very careful not to violate the limits of the phenomenal demonstration through which he has established the defects of infancy by pretending
that its application also to his life in the womb.

Thus, while there may be the strongest suspicion that this condition has been present already from his conception, since in this case it can neither be recalled nor deduced from observation, Augustine voices this suggestion merely as an hypothesis at the end of those chapters on infancy: see Conf., I, vii, 12 "... morte, et..."

32. Already in the two chapters on infancy, Augustine recognizes that, since the infant has not yet come to an explicitly rational self-consciousness, he cannot yet be regarded as the responsible author of his actions and is therefore incapable of realizing or committing a sin. See Conf., I, vii, 11 "qui non sapit, qui non operatur, et qui non potcit, non operatur, nec scit operandum nec sapit cubitum..."

33. In this context the age of childhood extends from the time when Augustine first learned to speak until the conversion to philosophy in his nineteenth year. The period therefore includes everything from Conf., I, viii, 13 to III, xiii, 6 and thus also the start of adolescence insofar as his body is concerned. See Conf., II, xiii, 6 "Quia immo..."
... The power to invent with pronouncing speech is the root of knowledge, and is in the human spirit. 

...". Augustine however dates the beginning of his 'spiritual' adolescence from the time when he first came to recognize the universal qua universal through reading Cicero's Hortensius and was moved thereby to the study of wisdom itself, see Conf. III.iv.7.

34. Conf. I.viii.13 "For even in the name of 'auctoritas' there means in nil verum esse clarum sicut  

atra rubea posse skatenas, or ego 'unde venes, non dolor 

mea', non reus, ...". See also, Conf. I.xiv.23 "Necesse vero 

esse est certe esse veritatem, in qua non est nec 

mea ut partem conspecta sit, ...

35. Although Augustine recognizes a more primitive and universal 'language' than that of the word, expressed by the countenance, the sound of the voice and the motion of the body, [Conf. I.viii.13 "... somnia nostra 

naturalia, animae portionis..."], this is by no means adequate to the universal capacities of reason since it remains bound to the immediate and particular. However, just for this reason, when coupled with the word, it is the means by which the child comes to learn his particular tongue: see Conf. I. viii.13.
36. In *Conf.*, I, vii, 12 Augustine brings out the apparent lack of connection between infancy and childhood resulting from the inability to recollect the former period: "... vel simile quid ille tempus: quae quidem linguae revocatio, ideo melius composita: verum non eam vocem." However, in the very next line at the beginning of the following chapter on childhood, (Conf., I, viii, 13), he finds a connection in the speech which the one age lacks and the other possesses: "Quae ab ipsis in carmine vox in vocabulo? et quid hic in re volat at non sanae infantiae? nec dissensum illa: quae est illa? et ulla non eam inanis, quae non facit, nec propri iterum eam." The connection here would be perfectly clear to a Latin reader for Augustine gives the etymology of the word 'infant', ("in-jungere, ut non jungere"), which means, strictly translated, 'one not yet able to speak'.

37. *Conf.*, I, viii, 13 "Sic enim hic, inter aequum eum, voluntas: ideoque signa communiuntur in vitia humanae procellarum concordatam altum ingressus non pondere, sed penis in concordantibus mutuo mutorum hominum."

Note here the, "vitae humanae procellarum concordatam," "procellarum" belongs to the image of the society of natural man as a bitter, chaotic, tempestuous, storm-driven ocean which occurs throughout the *Confessions*. The passage above is the
first use of this image which is finally explicated in the allegorical interpretation of Book XIII; see especially, Conf., XIII, xvi, 20ff. "quid congregant arare nostri in "cel. ven. melam" ..." etc. See BA 13, p. 316, n.1, for other references to Augustine's use of this symbolism. Particularly useful for the large number of texts which he has collected is H. Rondot's "Le symbolisme de la mer chez saint Augustin," in Augustinus Magister, Etudes Augustiniennes, Paris, 1954, Vol. II, pp. 691-701.

38. Conf., I, ix, 14 "inde in concham deus sur, un discessit
lipum, in qua quid utilitatis esset ignorabam mihi.
qui, quoque, est cognit in dissecendo secat, sapientiam."

39. Conf., I, ix, 14 "Deus, Deus meus, quae ibi nescius expeties sum et indifferentes, quandoquein recte mihi vivere pugno
iussim conscribere, obtintent eum nonentibus,..."

40. Conf., I, ix, 14 "Inde abhine eum ho a maiore in multis
ante nos via vostram agentem praeconiavit acrumosam vias,
per quas transire congravimus multiplicato labore et dolore
filii Adam."

41. See Conf., I, ix, x and following. At the end of the first book Augustine summarizes this matter in the following statement: Conf., I, x, 30 "... ubi eisim talibus dissecbiam
fallendo innumerabilibus mendacitis et paedoqum et magistros
et poenos amore ludendi, studio ocoetandi nuxtoria et"
immediata iniquitudine?

42. **Conf.**, I,x,16 "Non enim, sed quia longa inobscuratione erat, sed auro ludendi, ut mans in aerarii terminus superbar victoriae ...". As Augustine well recognizes, the child who cannot win by fair means may still exercise his authority by resorting to foul, in which he acquires dominion over his fellows by excercising his dominion over the rules of the game. See, **Conf.**, I,x,30 "In quo etiam ludis fraudulentae victoriae ipsa rana excellentiae cupiditate victus saecro 

43. **Conf.**, I,x,16 "... et scapi sunt mens falsae stabilitatis, quo pruvirent adolescentes, sedem curiositatis magis magisque per omnes emicente in spectacula, ludis maiorum; ..."

44. Augustine makes this suggestion that, from the earliest days of the race, man has been governed by authority, in the passage we have quoted above from **Conf.**, I,x,14: see above, n.37.

45. **Conf.**, I,x,15 "... sed delectabat ludere et vindicabatur in desub eic qui talum utique aegabant. ..." etc.

Elsewhere in the first book Augustine again points out this contradiction, e.g. **Conf.**, I,x,16.
46. See Conf., I,x,17 - 18, also, Conf., I,xv,24; Conf., I,xvi,25 and Conf., I,xvii,27 where Scripture is recommended as a safe text for learning language, (as opposed to the poets), on the grounds that it is neither vain nor contradictory.

47. Conf., I,x,16 "... peccabam faciendo contra praecepta parvis et magis magorum illorum. poicram enim poetae hunc et litteris, quas volabant ut discerem quocumque animo illi nos. non enim meliores solvunt incohendens cram, sed amore ludendi, ...". See also, Conf., I,xii,19.

48. Conf., I,xiii,20 "Nam illar primas, ubi legere et vernere et numerare discitur, ..."

49. The schola grammatica of Conf., I,xiii,22. For a general survey of the distinctions and functions of the various schools which Augustine attended, see N. Solignac's essay, BA 13, Notes Complémentaires, 5, p. 659: "L'éducation à l'époque d'Augustin".

50. Conf., I,xiii,21 "... et sic prohibere sa legere, (Virgil's tale) dolorum, ...", also, Conf., I,xii,22 "... vel potius tota odorum, illa amabam. iam vero unum et unum duo duo et duo quattuor olima contiu mici erat, et dulcissimum spectaculum vanitatis auroque lignore pleuro ornatus et Troio..."

Vir. "Necendium atque ipsius umbra Creusaet"
51. By the time he attended grammar school the deficiencies in Augustine's elementary studies seem largely to have centered on his knowledge of Greek, (Conf., I, xiv, 23), and perhaps also on mathematics, (Conf., I, xiii, 23, quoted above, n. 50). However, he disliked the elementary education in Latin just as much as he was later to dislike it in Greek and for the same reason. See Conf., I, xiii, 20 "... quod non nisi in praeceptis, non quae sunt ut quae praeceptis sunt. Nisi illae praecepit, ubi legere vo scribere et numerare dixit, non minue sacerdos parvulosque habebam quos non aperiebat. Unde tamen ut hoc nunc de positro et resitutio vellam, ...".

52. Conf., I, ix, 14 "... quia non voluit mihi nomen puerio tu præcessisse, obtinere munimentum, ut in hoc argumento flouret et resellero linguæ, arduum et homine honore et jure sit inter familiam familiisque." See also Conf., I, xii, 19 "Hic enim non incolumine, quo referreme quod ne diceam argybly quam ad extiander lusitiales expeditias corporisque luctum et ignominiosae glorias." See also, Conf., I, xvi, 26 "Et tamen, o flumen capturum, laetaabantur in te filii hominum cum mercedibus, ut hominibus, et magna res agetur, cum hoc agitur publico in foro, in conspectu legum supra mercedem salaria discorporationem, et casa tua percutito et sonic dicas: 'hine
53. Conf., I,xvi,26 "Nam eum esse, non esse, in olim
nomen verum venit semper illi. Hanc inquit
erat et sic incipit scriptum: "et hoc homo opus
esse sapienti." In the following chapter, Conf., I,xvii,27
Augustine recounts an instance of the kind of vain success,
which he sought after and sometimes
achieved in those studies.

54. Conf., I,xiii,22 "Tertium ergo pauca, que illa familia
sunt multo longius aequae, quoniam vel potius vale adsciam,
illa amorem."

55. Conf., I,xiii,20 "Nam quidque motores, quia sectores,
quiri priam illae litterae, quibus plebatur in habet famam
et habet illi, ut et legam, se quid scriptum invenio,
et coniunca igitur, si quid volo, quam illae ...". See also,
Conf., I,xiii,22 "Tum si quiescunt, quid honos moerere vitae
habet inconmodum quin unde obliviscatur, legere et scribere in
poesia illa signa, quin non videas, quid respondes
et, qui non est pentitum obitius sui?"

56. Conf., I,xvi,26 "Non mecum verba quasi vasa legi aetque
praeceps, sed viam erroris, quod in ete nobis propinabatur
et eum doctorem habere, et nisi biberamus, accederemus nec app-
disse, et aliquid indisse sobrium lecchab. et tamen ego,
Augustine again uses the same image of the "vinae error" in speaking of his father's misguided joy in Augustine's puberty, see Conf. II, i, ii, 6.

57. Conf. I, xvi, 25 "Numer ega in eo (the fiuer move hunc)

58. Conf. I, xvii, 28 "quid autem nunc, quod in voluntate

59. Conf. I, xvi, 26 "hinc verba eloquentiae, hinc

60. Conf. I, ix, 14 "et in hoc solvere flores et excellenter lingua ostibus ad honorem hominum et falces
where the necessity of these 'tongue sciences' by which a man may flourish in the world is opposed to the true science leading to everlasting salvation.

61. See also Conf., I,xiii, 22 "... i. e. quae..."

62. Conf., I,xviii, 29 "Vide, domince domo, et pulcrae, in vico, vico, quoniam divinere obsecro te filii hominum ... accepta a potestate

63. See above, n. 61.

64. Conf., I,xviii, 29 "Quasi vero quomlibet immenso

65. Conf., I,xviii, 29 "Et certe non est interior litterarum scientia quam scripta conscientia, id se alteri favere quo

nulli poti."
66. Conf., I,xi,29 "non sed vero praecepto inani- 

cium cerni venturi quae longa aestas, non eae 


tempora, quae vero in intelligendo animo, eaeque 


quae vero in verum inveniante.

67. Conf., I,xiv,23 "nec illum illum hocce verum, 


tetulisse est, aut, sed, tetulisse in aegitatoam sermone 


vorm et comprehensam mercurium, selenitibus tetulisse 


tetumque occultum occultorum non est et eter 


inveniente pestiferum, qua vocans a te."

68. Conf., I,xii,19 "institut infra rei ven, ut posse 


praestit velit ex inveniantur animo."

69. Conf., I,xviii,29 "veli tu cascinca cas, habita in 


cascolia in silentio, duc secus manu, lege infigibilii 


sperimum pror advertise supra intellectus cupiditatem, 


qui homo circumciscere famam quaeritium utro homines intro 


sperum hominem multitudine in nilium cum illo in 


monstrum incolitiae vigilantiasine caede, nec probus 


excepsum ille: inter omnes, et ne pro mel ia superam 


homines autem ex hominibus non carui."

70. Conf., I,ix,30 "necum ego pro in limite iucubam 


miser ..."
71. Conf., I,xvi,19 "in justam homin. De sign. ... de cœlo sentientem bene dicam, ..."

72. Conf., I,xix,30 "Nam haec esse evas, enim regnum
et magnum, a nobis et filiis et possessionem, et posse
esse et regere, autem, pronuba, veritatis, hoc est maius
encomiendum, maiores autem acutius carurem, sit ut
reserbo utrum supplicio encomio."

73. Thus Augustine asks of his childhood as he had already
asked of his infancy, if it can be counted innocent. And
again, for the same reasons, the answer is an unequivocal
"no". See Conf., I,xix,30 "Teneo etiam sanctum puritatem
... imm. terras, non eam, sed de, deus meus."

74. See above, I. The fault in first beginnings and infancy.

75. Since the child has not yet come to grasp the universal
as such, neither can he oppose the authorities to which he
is subject on the grounds that they do not derive from the
rational order of the whole. And although as we have seen,
the authority of parents and teachers is vain and
contradictory, even so Augustine allows that the child is
naturally and properly subject to their authority and ought
to obey it. For whatever end they may have in exercising this
power, because this end is achieved by developing, (in reading,
writing and counting), the rational powers which the child possesses by nature, so far it works with the nature of things enabling him to achieve whatever end his nature is capable of attaining both for good or ill. Thus the child who rebels against these elementary studies does not even work for his good in the order of the whole unwillingly, except insofar as he brings a deserved punishment upon himself for neglecting this work. See Conf., I, x, 16 and especially Conf., I, xi, 19.


77. Conf., I, xx, 31 "ude unius secularum, quod non in ipso,
non in eo, secundum quod aut a priori oportet voluptatem,
recti rectorem, rectiusque quaerendum, atque illa laudanda in
altri, coniuncta, concors..."

78. Conf., I, xx, 31 "Sed lemen, domine, uti excellentiassimum
arborum ex eis edulcori et rectori universitatis, quo nostro
conduci, etiam se param tamquam esse voluntes. Eam
cum eum viderim, videram etique secundum meamque
involuntatem, vertigium oecentissime unitatis, ex qua eam,
prael cladem, custodiendam interiori sensu integritatem
senium in eum unique ipsos parvis parvarumque parum
cognitionemque veritate delectabar. Falli nobis, memori
79. Conf., I, viii, 31 "And, ... if it be so...

80. Conf., I, viii, 31 "...he is..."
CHAPTER TWO

COMMENTARY ON THE SECOND BOOK OF AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS

II. The fault of childhood. Continued from Book I.

In the second book Augustine brings his account to the sixteenth year of his life because at this time he came to puberty and thus entered into adult life (childhood) at least insofar as his body is concerned. But although physically an adult, he still remains a child as far as his rational nature is concerned and in this book Augustine examines both the sin or harm of which this age is capable, which now appears fully expressed in the grown child, and also the limits to which he is all the while subjected by the universal order of things.

i. The sin of childhood against the sensitive order of the universe: (II,1,1 - II,111,8). Augustine begins by considering the damage that the physically mature child may do to his sensitive nature and to the sensitive nature of the universe. Now, in the ability to reproduce a sensitive nature has reached its highest capacity inasmuch as it has come to that one activity wherein every animal works directly for and attains to a universal end. And in a
sensitive animal its sexual desires are quite innocent since they are governed by natural instinct and hence informed by the order of the whole. But in a rational animal who is free of this order, these fleshly desires are potentially unlimited and in seeking to satisfy them the man consequently opposes himself to the order and well being of the whole and so also to his own well being within this order. Such a man was Augustine as he tells us when he says that he then delighted only to love and to be loved.

Now in using the freedom of his rational nature to pursue his sexual desires in an unlimited and aggressive manner he thereby perverts them from their proper and universal end in the ordered reproduction of the species to the particular end of obtaining for himself that pleasure which is associated with this activity. And although the unlimited pursuit of any particular end necessarily disturbs the order of the whole, here in the perversion of the one activity in which his sensitive nature works directly for a universal end, he now brings that nature into the most complete possible opposition to the sensitive order of the universe.

Moreover, as Augustine notes, the same rational powers by which he is freed from instinctive sensuality and which, by their nature aspire after the universal, are themselves seduced away from this end by his unfettered sexual desire.
and bound to the continual pursuit of sensual pleasure in
the many particular loves in which this desire may find
gratification. And thus, as he says, he was most powerfully
dispersed by this highest capacity of his sensitive nature
and broken apart, turning from unity to the vain pursuit of
the many. 7

Now until such time as a man comes to recognize and
desire the universal qua universal, it is inevitable,
whenever the opportunity presents itself, that his rational
powers be given over to the particular in this way. 8 For,
as they do not yet have any proper object of their own, they
are easily seduced to serving the ever present desires of
his sensitive nature. 9 And although for this reason Augustine
was unable to restrain himself, he might have been restrained
by the authorities to which he was then subject had they com-
pelled him, if not to chastity, then at least to the restric-
tion of marriage, by which means human society first imposes
order on disordered sexual desire, thus freeing man's
rational powers from this bondage to the particular while
satisfying both the demands of his own body as of the
'universal body' of the race. 10

But since his parents no more than he, had grasped the
danger and damage involved in this unlimited pursuit of
sexual pleasure, they were content to leave him free to
satisfy these vain and insatiable desires as best he could. 11
taking care all the while that he continue those studies by which a man may come to power and authority in the world. 12 And while it is true that Augustine was admonished (single, 
monogamy), by his mother not to fornicate and especially not to have adulterous relations with another man's wife, 13 she herself scarcely grasped the principle which informs this advice. For, having once offered it, she did not strive to enforce the advice by compelling his obedience, which, as advice, he was then unable to appreciate because he did not yet understand the principle that informs it any more than she. 14 Rather, Monica was content to follow her husband who had only a secular end in mind and neither understood nor cared for the danger to which his son was exposed by the loss of his soul's integrity. 15 And thus the reins of authority were slackened and Augustine was left free to dissolve himself in the pursuit of sensual pleasure, 16 from which however he could derive no lasting satisfaction 17 because this pleasure was a bondage for his rational nature.

But although in the absence of any authority which is informed by the order of the whole, the man who has not yet come to recognize the universal as such, inevitably, and indeed gladly too, 18 falls into these harmful excesses and perversions of his sensitive nature, he is guilty of a
far more serious hurt both to himself and to the society of man when such authority or law is present and he nevertheless neglects it. For while in the former case his rational powers are bound to the sensitive and in serving them, harm these sensitive powers by wasting their strength on an end which is in no way proper to them; in the latter case not only does he attempt to pervert the rational nature of the universe to his own particular ends but in the process, rather than merely binding, he actually destroys his own rational nature.

ii. The sin of childhood against the rational order of the universe. Augustine turns his attention to this matter in treating the incident of the theft of pears which occupies the remaining seven chapters of the second book.¹⁹ It is perhaps difficult for the modern reader to appreciate the gravity of the charge which Augustine brings against himself for having committed this theft which we might well be inclined to regard as a 'natural' but insignificant moment in growing up and which we would therefore dismiss with an indulgent, 'boys will be boys'. From such a standpoint one would then regard Augustine's lengthy treatment of the incident as a kind of pious, or perhaps neurotic, hyperbole of the 'great saint' and this especially of his implication that in this childish act he is even worse than the notorious Cataline.²⁰ But such a view merely reveals our own prejudices regarding
Augustine's character and the seriousness of such a prank and contributes nothing to the interpretation of the work and for this we must rather discover an internal explanation which is adequate to his treatment of the matter.

Augustine, certainly agrees that such an action is 'natural' to childhood, and indeed it is precisely for this reason that he includes the incident in his Confessions. For, although this theft was peculiar to Augustine and his few companions, his aim in discussing it is to discover the universal conditions and consequences of the deed which must therefore apply to all men who have ever committed a similar act. It is to the consequences and significance which Augustine discovers here that we must turn our attention.

As we have already seen in the first three chapters, Augustine relates that at this period of his life the reins of authority were slackened and he was left free to pursue his sensual desires with the result that his rational powers were given over to the service of his sensitive nature. And from this unnatural pining comes, in the image Augustine draws from the Psalms, a kind of swelling faintness that more and more occludes his vision of the Truth, or as one might say, prevents his rational powers from attaining their own proper end. This then is the background against which he discusses the theft of pears and so we take note already that theft is treated here in the context of an inadequate
apprehension of the Truth.

But however inadequate and occluded his vision may have been, Augustine immediately proposes that there is a divine law which punishes theft and of which it is impossible for man to be ignorant.

"Without doubt, O Lord, your law punishes theft, and the law is so written on men's hearts that not even iniquity itself can blot it out: for what thief can suffer a thief with equanimity? Not even a rich thief when the other is driven to steal by want." 22. (II, iv, 9)

Now, when in this poetic image, Augustine affirms that God's law is "written on our hearts", he intends, following Paul, 23 that this law is already present in man before being given or known from any external source. In other words, it is affirmed as belonging to man's nature in such a way that it is a principle of his very identity as a man and so in this sense is quite independent of any external authority to which he may or may not be subject. Thus, when Augustine speaks here of a divine law (lex tua), he intends neither the external law of Scripture nor of the Roman state. Rather, he condemns this theft of his childhood because in it he denies the law of his own nature—a law which derives from the universal order of things and which is already present in man before it ever appears in the form of external
authority.

And what is this law? As Augustine states the matter, it is manifested by the fact that no thief can suffer a thief with equanimity, which, as we shall see, is a way of saying that in all his finite rational activities man is subject to the law of non-contradiction. The logic which informs this doctrine stems from the following considerations.

We must begin by examining what is involved in the recognition of theft, for unless this is clear we shall not be able to understand Augustine's argument. Now the child who has come so far in the use of language as to recognize the meaning of theft must thereby have come also to the recognition that he places the things in the world in a rational relation to himself. That is, that he can appropriate them not merely as a sensitive animal, by immediate and particular possession, but also in a remote and universal manner according to which he 'owns' them (i.e., makes them his own), simply in virtue of his rational will towards them by which he establishes a 'right' over these things to use at his pleasure, even though for the moment he may leave them as they were before. And, as by his rational powers the child is potentially related to everything in the universe, so may he potentially 'own' all its parts.
However, as Augustine has already shown that in the use of language, the child is bound to the recognition of the common rationality of his interlocutors, so, having come this far, is he bound also to recognize in them the same right of ownership which derives in them from their rational powers, as it does in him from his.

But as things in their absolute particularity — unlike words whose very nature is rational and universal — as things cannot be absolutely possessed simultaneously by two individuals, so there arises in the society of rational animals, from these rational powers, the necessity of establishing a rational order or law governing the relation of the individuals in a community to the things in the world — a law to which all alike are subject and by which the rights of each individual are rationally defined and determined. And although these laws, as such, are a universal requirement for every human society, such laws, in their particular content (how ownership is established, what may be owned, who may own, etc.), are a human creation which may and do vary from place to place and from time to time. And as each child is brought up in a particular language community (Latin, Greek, Hebrew, etc.), which, as we have seen he joins through the recognition of its rational order, so too is he brought up in a particular legal
community (tribal, Roman, Jewish, etc.), of which he likewise becomes a member through the recognition of its laws, laws, from which he also comes to know the meaning of theft. And finally we note with Augustine that, in the society of rational animals, these laws govern even the necessities of man's sensitive nature, for it is equally theft (for example), if a man violates these laws when he is compelled by hunger or poverty as it is if he does so out of a desire for luxury. 24

So much then as presupposed in the child's capacity to commit a theft, which as Augustine tells us he desired to do, and did, at this time. 25 However it is not for the violation of these particular, external and human laws that Augustine accuses himself here, but rather for the very act of committing a theft. For whatever specifically may constitute theft in any given legal community, theft itself, wherever and whenever it occurs, constitutes a violation of the divine law to which all men are subject inwardly in their very nature as rational animals. And this divine law which Augustine has already exposed in the first book, is that in all finite rational activity, reason cannot contradict itself and remain rational. This is the law that is "written on our hearts" so that iniquity itself cannot blot it out. 26
for this principle everyone must first possess who undertakes any rational activity whatsoever.

Theft is just such a rational, though self-contradictory activity. It is rational inasmuch as the child, to be capable of stealing must first have recognized a rational ordering of the things in the world in their relation to himself and the others in his community whereby he is moved to ethical activity from the instinctive behavior of sensitive animals who cannot steal. And it is self-contradictory because, in stealing, he violates that order to suit his own particular interests while at the same time, insofar as the order protects his interests he can neither fail to recognize nor remain indifferent to the same act when another steals from him.

Thus, as Augustine both asks and answers, "What thief can suffer a thief with equanimity? Not even a rich thief when the other is driven to steal by want."²⁷ (II,iv,9). For it cannot be indifferent (nego animo) to a man if someone steals from him even when the thief is compelled by poverty, since in this case the very meaning of theft would be dissolved in irrational instinctive behavior, and this cannot be so precisely because the man knows that he has suffered a theft. But if a man cannot suffer a theft
with indifference in the sense that, whether he cares or not, he recognizes the distinction between his property and that of others as it is defined by the law, then neither can he commit a theft without contradicting himself. For in this case he knowingly does to another that he is unwilling to suffer from him. And this is just the religious and ethical form of the principle that in all finite rational activity, contradiction is intolerable. Thus Augustine says that the divine law punishes thievery (i.e., the law itself punishes), for, as he has already shown, it is the most fundamental principle or law of man’s rational nature that in the contradictory pursuit of his own particular desires he destroys the same rational powers by which he would realize these desires since a finite reason cannot contradict itself and remain rational. In just this sense then, absolutely no theft goes unpunished and every thief remains inescapably subject to a divine law and order which is not of his own devising.

But because this is the case a question is immediately raised as to why Augustine did steal the pears and the resolution of this problem occupies the final half of this second book where his primary concern is to discover his purpose in committing this act. Now the great importance that he accords to this matter lies in the fact that, for
Augustine, this theft constitutes the first moment in which he consciously realizes the potency—discovered in all men from their first beginnings—to oppose the rational order of the universe.

For although it is true, as Augustine has already shown, that the child who strives to submit others to his own authority being all the while unwilling to submit to theirs, is in this necessarily opposed to the rational order of the whole, it is not necessary that such a one know that he is affirming his particularity over against the universe since it is only affirmed, directly, against some other particular human authority. And thus, in his earlier childhood, he had not yet intentionally opposed himself to the rational order of the whole even though this was indeed the actual result of his actions.

But this cannot be the case with his theft. For while it is immediately only a violation against the human laws of a particular legal community which are in this respect no different from those other particular human authorities (parents, teachers and elders), to which he was opposed in his earlier childhood, theft itself, considered in its essential nature, necessarily involves an explicit and intentional opposition to the rational order of the universe as it is manifest in law. For regardless of the content of the particular law which Augustine broke in stealing the
ears, \textit{law itself}, as such, is the expression of the rational order of the whole in the community of man. And as theft is only possible where this rational and universal order is consciously recognized (though always of course in the form of some particular law), so also does the thief consciously and explicitly deny that order in stealing. It is then for this reason that Augustine regards this matter so seriously, saying as he does of his theft that it brought him to the very bottom of the deep.\textsuperscript{32}

Now although we do not insist that the parallelism is intended, it is nevertheless striking that for Augustine the theft of pears stands in the same relation to his life (the moment of the 'awakening of subjectivity'), as the 'theft' of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil stands in relation to the life of the human race according to the cosmogeny of Genesis.\textsuperscript{33} We should at any rate bear this suggestion in mind as we try to make clear the significance which Augustine discovers in this act.

He begins his inquiry by stressing that he was in no way compelled to the theft by any necessity of his sensitive nature — neither by hunger nor poverty.\textsuperscript{34} Not that this would in any way justify the theft or render it innocent since, as we have seen, in the society of man, the rational order or law governs even the necessities of man's sensitive nature. But had this been the case it would constitute a sufficient reason for his action such as he is
attempting to uncover. And yet, as it is not, he must look elsewhere.

If however the satisfaction of the necessities of his sensitive nature was not the cause of his theft, neither was the desire for luxury. For, since the appetites of man embrace not merely the necessities of his sensitive nature but also the entire spectrum of goods which his rational nature is able to conceive (gold and silver, worldly honour and command, etc.), these too are ends for which a man might violate the law. And as Augustine notes, when inquiry is made into the cause of a crime, the only reason that is ordinarily believed (cuius ne cui color), is when there appears to be the possibility of the appetites obtaining some one of these positive goods, or else through fear of its loss. But the desire for goods of this order cannot be understood as the reason for which Augustine committed the theft, any more than can the desire for the necessities of the flesh since he flung away the pears as soon as they had been stolen.

Now as he did not steal the pears for any positive good (spesor), which he saw in them, Augustine concludes that what he loved was his own fault itself and not that for the sake of which he committed it, having thus no cause for wickedness but wickedness itself. So here his inquiry moves inward to a consideration of the activity itself and he asks what it was that he loved or could love in the very act of
stealing.  But since his theft was not directed towards any particular, positive end or good and is rather the negation of these goods, neither can it have the beauty or substantial reality of any of the positive orders of creation from the highest to the lowest. And yet, if his theft is altogether devoid of any positive content, how then is it anything about which it is even possible to speak?

Here Augustine gives a catalogue of human vices or faults which constitute the very lowest order of creature being, having even less reality and beauty than corruptible earthly bodies since their only existence is as the negation of some prior, positive good. His purpose in this is to establish that even these activities have a kind of shadowy reality and beauty, insomuch as in all of them men are bound to the imitation of a positive good which they apprehend, pure and unmixed, outside of themselves. And thus, if on the one hand he did not steal the pears for the sake of some good which he sought to appropriate to himself, then his theft must be understood as an activity in which he sought to imitate in this way a good perceived.

But what good can he have sought to imitate by stealing for he does not find the cause of his theft in any of those vices, from pride to grief, which he has already presented?
Rather, it has at once less reality or beauty in it than the least of the faults he has enumerated (crisitis), since he says that his theft does not even (non saltum), have the shadowy species of good that is found in any of the vices which he lists and yet it is also in some way worse than the worst (superbia), since by it he is, as he says, brought to the very bottom of the deep.

This is so because, while all these vices, including those of Catiline, seek to imitate some particular good perceived, this cannot be the case with respect to his theft since he did it simply for the sake of the theft itself: that is, precisely in respect of its negativity, precisely insofar as it is not a good. But as no activity is either possible or comprehensible which is a pure and absolute negation, even his theft must be understood as the imitation of some good and so he concludes that he broke the divine law in this way to imitate the freedom and omnipotence of God. And this he does by doing, as he imagines, unpunished, what, according to the laws of the universe it is not permitted to do - i.e., to steal.

However, as Augustine notes, the freedom which he gains in this way can only be illusory (fallacia), since every theft, or more broadly speaking, every kind of self-contradictory activity, ultimately and inexorably brings about its own punishment.
The reason why Augustine concludes that this was indeed the cause of his theft is that the only good which can be sought in denying or negating the good perceived, is the freedom or omnipotence to determine, by oneself, what good is. And as freedom or omnipotence (omni-potence), is not a good like the other goods which a man recognizes (celebrity, honor, glory, etc.), but is rather the condition of their possibility, so inversely, his fault in this theft is not a vice like the other vices of which he speaks, for likewise, it too establishes the very condition of their possibility.\(^5\)

Now the conclusion of this argument may appear rather extraordinary since it follows from what we have said that until such time as Augustine did this theft and willed evil for its own sake, he was as yet innocent of any of the faults listed in the catalogue of chapter vi and this seems directly to contradict what he has already said of his earlier childhood in the first book of the Confessions. However, a moment's reflection will reveal the sense of his argument. For while, as we have seen,\(^5\) as a young child he strove continually to imitate the good perceived, copying his parents and elders according to the capacities of his age - in which he judges himself to have erred inasmuch as he preferred his own particular good to the good of the whole; nevertheless, it is
only at the time of this theft in which he negates the good perceived, willing evil for its own sake, that he not only prefers his own good over against the good of the whole, but moreover wills that the only good of the whole be his good — i.e., what he determines good to be. Thus it is not until this moment that his imitation of the good becomes perverse (perverae imitatur), which is to say, literally, turned away from the rational and universal character of good, known in law, which he negates in order that his own particular, subjective good may become the good of the whole.

And thus we have spoken of this moment as the 'awakening of subjectivity' for here, for the first time, Augustine consciously realizes the potency — discovered in all men from their first beginnings — to move into an absolute opposition to the universe, which he now achieves by this effort to substitute his own subjectivity, his own subjective order, for the rational order of the whole. For the pursuit of his own particular desires to the detriment of the good of the universe which has already been discovered in man's infancy and earlier childhood and which was there limited, because unconscious, now acquires in principle its most absolute possible expression inasmuch as the child who has become conscious of his separation from the rational good of the whole through the recognition of his subjection to law, here strives to affirm that his own
subjectivity is itself the good of the whole. As a result, the universe insofar as it displeases him, is no longer merely opposed to his particular desires but now its opposition is known as evil. Although of course it is in actuality the man himself who has become evil.

It is then by this action that Augustine comes to be capable of any and all of the vices in the catalogue, the fault of which lies precisely in the fact that they are a perverse imitation of the good. And this demands that a man first 'free' himself and establish his autonomy from any rational, universal good or law, by negating it, so that he may take his own good for the good of the whole.

And thus in the next chapter, Augustine indicates that he, who had now gone so far as to love a bad deed done for no profit, had thereby become capable of every vice. However we should note that the child who, like Augustine, has tried to establish his subjectivity as the good of the whole, has so far only realized the minimum requirement for the commission of any of the particular vices in the catalogue. For he cannot yet actually commit these sins, insofar as they are a perverse imitation of the good, until such time as he has seen the good itself which he is in turn bound to imitate. And as this is the moment by which Augustine distinguishes childhood from adolescence it follows that these are, properly speaking, the vices of adolescence.
It will be clear by now that although the theft of pears was peculiar to Augustine and his few companions, the significance which his argument has revealed in this deed will apply to all those who have ever committed a similar act by an intentional breach of the divine law in which the rational order of the universe is both recognized and denied for the sake of establishing the individual as the sole arbiter of the good of the whole.

Augustine also recognizes that many may not have gone so far as he either in the want of chastity with which he began in this book, nor to the absolute want of innocence which he has discovered in his theft. But these do not in any way fall outside the scope of his argument. For both the effort to subvert the sensitive order of the universe to the desires of his rational nature and the effort to pervert the rational order of the universe to the private and subjective will of the individual are permanent possibilities of man's very nature as a rational animal. Thus no man who has not yet committed these wrongs may ascribe either his chastity or his innocence to his own strength or virtue (sic), since in this case he is either chaste or innocent merely because he has not yet realized the potency of his nature to be otherwise. He has in short, not yet come to the point where either chastity or innocence have become possible for him - which point he can only arrive
at by losing such chastity and innocence as he immediately possesses. 60

And furthermore, once lost, it is the case that he himself can never regain that innocence. For, having now willed and consciously realized his absolute opposition to the universe, he cannot return to the earlier, immediate and unconscious innocence except by an act of his own; he must now will to return. And yet neither can he return to that immediate innocence by any act of his own for he must now will an innocence which is innocent precisely insofar as it is not willed and thus every act by which he strives to return to that innocence is actually a further going away from it.

Here now at last we are in a position to appreciate Augustine's characterization of the fault of this age (childhood), from our text in the seventh book 61 where he says of it;

"And because my soul did not dare to allow that my god should be displeasing to it, it would not allow that anything which was displeasing to it should be yours." (VII,xiv,20)

From Augustine's treatment of his later childhood in the second book of the Confessions we may now see that this is, indeed a very precise statement of the fault of which this age is capable. For the child who has come
so far as to recognize good as it appears in particular, finite laws - even though he has not yet come to see the good itself - must thereby also have recognized the rational and universal character of good in its most abstract and contentless form in the law which is written on our hearts - i.e., in the principle of non-contradiction. For indeed, apart from the recognition of this divine law he could neither know nor break any particular law. And because he does not dare to allow or tolerate (non audebat), that any good should be displeasing to him (ut ei dispiiceret deus meus) - that is, that he should be subject to any good which is not of his own devising and thus, by nature, in a faulty and imperfect relation to the rational nature of the universe - he rather perverts the very sense of good and equates it with his own pleasure (nolbat esse tuum quidquid et dispiicerat), attempting in this way to establish his absolute independence from any reason or good or law according to which he is judged and found wanting.62

Of course this effort is, in truth, altogether futile since his rational powers can in no way escape from the law of non-contradiction.63 For unless he had first recognized the rational and universal character of good - through his subjection to the law of non-contradiction - then neither
could he know his own imperfect relation to the rational order of the universe nor would he seek to overcome his subjection to it by attempting in this way to make himself the judge of the good of the whole. And thus while he imagines that he has now absolutely freed himself from his subjection to the order of the whole, it is just this action that sharpens in the highest degree his opposition to the universe and brings him more firmly than ever under its judgment. 64

Finally, we note that it is only possible for a man to try and make himself the arbiter of the good of the whole in this way in that precise moment when he has grasped the rational and universal character of good but has not yet recognized the universal or the good as it is in itself. For, in the moment that he discovers the latter - i.e., that the good has also an objective nature, that it lives and has its being and truth apart from himself or any other particular being, then he can no longer simply identify good with his own particular pleasure in this straightforward manner. The discussion of this new moment and of the faults that are peculiar to it begins with Augustine's discovery of the objective nature of the good through reading Cicero's _Hortensius_ 65 and constitutes the next section of his work in which he treats the faults of adolescence.
To sum up, we may see that the child who in his first beginnings was already cut off from an immediate unity with the whole of creation has now defiantly affirmed this disjunction by turning away from the demands of Being and Life and Truth as they are made known to us in that law which is written in our hearts. And this defiance is just the churlish though impotent negation of all three. For, lacking the power to subvert the whole, the child can only harm the whole in its parts which is to say primarily in harming himself whereas the only affirmation of the whole that can be made from this defective and separated condition consists rather in the humble confession of this very separation and defection.

Here we may say a final word in this context about the law which is written on our hearts in order to prepare for what comes after. For although as Augustine has shown, this law works inexorably with an absolute justice, punishing all those who are guilty of self-contradiction, nevertheless it is inadequate in just this form to the life of human society. For as the principle of non-contradiction is itself devoid of any objective content ("thou shalt not steal", "thou shall not kill", etc.), only the individual in the inwardness of his subjectivity can know if, in any particular situation, he has been guilty of self-contradictory behavior. And thus, while he can in no way escape the judg-
ment of the universe (God), on his actions, each man remains his own judge in the society of man. In order therefore that there can be justice and judgement amongst men there arises the necessity of giving this divine law an external, objective form. In short, it must be written not only inwardly on our hearts but also outwardly on stone and this is just the point from which Augustine begins in the next section of the Confessions.  

We have now come to the last matter which Augustine raises in connection with the theft of pears and which he treats in the eighth and ninth chapters of the second book where he asks what fruit (fructum), he had from this action. At first sight this question is rather puzzling since he has already shown that he loved nothing but the theft itself and discovered that his purpose in this was just to establish for himself the freedom and omnipotence of God. But having shown so much why then does he raise this question here?

To understand this matter we must bear in mind that Augustine is striving to discover an adequate reason for his theft and the problem is that this purpose, considered by itself, is now seen to be inadequate to the explanation of the theft. For, in order that his good actually become the good of the whole it is not enough that, by himself alone he merely will it to be so but it is also necessary that the universe recognize that this is indeed the case. And yet this is precisely what the universe does
not do inasmuch as every effort by which a man tries to establish his freedom and omnipotence is inevitably and inexorably judged and punished by the law which is written on his heart. But if the universe will not recognize his omnipotence and if Augustine by himself cannot force it to do so, then neither can his theft be understood in an immediate and direct sense as the effort to realize this purpose. For when it is considered simply in its relation to the universe as a whole his purpose is entirely negative and can therefore in no way be realized—either by such a theft or any other means. And so far the reason for his theft remains inexplicable.

Thus Augustine asks what fruit he had in the theft which he did and in searching for an answer he is driven to recollect another element in the affair which he has so far neglected. He recalls now with certainty that, by himself alone, he would never have committed the theft for indeed, as we now see, by himself alone he could never have committed it.

But although the universe will in no way recognize the freedom and omnipotence which he desires to establish for himself and which, in order to be established must in some way be recognized, he can and does get the recognition he needs and desires— to establish at least the illusion of omnipotence—from other men who desire and obtain the same
from him. And thus, as Augustine concludes, it was not for nothing that he did the theft, but for the love of the company with whom he did it, through whom he acquires, in their mutual regard, not indeed the substance of freedom and omnipotence, but at least the illusion thereof, wherefore he also says that this company or unfriendly friendship was itself a nothing. 70

This then is the fruit or positive end which Augustine had in his theft and which is therefore also the very condition of its possibility as a means of realizing his purpose. For without these others not only would he not have done the theft but neither could he in any way have realized or expressed his desire for an absolute independence which would therefore have remained forever an unrealized and unrealizable potency of his nature.

Now of course by this action he only gains the omnipotence he desires in a horribly false and perverted sense - through the creation of a tiny society or modality whose members give one another the illusion of an absolute freedom which the universe as a whole denies to them in reality. And this they do through their mutual implication in just such wanton and destructive acts as the theft of pears, which are done for no thought of gain, 71 but in which however, by the joint negation of the divine law, each satisfies the
other than he has the omnipotence all desire. It is in short an exceedingly unfriendly friendship (nimi: nimi: amicitia); a society which caters exclusively to their mutual sin, coming together for no other purpose than to give to one another in falsehood what none can have in truth. 72 And because moreover this is the only way in which the desire for freedom and omnipotence can in any way at all be satisfied, no one can resist the importunities of any other member of such a company when he says, "Let's go and do this or that". For only thus, by pandering to one another's illicit desires, is the illusion of omnipotence established and maintained: a contradiction heaped on contradiction. 73

Thus it is no wonder that Augustine concludes in the tenth chapter of the second book by recoiling in horror and disgust from what he has discovered to be the sins of which the child is capable 74 and his final word is that at this time he had made himself into a region of want (regio egestatis), 75 for indeed as he has shown, in his later childhood he has willed nothing but the negation of the Being, Life and Truth of the universe as a whole.
NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. *Conf.*, II,iii,6 "Sed ubi secutus ille et secunde anno ...
... quin immo ubi me ille pater in balenie visit pubescentem
et inquieta inauditum adolescentia, ..."

2. In this context, the age of childhood extends from the
time when Augustine first learned to speak until the conver-
sion to philosophy in his nineteenth year. The period there-
fore includes everything from *Conf.*, I,viii,13 to III,iii,6
and thus also the start of adolescence insofar as his body
is concerned; see *Conf.*, II,iii,6, above, n.1. As we shall
explain below in III. The fault of adolescence, Augustine
dates the beginning of his 'spiritual' adolescence from the
time that he came to recognize the universal qua universal
through reading Cicero's *Hortensius*; see *Conf.*, III,lv,7-8.

3. Of course one does not exclude all those equally universal
activities of feeding and rearing the offspring which occur
in certain species but all these derive from, and are exten-
sions of, the prior capacity to reproduce.

4. Similarly, man's rational nature comes to maturity when
it first attains to a universal end according to its proper
capacities: see above, n.2.
5. Because reproduction is the most universal capacity of a sensitive nature—since it aims at an end beyond the individual—it is also that capacity that can stand the most unlimited indulgence without harming the individual himself, simply in respect to this capacity. (This is no doubt less true of woman to the extent that the end of the reproductive capacity is not entirely realized beyond her but also in her). However, just because its proper end is universal, in the ordered reproduction of the species, unlimited sexual activity is much more immediately and directly damaging to the sensitive order of the whole than it is to the individual. And yet even here man can only harm the whole in harming its parts although it is the parts or the individuals of another generation who suffer the disorder in the species. And this disorder can only tend to the destruction of man's sensitive nature which sustains the same rational powers through which the disorder appears in the first place.

6. Conf., II, 11, 2 "Et quid erat, quod me delectabat, nisi amare et amari?"

7. Conf., II, 11, 1 "... a dispersione, in qua frustratim discissus sum, dum ab uno te aversus in multa evanui."

See also Conf., II, 11, 2.
8. Conf., II,i,2 "Oburueram stridere extensa mortalitatis meae, poena superbiae animae meae, et ilam longinac a te, et sinceras, et factae et ofunditae et difficulas et extubor per fominationes meas, et noctes."

9. Conf., II,iii,8 "Et in umbilico cius (Babylon), quo venues harenac, callebar me initius invisibiliis et espiabilis, quia seductis eram."

10. Thus Augustine asks in a kind of prayer in Conf., II,iii,3 "Quid mihi modularetur acruminem meam et novissinarem rerum fugaces pulchritudinés suum perpetue carumque suavitatis usque praecipieret, ut usque ad conjugalitis eius existuarent fluctus actatis meae, si tranquillitas in eis non poterat esse fine procreandorum liberorum contenta, si aut prascirabit lex tua, domine, qui formas etiam propaginem mortis nostrae, potens inponere lenem manum ad tempora- mentum spinarum a paradiso tuo seclusarum?"

11. Conf., II,iii,6 "Sed ubi sexto illo et decimo anno interposito otio ex necessitate domestica feriatus ab omni schola cum parentibus esse accepi, excesserunt caput meum vepres libidinum, et nulla erat eradicans manus."
12. Conf., II,ii,4 "Non fuit cura moorum ruentem excepere me extrinseco, sed cura fuit tantum, ut discernem sermonem sacrum quam optimum et persuadere dictione." See also Conf., II,iii,5 where from the standpoint of this argument Augustine condemns his father's exceptional efforts, commendable by a secular reasoning, to support him in his studies and Conf., II,iii,8 where Monica too is condemned for the same reasons.

13. Conf., II,iii,7 "Volebat enim illa, et secertum nominis, ut nonuerit eum sollicitudine ingenti, nec fornivacuv maximeque ne adulterarum quisquam uxorem." Adultery is of course more serious than mere fornication because in addition to the disordered and unlimited pursuit of sexual pleasure the adulterer also disturbs the rational order of marriage.

14. Conf., II,iii,7 "Qui mihi monitus multiebros videbantur, quibus obtinere coerubescere.

15. Conf., II,iii,8 "Non enim et illa, quae iam de medio Babylonis fugerat, sed ibat in ceteris cius tardior, mater earnis meae, etsi manuit me pudicitiam, ita curavit quod de me a viro suo audierat, tamque pestilentiosis et in posterum periculosum sentiebat echeerecere termino conjugalis affectus, si resecari ad vivum non poterat; non curavit hoc, quia metus erat, ne impeditetur spes mea compede.
...ae, non opus illa, quae in te futuri accerl habeas mater, sed opus litterarum, quae ut noster nimis solebat parere atque, illa, quae de te praepe nihil cogitabant, de me aequam inania, illa aequam, quae non eolum nullo dextrimento, sed eiam nonnullo allimento ad te adiisse nondum emittat, sed utratque uelut illa studia prudentiae. Ita enim contineo secolium, ut possur, sapere parentum meorum."

16. Conf., II,iii,8 "Relaxabantur otia nihil ad ludiciarum habentia ultra consecrationem severitate in dissolutionem apponuntur, et in omnibus exat saligo inter- studium nihil, deus reus, severitate veritatis tuae, ..."

The particular opportunity for his license was the year in Thagaste away from any school while his father collected the moneys to have him continue his studies in Carthage: see Conf., II,iii,5 also see Conf., II,iii,6 quoted above.

Ps 93: 20

Ps 93: 20

17. Conf., II,ii,4 "Sed offerbul miser, sequens impetum fluxus mei velisto te, et excepi omnia legitima tua nec evasii flagella tua: quis enim hoc mortalium? nam tu semper aedras riscrierides acerivens, et amarissimis aspargens offensionibus ornes iniquitas incenditatis meas, ut ita quocumquem sine offensione incendari, et ubi hoc possem, non invinimer quiaquam praeter te, domine, praeter te, qui singis dolorum in praecipito et percutis, ut sanes, et oadidis nos, ne moriamur abs te."
18. Conf., II, i, 1. "Exopto eum illo quando satiari inferre in saluberrima et silensere amans cuius caro et undrosa creatus, eo ostendit species 'ea et animarum animo
occudit rubea plasens 'ibi et plasere omnium soleto hominum'."


Modern commentators who cannot find any internal logic for Augustine's lengthy treatment of his theft are bound to look for an external reason, as for example, P. Courcelle in Recherches, pp. 51-52, who cites E. Vischer, 'Eine anstößige Stelle in Augustins Konfessionem', in Harnackehrung, Leipzig, 1921, pp. 183-194. Courcelle finds Augustine's treatment of this matter in conformity with an ascetic literary tradition in the ancient world. He says, "Il est pourtant probable que, si Augustin a donné un tel développement à l'analyse de cette peccadille, pour en faire ressortir la malice gratuite, c'est en conformité avec une tradition usuelle dans la littérature ascétique. ... Augustin s'est contenté d'habiller l'épisode a la romaine, en se découvrant plus coupable que le pure scélérat: Catilina!" So long however as the connection which Augustine draws between this incident and the gravity of the charge that he brings against himself is not clear, the whole matter remains unexplained and the theft
itself will be regarded with Courcelle as a "peccadille" or with Solignac as a "mince fait" - see A. Solignac, 'Introduction', in _BA_ 13, pp. 229 - and thus totally inadequate in any direct sense to Augustine's lengthy treatment of it.

M. Pellegrino in _Les Confessions_ de Saint Augustin, Editions Alsatia, Paris, p. 77, (hereafter referred to as _Les Confessions_), concludes that Augustine is trying to justify his "philosophical - theological" view of evil as the disordered desire of the good against the evidence of his theft which seems to aim at no good whatsoever, being rather moved by a desire to sin for the sin's sake. "Où était donc ici le bien qu'il voulait, fût-ce d'une volonté désordonnée et tortue? Voilà la raison du long commentaire qui se conclut par la solution de la difficulté: même en ce cas, le péché avait en vue un bien, mais vitiœse atque perverse: c'était l'expression d'une volonté de puissance, dirons-nous aujourd'hui, il avait en vue, dit saint Augustin, une 'ténèbreuse ressemblance avec l'omnipotence' divine." However this may be, it does not explain the seriousness with which Augustine regards this sin and Pellegrino can only maintain the interpretation by making light of just this point. Thus he says of Courcelle's (incredulous) remark: "(Il) a tort d'écrire qu'Augustin se découvre plus coupable que le pire scéléré: Catilina. Ce personnage est cité simplement pour démontrer
que personne, même le plus malfaisant des hommes, n'aime son délit pour le délit. Augustin lui-même n'a pas dans ce vol cherché le mal pour le mal, ainsi que démontrent les explications que nous avons rassemblées." According to Pellegrino's view it is then not the sin itself which is significant (which indeed he, Pellegrino, regards as rather insignificant compared to Catilina), but its importance for Augustine lies in the problem it appears to present to a certain philosophical position. This does not make any more sense of Augustine's text that does Courcelle's interpretation and our problem remains to discover what Augustine saw in the deed that justifies the extreme seriousness with which he regards it.

On the interpretation of the reference to Catilina, see below, n.36.


Ps 72: 7

Rom 2: 15

22. Conf., II,iv,9 "Furtum certe punit lex tua, domine, et lex scripta in cordibus hominum, quam ne ipsa quidem delet
intemitas: quis enim fur acque animo furem patiatur? nec contemptus adaequum inopia."

Note the parallelism between intemitas and acque animo. It is difficult to bring this out in English translation.

23. The Scriptural references of the RA edition which are usually complete fail to note the locus of this important phrase, "lex scripta in corâibus hominum", which is found in Romans 2:15, "qui ostendunt opis legis scripta in corâibus suis."


25. Conf., II, iv, 9 "Et ego furtum facere volui et feci ..."

26. The point about this law being present in such a way that iniquity (intemitas), itself cannot blot it out is, of course, that however much a man's nature as a rational animal puts him in a disordered (in-aequus), and therefore harmful (intere), relation to the universe as a whole, he nevertheless remains subject to its order in this law which is written on his heart precisely in respect of the rational powers by which he is, immediately, free from the immediate control of nature. For in his subjection to the law of non-contradiction, his rational powers are themselves subject to a law and order not of their own devising.
27. Conf., II, iv, 9 "... quis enim fur aequo animo fuerit? non copiosae adaequat inopia."

28. "Indifference" and "Equanimity" for aequo animo are used here in the logical sense of 'not making a distinction' - 'without distinction' and thus when it is said that a man does to another what he is unwilling to suffer from him, it is not a question of whether he cares in any particular instance if something has been stolen from him - which may or may not be the case - but rather that he cannot without contradiction will that another steal from him at the same time as he recognizes his own right to property.

29. Augustine has already stated this principle in the first book; see Conf., I, xviii, 29 "Et certe non est interior litterarum scientia quam scripta conscientia, id se alteri facere quod nolit pati."

30. Conf., II, iv, 9 "Furtum certe punit lex tua, domine, ...

31. Augustine cannot object to the content of the particular law which he broke in stealing the pears since he has not yet come to the recognition of the good itself - (through reading Cicero's Hortensius, see Conf., III, iv, 7 - 8 and also below, III. The fault of adolescence. For it is only from a standpoint which knows the good itself that he
might rationally oppose this or that particular law as a bad law - from which higher perspective however, the taking of the pears would no longer constitute a theft. But Augustine had not arrived at this higher position at the time of the incident and he did know himself to be stealing. Thus, what he has already said of his earlier childhood obtains here as well; see Conf., I,x,16 "Non enim meliora eligens "repudiationem evitam ..."

32. Conf., II,iv,9 "Ecco eor meum, deus, eoge eor meum, quod miseratus es in ira abyssi."

33. See Genesis 2,3.

34. Conf., II,iv,9 "Et ego furtum facere volui, et feci, nulla cupidine ego statice nisi penuria ... nam id furtum sum, quod niki abundabat et multo melius, nec ecce volocham frui, quam furtum appotebam, ..." See also Conf., II,vi,12 and II,viii,16.

35. See Conf., II,v,10. From the examples which Augustine gives in this chapter it is clear that he is speaking here of those goods which a man may desire when he is considered as a rational animal. For gold and silver and worldly honour and command form no part of the necessities of his sensitive nature.
36. *Conf.* II, v, 11 "Cum utique de facinore quaeritur, qua causa factum sit, credi non solet, nisi cum appetitu adipsendii aliquid illi nec hominem, quod instina diximus, cense posuisse adiuvendi aut metus amittendi." Augustine mentions Catiline in this chapter because his case seems to contravene this ordinary view that the cause of a crime can only be found when a man is seen to have some positive end or good in mind. See Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae*, 16 "Si causa pecundii in praesens minus suspicabat, nihil minus instincit scisti suntis circumvenire, ignovise; se illeque, ne per otium torpecerent manus aut animus, gratiuto potius malus atque enudelle crat." But as Augustine notes a cause is given, *Conf.* II, v, 11 "Nee igitur Catilina amavit facinora sua, sed utique alium, cujus causa illa faciebat." Now as we shall see, the good that Augustine loved in doing his theft is of an altogether different order (absolute rather than particular), from the goods which are ordinarily reckoned (credii non solet, nisi ... etc.), as the cause of a crime. For this reason - contrary to both Courcelle and Pellegrino, (see above n. 20) - we maintain that Augustine does with justice judge himself worse than even Catiline.
37. *Conf.*, II, iv, 9 "... et abstulimus in te inimica ingentia non ad nostras epulas, sed vel potentiua peroris ..."

38. *Conf.*, II, iv, 9 "... etiamsi aliquis in te consedimus, dum tamen fieret a nobis quod eo liberet, quo non fieret. Ego ego meum, Deus, ego ego meum, quod miseratus es in me abyssi. Dicat tibi nunc ego ego meum, quid tibi quaecebat, ut esser gratus malus et malitiae reae causa nulla esset nisi malitia. Fecit evat, et amavi evam; amavi porire, amavi defecum meum, non illud, ad quod deftlochebam, sed defecum meum ipsum amavi, turpis anima et dissilientes in firmamentum tuo in exterminium, non dedoceo aliquid, sed deducus appetens." See also *Conf.*, II, vi, 12.

39. *Conf.*, II, vi, 12 "Quid ego miser in te amavi, o furtum meum, o facinus illud meum nocturnum sexti decimi anni actatis meae?"

40. *Conf.*, II, vi, 12 "Et nunc, domine deus meus, quaero, quid me in furto delectaverit, et ecce species nulla est: non dico siout in aequitate atque prudentia, sed neque siout in mente hominis atque memoria et sensibus et vegetante vita, neque siout speciosas sunt sidera et decora
locis suis et terra et mare plena fetibus, qui succedunt
nascendo defectibus; non saltem ut est quaedam defectiva
speciee et univerti viriis nullius quandam. Note that
Augustine provides here a brief sketch of the entire uni-
verse: i The currum bonum .... acuitate etque prudentia.
ii Man ................... mente hominis etc.
iii Heavenly and earthly bodies .... sidera et etc.
iv Man's vices as the negation of some one or more
of the above ............ defectiva species etc.

A. Solignac, commenting on the previous chapter, (Conf., II,
v,10), in his 'Notes Complémentaires' #9, 'Les degres du
bien', in BA 13, p. 664, merely distinguishes the first
three of these. This threefold division can scarcely be
maintained in the light of this text.

41. Conf., II,vi,12 "Non enim pulchra eras, cum furtum
esses. aut vero aliquid es, ut loquar ad te?"


43. Conf., II,vi,12, see above n.40.

44. Conf., II,vi,14 "Ita fornicatur anima, cum avertitur
abs te et quaerit extra te ea quae pura et liquida non
inventit, nisi cum rebit ad te. perverse te imitantur
omnes, qui, longe so a te faciunt et extollunt se adversum
te. sed etiam sic te imitando indicant creatorem te esse
omnis naturae et ideo non esse, quo a te omni modo rece-
45. Conf., II, vi, 14 "Quid ergo in illo furore dilexi et in quo dominum meum vel vitiosae aique perverae imitavi sum?"

46. So far we are unable to locate the provenance of this catalogue of vices but it is clear from the context that, if it is not simply arbitrary, it is not Augustine's invention and must have been current and well known in his day since he provides no justification or explanation of the order and number of vices. Likewise the list must also have been regarded as both fixed and comprehensive - else why should Augustine not have included that vice which he assigns as the cause of his theft? We may also assume that there is a logical order in the list, from pride to grief, similar for example to the order of sins in Dante's Inferno (which has in a way the same terms - from the pride of Satan in the bottom of the pit to the grief of Limbo), although what the order might be here is difficult to discern from this brief text.

47. Assuming that the order and number of vices in the list is not arbitrary and without having to discover the logic of the order within the list, we can at least dis-
tinguish between the first and the last terms—pride and grief—as between the most and the least offensive.

48. Conf., II, iv, 9 "Saepe cor meum, deus, exae cor meum, quod miseras co in ine abyssi."

49. Conf., II, vi, 14 "An libuit facere contra legem saltem fallacia, quia potueram non poteram, ut maneam libertatem captivus iniciare faciendo impune quod non liceret tenescre omnipotentiae similitudine?"


51. This then is the source of the qualitative distinction which Augustine draws between himself in this theft and Catiline.


53. See above, p. 75. We can now give the following sense to the parallel which we have noted between Augustine's theft of the pears and the 'theft' of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil according to the cosmogony of Genesis. In both cases man is represented as
negating the rational good perceived in order to establish his own subjectivity as the good of the whole.

The difference of course lies in the fact that whereas Augustine is realizing a potency of his nature, the myth of Genesis aims to explain how man came to have just such a nature. For those acquainted with Aristotle, the distinction here is like the one which he makes between the first and second grades of actuality, (see De Anima, 412a and and also 417a,b), corresponding to the possession of knowledge and the actual exercise of it. Thus the myth of the fall of man answers to the question of how man first came to possess a nature which is separated from an immediate unity with the universe while in the incident of the theft of pears, Augustine discloses how the individual first actually realizes this potency.

54. It is because Augustine first realizes his absolute opposition to the universe in this moment that he speaks of it as having brought him to the very bottom of the pit or deep. See Conf., II, iv, 9 "Eoque cor meum, deus, eoque cor meum, quod miseratus es in imo abyssi."

55. Conf., II, vi, 14 "Perversus te imitantur omnes qui longe se a te faciunt et extollunt se adversum te"

Here we have the logic behind Solignac's criticism
of J. Frutiger who argues in "Gods licht in het kwaad. Aug. Confes., II, vi, 13, in Bijdragen, 17, 1956, that, "il n'y a pas opposition entre le comportement de Dieu et celui de pécheur, dans la pensée d'Augustin, mais seulement 'imitation', selon l'idée platonicienne que tout être imite Dieu par nature." To this Solignac adds, no doubt correctly, but without explaining the reason, "Mais, à notre avis, l'imitation pervertie prend un sens éthique original qui doit être mis en évidence." See A. Solignac, 'Introduction', in BA 13, pp. 180–181.

56. Conf., II, vii, 15 "... :quid enim non facere potuit, qui etiam gravitum facinus amavi?"

57. See above, n. 2.

58. Note the formal similarity between the two topics that Augustine deals with in this second book which might otherwise seem to have merely an arbitrary or external connection. i. The want of chastity which is the perversion of the sensitive order of the universe to the (rational) desires of the particular individual.

ii. The want of innocence which is the perversion of the rational order of the universe to the (rational) desires of the particular individual.

That the difference between these two is really one of degree rather than kind is recognized by Augustine in
Conf., II, viii, 16 where he says: "in his, quae non recolens crudescet, maxime in illo facto ..."

This maxime is a quantitative distinction. Note also that the image which Augustine draws from the Psalms to characterize those sins which are a perverse imitation of the good is just, formicatur abs ce; see Conf., II, vi, 14

"Ira formicatur ante te, cum accurritur abs ce ...".

Augustine first uses and explains this phrase in Conf., I, xiii, 21.

59. Conf., II, viii, 15 "Cuius est hominum, qui quam cogitat et infirmat aversus est; cum acerbiret eae omnia, ut minus ob urbem, quae minus eae necessaria fuerit miserio corda tua, qua dicas peccata conversis ad te?"

60. The use of 'innocence' in this context needs perhaps a word of explanation for in the first book Augustine has been at pains to show that no man, even from his first beginnings may be considered innocent; see above, Comm. Conf. I., I.

The fault in first beginnings and infancy. The point of course is that it is here with this theft that Augustine first consciously and intentionally realizes and makes actual the want of innocence which is his by nature and in this sense it is the moment in which he 'loses' his innocence (i.e., by
his own act and desire), but the innocence which is lost is merely the innocence of not yet having willed to be what he is by nature.


62. Because, as we have shown above (n. 58), the want of chastity and the want of innocence are formally and essentially identical, this characterization of the fault of childhood from the seventh book (Conf., VII, xiv, 20), applies also to the perversion of the sensitive order of the universe which Augustine did by his unrestricted fornications from the time he first came to puberty.

63. Conf., II, vi, 14 "An libuit factae contra logem saltem fallacia, quia potentatux non poteram, ut mancam libertatem captivus imitarer faciendo ipsum quod non liceret inenso-brosa omnipotentiae similitudine?"

64. Conf., II, vi, 14 "Eoque est ille servus fugiens dominum suum et consecutus umbram." This sentence is difficult to translate but we take the sense of it to be the following. "Behold, here is a servant fleeing from (the substantial reality of) his Lord [i.e., from omnipotence] and gotten himself into the shadow (of his Lord [i.e., the insubstantial appearance of omnipotence]). The two ideas that are
found here are that, on the one hand, man takes the insubstantial appearance or trace *umbra* of omnipotence for the real thing and also that, while he imagines this to be an escape (*fugitio*) from his subjection to divine law, his hiding place is in the very shadow of God's omnipotence, being an imitation of it.

This image of the 'freedom' of a runaway slave is found again in the context of Augustine's discussion of the fault of childhood in *Conf.*, III,iii,5 "... *annes fugitivam liberiater.*"

65. See *Conf.*, III,iv,7-8 and for our interpretation, see below, *Comm.Conf.* III., III. The fault of adolescence.


67. *Conf.*, II,viii,16 "*Quem fructum habui miser aliquando in his, quae nunc revoluens crubesceo, maxime in illo furto ...*" No doubt this *fructum* is an intentional pun on Augustine's part.

68. *Conf.*, II,viii,16 "*Et tamen solus id non fecissem - sic recoror animum tunc meum - solus omnino non fecissem.*"

69. *Conf.*, II,ix,17 "*Ai ego tullud solus non facetem, non facrem omnino solus.*"
Bearing in mind the parallel to the Genesis account of the fall of man we would then have here an answer to questions of this sort: "Why is the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil not taken until there are two finite minds?" or "Why did Eve not eat the fruit of the tree by herself alone — why did she tell Adam and invite his complicity?"

According to the argument we have been looking at in Augustine's Confessions it now appears that it is impossible for man, by himself alone, to affirm his subjectivity as the good of the whole, or in other words, that the fall is only possible where there are at least two finite minds.

70. Conf., II,viii,16 "Ergo amavi ibi etiam consortium corum, sum quibus id feci. non ergo nihil aliud quam furum amavi; immo vero nihil aliud, quia et illud nihil est."

71. Conf., II,ix,17 "Risus erat quasi ittillato corde, quod fallebamus cos, qui haec a nobis fieri non putabant et vehementer nolabant."

The marvellous rigor and precision with which Augustine pursues his argument forces him to pause here to inquire whether perhaps this laughter can be understood as the
cause of his theft. But because he is absolutely certain that he would not have done the theft alone and because he notes that a man will sometimes laugh by himself, he concludes that he did not do the theft for the sake of the laughter: see Conf., II, ix, 17.

72. Conf., II, ix, 17 "O nimis inimica amicitia, seductio mentis investigabilis, ex ludo et ioco nocendi aviditas et alieni damni appetitus nulla lucri mei, nulla ulciscendi libidime, ...

73. Conf., II, ix, 17 "O nimis inimica amicitia, seductio mentis investigabilis, ex ludo et ioco nocendi aviditas et alieni damni appetitus nulla lucri mei, nulla ulciscendi libidime, sed cum dicitur: 'eamus, faciamus' et pudet non esse impudentem."

Augustine has already noticed the same bad unfriendly or negative friendship in relation to the formations of this period. For likewise, it is only by boasting in such a company, whose members agree that they are one another fine free fellows; that man can establish the illusion of his independence from the sensitive order of the universe which freedom he can in no way have in truth: see Conf., II, iii, 7 "Sed nosse ibam et praeceps ibam tanta cacitate, ut inter coactaneos meos pudaret me minoris dedecoris,
Here also we are reminded that in the first chapter of this second book Augustine has said that in this period he turned from unity and lost himself in the vain pursuit of the many: see Conf., II, i, 1 "... a dispersione, in qua certamin disseisum sum, dum ab uno te aversus in multa evanui." Not only does this apply to the perversion of his sensitive nature as we have already seen but it is also a most precise statement of his attempted perversion of the rational order of the universe through his flight from the one true omnipotence and his subjection to the many false omnipotences (if we may speak in this way), of such an unfriendly society.

74. Conf., II, x, 18 "Quis exaperit istam tortuosissimam et implicatissimam nodositatem: foeda est; nolo in eam intendere, nolo eam videre."

Ps. 118: 75. Conf., II, x, 18 "Defluxi abs te et erravi, deus meus, nimis devius ab stabilitate tua in adolescentia et factus sum mihi regio egoestatis."
CHAPTER THREE

COMMENTARY ON THE THIRD BOOK OF AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS

II. The fault of childhood. Continued from Book II.

In the first three chapters of this third book Augustine concludes his treatment of the fault of childhood with a brief account of the kind of life into which the child will fall once he has committed a deed such as the theft of pears and sought to identify his own pleasure with the good of the whole. He also indicates how the transition is made from childhood to the next stage of a man's life which is his adolescence (adolescentia).

He begins here with an observation of recollection similar to the one with which he began in the second book but which is yet significantly different. This difference may be accounted for as a consequence of the theft of pears: that is, of the effort to establish his good as the good of the whole.

In the second book, speaking of a time before the theft of pears, he notes that he then delighted to love and to be loved ("Et quid orat, quod me deleatabat, nisi amare et amari?" II,ii,2), and here in the third book he tells
us that now, while not actually in love, he nevertheless loved to be in love ("Non iam amabam et amare amabam ..."
III, i, 1). At first sight the difference may perhaps seem minor - merely a matter of expression - but a moment's reflection will reveal that a great deal hangs on this difference. In the first, there is simply the immediate pleasure which the young man finds in the gratification of his sexual desires. On the other hand, in the second, which comes from a time after the theft of pears, this immediacy has now been lost and is present only in the mediated form, "Not yet in love I loved to be in love."

This is a very curious state - though altogether common to the teenage years of which Augustine is speaking - and we may well ask how the first immediacy was lost. The answer which Augustine has already developed in the second book, is that it was lost in the desire of the particular individual to establish his own good or pleasure as the good of the whole. As a result he can no longer simply and directly find pleasure in this or that, but must now also raise his pleasure from its immediate status as a good for him to the level of the good. He can no more merely delight (dolceo), in sexual pleasure but must now love (amo), which is to say, take for the good, that in which he finds pleasure. Thus as he says, he loved to be in love.
And since he will not allow any other good than his own good,² so also is he driven to hate himself for the paucity of his immediate natural desires – for these alone constitute what he can regard as good.³ In short, because he insists on equating the good with his own pleasure and has as yet no notion of an incorruptible good,⁴ he is forced, in order that there be a good, to force himself into love⁵ that is, into carnal love, sensual pleasure, the contaminatio sensibilium.⁶

But by the identification of his own sensual pleasure with the good, the spring of friendship is wholly polluted⁷ and with marvellous precision Augustine points out the contradiction that his ignorance of a spiritual good in no way lessens. For while he sought out (loved), nothing more than the sensual pleasure he took from the body of his lover,⁸ he loved or took for the good that which, apart from its spirit or soul (anima), would not be loved at all.⁹

Furthermore, as Augustine has also shown in the second book, the very possibility of taking one's own pleasure as the good must be mediated.¹⁰ For it is only given in the presence of another (here, his lover), who, just by complying with his desires, enables him to imagine himself elegans
and maintain the illusion that he is indeed the
arbiter of the good - which is precisely his chief end in this
business of loving to be in love. And yet, because it is only
through this other that he can preserve the illusion that his
pleasure is indeed the good, so is he utterly dependent on
the other and thus necessarily becomes subject to jealousy,
suspicions, fears, angers and contentions.12

In the second chapter Augustine discusses the stage
plays (spectacula theatrica), by which he was seduced (rapiō),
at this time of his life. The attention that he devotes to
this subject at just this point in the Confessions is not
accidental but we shall only be able to appreciate what he
has to say if we bear in mind that it is raised in the context
of the kind of life that the child will lead who has sought
to identify the good of the whole with his own pleasure. The
success of this venture or rather, the possibility of the
illusion of success, depends in every case on a perverted
friendship whose members agree to give one another a counterfeit freedom and omnipotence which none can in any way have
in truth.13 Now as we have just seen, it is by this total
dependence on the other that a man becomes inevitably prey
to jealousies, suspicions, fears, angers and contentions and
according to Augustine's testimony the images of these
things are just what filled the theatrical productions and
precisely what he sought out in them.\textsuperscript{14} For indeed, each man is more moved by these images the lese free he is from such affections\textsuperscript{15} since only to the one who suffers from such afflictions will the representation appear to have any verisimilitude.

But, given the strong attraction with which one may be drawn to these things, it immediately becomes a question as to why a man wishes to sorrow by going to the theatre and watching sad and tragic events. In his own person he is altogether unwilling to suffer such things\textsuperscript{16} and yet he enjoys watching the more, the more he is moved to tears.\textsuperscript{17}

In answering this question Augustine observes the following distinction in human custom and ordinary usage (dist. colet): when a man suffers himself it is called misery (miseria), while, when he suffers with another (comparator - in the sense of feeling pity for another's misery), it is called mercy (misericordia).\textsuperscript{18} Now since there can be no mercy where there is no prior cause for sorrow and since it pleases a man to be merciful - especially the man who cherishes above all else his claim to an absolute freedom and omnipotence\textsuperscript{19} - Augustine concludes that it is for this reason that men take pleasure in being made sorrowful by these theatrical productions - i.e., so that they can imagine themselves merciful and compassionate.\textsuperscript{20}
All this must come as he says from that vein of friendship, the inimica amicitia, whereby men agree to give and receive from one another in falsity what they cannot have in truth from the universe as a whole. For indeed, whatever human custom may style as mercy, the conviction of his own merciful disposition which a man acquires as a spectator of this kind of theatre is wholly and altogether false since he is by no means called upon to succour or actually give aid to anyone at all. Rather, he is only invited to feel sorrow and thus merely to enjoy the illusion of his compassion—wherefore the more he is brought to tears, the more does he enjoy the show. Here then is the reason behind the strong attraction which such theatrical productions exercise on a man who has come to the same state of his life as had Augustine.

Now a truly benevolent mercy would, before all else, prefer that there be no occasion in another for grief. And yet, just because the society that Augustine has joined, in order to establish the illusion of his freedom, is itself the cause of all those calamities which move him to tears in the theatre, he who cannot on this account overcome these things in his own person, neither wishes to see them overcome in another. Insofar as anyone has identified the good with his own pleasure a truly benevolent mercy is
impossible. For it must first have its cause in what is displeasing to that man and this, according to the perverted logic of the position, is just what is evil, unlovely and in no way a possible object for his compassion.

But neither can such a man maintain the illusion of his omnipotent benevolence unless he can imagine that he has the power to affect another for the good by extending a merciful disposition towards him. And this, since he cannot do it in truth, is then done in falsity by the equation of his sorrowful feelings for another with mercy itself - an equation which human society endorses by customary usage and to which the theatre panders by its invitation to grief (ad dolendum invitatur).\textsuperscript{27} Such was the life that Augustine then led,\textsuperscript{28} loving his own ways (i.e., his own pleasure, his subjectivity), and not God (i.e., the good of the universe taken as a whole).\textsuperscript{29} And this as he now repeats in an image from the second book,\textsuperscript{30} is simply to love the illusory freedom of a runaway slave.\textsuperscript{31}

Finally, in the third chapter, Augustine concludes his treatment of childhood by indicating the ways in which he was moved beyond the position he had held since the theft of pears in his sixteenth year. In the narrative this transition turns chiefly on the fact that at this time (in
his nineteenth year, he did not entirely throw in his lot with the 'Destroyers' (evacorces). These evacorces (e-verte = to turn upside down, to overthrow, to destroy), formed a gang or society like the one in which he was fully a member when he stole the pears some three years before. And this latter gang, though perhaps more wantonly cruel and destructive, served precisely the same ends by the same means. But although Augustine kept company with these young men and by his own admission was ashamed that he was not as shameless as they, nevertheless he was by now able to refuse to join in their deeds which were, for whatever reason, abhorrent to him. If we recall from the second book the tyranny by which the members of these 'unfriendly friendships' are subject to one another, the importance of Augustine's ability not to join in the perversities of this group will be readily seen. And while he has not yet grasped the objective nature of the good and so has nothing with which to replace this perverse friendship - which is the reason why he did not then break with the evacorces altogether - the various miseries to which he has become subject as a result of his love of such company have taught him the ability to resist at least those of their demands which he immediately finds repugnant.

These miseries are just those that he has exposed in the first chapters of the third book and they all derive
from the effort to establish his good as the good of the whole. On the one hand this has meant that he has become entrapped in his own subjectivity and thereby become incapable of any true relation with another - incapable of either friendship or compassion. On the other hand he has had to deliver himself into the hands of 'friends' such as himself. For only in their regard can he maintain the opinion that he is the free and omnipotent arbiter of the good. And yet by his utter dependence on the totally inconstant opinion of these others he becomes subject to the burning scourges of jealousy, suspicion, fears, angers and contentions which as he says are the poisons that God (i.e., the nature of things in the universe as a whole), sprinkles over such illicit pleasures and by which a man may be led to become disgusted with them and refuse to join in the doing.  

For this reason he also says that God's mercy hovered about him afar off all the while.

III. The fault of adolescence, *adolescentia*.

We may begin our interpretation of Augustine's treatment of this age - which includes everything from the *Hortensius* episode in *Conf.*, III, iv, 7 to the end of the fifth book - by recalling from our text in the seventh book, his summary of the error of this period. There he says, "And from there (i.e., from the fault of childhood), it (my soul),
had gone to the opinion of the two substances but it found no rest and was raving." (VII,xiv,20). Now by this 'opinion of the two substances', he intends the dualist teachings of the Manichees with whom he "fell in" soon after reading Cicero's Hortensius and thus in his adherence to Manichaeism which he treats in these three books (III - V) he sees a particular instance of the fundamental error of this age. With this general view in mind let us now try to discover its precise sense by attending to the more significant moments in the long narrative, beginning with the Hortensius episode.

In his nineteenth year during the ordinary course of his studies Augustine had occasion to read Cicero's Hortensius, included in the curriculum on account of its exemplary eloquence, from which however he drew a far different lesson.

"This book, in truth, changed my disposition and to you yourself O Lord it moved my prayers and my vows and desires it made other. Suddenly all groundless hope became worthless to me and I ardently desired the immortality of wisdom and thus with an extraordinary passion of the heart and I had begun to arise in order that I might return to you." (III,iv,7)
Of course this was not at all the result that Augustine expected from his study of this work since by his own admission he was fully taken up in the study of eloquentia by which means he hoped to come to power and authority in the society of man. However the exhortation to Wisdom (sapiencia), which was the content of Hortensius, provided Augustine with precisely the thing for which he was unwittingly searching.

Augustine was by now fully experienced in the painful consequences of the effort to identify his own subjective good with the good of the whole and to such a man the mere notion that Truth and Good have an objective nature and are thus quite the opposite to what he has taken them to be, to such a man the mere notion of Wisdom must have just this revolutionary effect.

From the Hortensius Augustine has as it were conceived for the first time the 'idea' of Wisdom as an abiding unity over all the many mutable earthly delights or goods and above all the various mutually exclusive truths expressed in the multiple sects of philosophy. In short, he grasped that Truth and Good, the universal as it is in itself, God, is not subjective but has an objective nature. And so as he says, by coming to this understanding of the nature of the good he had begun to arise on the journey which would return him to God — for only what is first
known can in any way attract a man as the object of his desire.

Elsewhere in the *Confessions* Augustine again indicates that he regards the reading of the Hortensius as the first significant turning-point in his life and the one in which he came to be directed towards God (Wisdom, Truth).\(^{53}\) The great importance of the Hortensius episode for Augustine and the sense in which he regards it as a beginning, is that the arousal of the desire for Wisdom marks the entrance into his full potentiality. For his rational powers have now at least grasped their own proper object and one which is altogether adequate to them. This then is the moment in which a man fully enters into his adult life (* adulco ventia*), from childhood (*pueritia*),\(^{54}\) since both his sensitive and rational natures have now grasped the universal according to their several capacities.\(^{55}\)

As such, this is therefore the beginning of the return to God inasmuch as the ascent is made by the man rather than the child - by his rational rather than his sensitive nature - and yet as an adult the man can and does indeed also fall away from the God he seeks.\(^{56}\) The cause and sense of this fault of adolescence is precisely what Augustine aims to bring to light in his lengthy treatment of this age and it is to this matter that we must turn our attention.
While the love of Wisdom may be the beginning of the return to God it is merely the first moment of that movement, for Wisdom (God), is present here only in the most abstract and indefinite form. And although the 'idea' alone is capable of arousing this intense love of Wisdom (which in Greek is called philo-sophia), it is totally inadequate to the consummation of the love which it has even now generated. For the proper object of this desire is Wisdom itself — Wisdom, that is, as the objective Truth — and of this the mere 'idea' has no comprehension whatsoever since, in itself, it is totally devoid of any objective content. Thus, while his reading of the Hortensius had determined Augustine, (i) to love only Wisdom; the realization of this love demands that he also, (ii) seek, (iii) attain to, (iv) hold and (v) embrace Wisdom itself, whatever it might be. And so, enflamed with the desire for Wisdom itself but possessing it merely as 'idea', the immediate task was to seek it out in its concrete embodiment — to discover its objective content — and the problem was to know where to seek.

Already one thing had served to check the ardor which the Hortensius had kindled in Augustine and this, that it made no mention of the name of Christ. This name, he tells us he had imbibed in his infancy along with his mother's milk and held in his heart in such a way that nothing from
which it was lacking was entirely able to captivate him. 60

This statement may perhaps seem strange when one considers that, to this time, Augustine by his own testimony had evinced no interest in the church but was rather ashamed of his mother's Christian admonitions. 61 A moment's reflection will however disclose its sense. For Augustine says only that, because of the accidental circumstance that Monica was a Christian, 62 he grew up associating God with the name of Christ (rather than say, Caelestis, Yahweh or Jupiter). And thus, having now for the first time understood the proper meaning of the word 'God' and yet being totally ignorant of what its objective content might be, he could not be altogether captivated (rapio), by anything from which the name of Christ was lacking. For this would be inadequate to the immediate association (God - Christ), which he had from his mother. On the other hand, in searching for the objective content to the 'idea' of God he is likewise bound first of all to try and satisfy himself whether this immediate association - whether Christ - is indeed adequate to the bare notion of God which he now has from the Hortensius.

Thus as he tells us in the following chapter (Conf., III,v,9), he turned first to the Holy Scriptures to find out of what sort they were 63 and whether the Christian teachings were adequate to the notion of Wisdom which he now possessed. At the time however he was quite unable
to discover any Wisdom in them and rather held them to be unworthy of comparison to the dignity of Cicero's text. 64

Augustine has already shown the central importance of eloquence and the artes linguisa 65 in the perspective of a purely finite human society and as he has told us, for many years he has most avidly pursued these sciences precisely for the fame and fortune which they bring amongst men. 66 From this point of view the lack of sophistication 67 in the Scriptures and their want of eloquence when measured against the traditions with which Augustine was acquainted would immediately disqualify them from any serious attention and so indeed did he scorn them.

More fundamentally however, he allows that his inability to find there the objective concrete Truth which later he was indeed to discern in Scripture stemmed from a bloated conceit in his own recent discovery. For, if the content of the Scriptures is indeed the Truth then, while on the one hand they will be opaque to those children (pueris), who have not yet risen to the 'idea' of Wisdom and who cannot therefore grasp what they are about, on the other hand neither can any Truth be discovered in them by those who, wishing to seem great to themselves, delight in their own powers of apprehension rather than in the Truth itself. 69 At the time Augustine was just such a man, puffed up with pride (destignabar esse parvulus) in his own activity in discover-
ing the 'idea' of Truth and thereby he had become incapable of submitting to any Wisdom which he does not discover by his own efforts and which does not conform to his own immediate notions of its nature. 70

Soon after, Augustine happened upon the Manichees and "fell in" (ineldeo), with them the more readily, since they spoke incessantly of Christ and Truth 71 and seemed therefore to possess precisely what he was seeking.

A considerable amount of research has been done in recent years both on Manichaeism itself and on Augustine's relation to it and these efforts have aimed in general at disclosing the particular character of the Manichaen doctrines and the peculiarities of Augustine's relation to them. 72 We shall rely on this work in much of what follows. However, for the purpose of our interpretation it is once again centrally important to discover what Augustine regards as the universal character and significance of Manichaeism. For it is just this that informs his treatment of the Manichees as it has of all the earlier moments and episodes in the Confessions.

In other words, in his argument Augustine treats of the Manichees as a particular instance of a doctrine that appears in different forms, in divers times and places, in response to a certain moment of human development. Accordingly, it follows that anyone who has arrived at a
point similar to his own is bound, when the occasion presents itself, to "fall in", either with the Manichees or else with some other doctrine essentially identical to what they taught. We must now try to present the logic of this argument.

In an obvious sense it is of course quite accidental that Augustine met up with the Manichees and this contingency is present in the words which he uses to describe the encounter - *incautio* to fall in; *affendo*, to blunder upon; *inrueco*, to rush into. At a more profound level however, as we will show below, an inexorable necessity governs this apparent accident. And yet with his usual and marvellous precision, Augustine has chosen his words with care since, as it turns out, the man in his position is necessarily given over to the contingent and can only "fall into" such a doctrine.

Thus, while Augustine did not purposely set out to become acquainted with the Manichees as he had done with the Scriptures, nevertheless, to the young man who has come to the recognition of Wisdom and yet possesses it merely as 'idea', the task is just to seek it out in its concrete embodiment. And if moreover he is as yet unable to hear the Truth itself even when directly confronted by it because of his proud and vain determination that it
must have a nature such as he can immediately recognize, then he will be bound both to look for the Truth and be satisfied that he has found it in what is immediately to hand - which is to say in the sensitive. And this, according to Augustine's estimate, is precisely the nature of Manichaeism. 74

The sense of this view of the essential nature of the Manichee's teachings as of Augustine's reason for joining their 'church' 75 needs some further explanation - the more so since modern scholars agree with what he himself also allows - that he was attracted by the rationalism of the sect. 76 The clearest statement of this latter point is found in a passage from the De utilitate credendi, written in 391-2, which also speaks of his 'fall into' Manichaeism. 77 There, he says:

"As you know Honoratus, we fell into such men for no other cause than that they claimed they would lead their hearers to God and free them from all errors by pure and simple reason rather than by any terrifying authority. What else indeed constrained me for about nine years, rejecting the religion which my parents had commended to me since I was a young child, to follow and diligently listen to those men, what else except their claim that we (Catholics) are
frightened by superstition and enjoined to a faith before reason while they press no one to faith unless the truth has first been discussed and freed from obscurity." 78 (I, 2)

This text agrees altogether with what we find in the Confessions where he tells us that he was persuaded to go along with the Manichees precisely through their insistence on certain apparently irreconcilable contradictions in the Catholic Scriptures to which he had so recently turned in the effort to discover the content of the Truth. For in these books which purport to be the word of God, Augustine had immediately discovered contradictory genealogies, an anthropomorphic deity who justifies polygamy, homicide and animal sacrifices and above all the problem posed by Genesis concerning the origin of evil in a world which is held to be altogether the creation of an entirely good and omnipotent God. 79 When Augustine then happened upon the Manichees who insisted on just these contradictions in the Catholic faith as opposed to the complete rationality which they claimed for their own teachings, 80 he was thereby persuaded that the difficulties which he had already encountered in Scripture were indeed substantive and that Catholicism was nothing more than an irrational superstition fostered by authority which he should put away from himself as quickly as possible. 81
Now, having once discovered what Augustine found irrational and superstitious about Catholicism and what he found attractive about the Manichees, we must not suppose that we have thereby exhausted his treatment of the matter. For so far we have only discovered an external and accidental explanation which is altogether peculiar to Augustine and which, as it turns out, he was later to recant. However, the whole significance of Augustine's personal testimony lies in the reason which he discovers behind this event. In other words, given the fact that he became a Manichee just to avoid the contradiction and superstitious dependence on authority which he then saw in Catholicism, his main concern is to expose the reason why he was moved by these reasons. The important question which Augustine asks is just this; "Why was I so desirous of avoiding contradiction and of discovering a total rational explanation of the universe such as I could immediately grasp without having to accept anything by faith on another's authority?" In answering this question he discloses the universal significance of this moment of which his fall into Manichaeism is but a particular instance.

Once put, it is clear that Augustine has already provided the answer to this question. In the first book he has shown that, from the time when they first enter into the society of man, all men are bound to desire for themselves
the power and authority by which this society is governed. And now, having come so far as the notion of the Truth or Wisdom by which the universe itself is governed, Augustine is likewise bound to try and appropriate this to himself.

According to the mere 'idea' of the Truth which he then possessed, this Wisdom is in principle both rational and objective. As objective it is there in everything that is, which is to say that it is not the subjective creation and possession of any particular individual or group.\(^ {82} \)

As rational, it cannot be contradictory and it can be known. This means that all who have come to the 'idea' of Truth have come to a point where they can in principle, by the exercise of their own rational powers free from any dependence on another's authority, grasp the Wisdom which governs the universe. And it is precisely by the actual possession of such a knowledge or gnosis\(^ {83} \) of the nature of the universe and man's place in it that one comes to power and authority in the society of man.\(^ {84} \)

To such a man who is therefore determined above all else to seem great to himself\(^ {85} \) and who desires to know the Truth merely as an instrument to this end,\(^ {86} \) to such a man it is in no way possible to accept the demand of the Catholic church that one submit to its authority, accepting first by faith its claim to possess the Way and the Truth. For this may well require him to accept certain apparently
irreconcilable contradictions and for the time being give his assent to things not yet seen, relying rather on the authority of the church and obedient to its precepts so that, by this humble and childlike (parvus) service now he may, according to the promises of Christ, come in the end to that position from which it is possible to see the Truth face to face. 87

But if these contradictions must be tolerated now, then neither can he know the Truth immediately and what he cannot know at once will not serve his private ends. Such a man is therefore bound to reject the simple faith of Catholicism and "fall into" a gnostic doctrine such as the Manichees taught. 88 For he desires a knowledge of the Truth not that he may serve it but rather that it may serve Him.

If this explains the rationalism by which Augustine was initially attracted to the Manichees, how are we also to make sense of his clear assertion that they are carnal men, 89 teaching a doctrine which finds the Truth in corporeal nature, 90 by which he was seduced just because, he sought the Truth not according to the understanding of his mind but according to the senses of the flesh? 91 The answer to this question may be discovered, from what we already know for it is merely the other side of the same thing - the position into which he must fall as a consequence.
of his determination to know the Truth at once so that he may put it to the service of his private ends.

Because the Truth which governs the universe can principle be known and because it is through the actual possession of the Truth that one comes to power and authority in the society of man - to the natural man who is bound by his nature to desire such power and authority for himself - to the natural man who has also come to the 'idea' of Truth, there arises the demand that this knowledge of the Truth which he can have in principle be realized in him immediately. 92 And if it is to be realized immediately, this in turn demands that the Truth must have a nature such as he can immediately recognize. But so far, possessing merely the 'idea' of Truth and being altogether ignorant of what its actual concrete content might be, so far he knows only that, in principle the Truth cannot be contradiction. And that in which there is immediately no contradiction whatsoever is just the sensitive nature of the universe and the word taken in its literal sense. 93

Thus, as Augustine says, prompted by his proud unwillingness to tolerate any contradiction he initially "fell in" with the Manichees because they too rejected Catholicism for the same reason. And from this he was led, little by little, to accept their positive doctrines con-
cerning the nature of the Truth according to which both good and evil are to be found in corporeal bodies. 94

For the Manichees affirm the existence of two infinite, eternally opposed corporeal substances, one good the other evil, 95 out of which the world is composed by their intermingling in a constantly waged battle in which each tries to overpower the other. Consequently, for the Manichees there is, strictly speaking, no problem of evil, since it is simply attributed to the presence in anything of some quantity of the substance of evil 96 which is opposed to the substance or particles of good (God) - from which together, by their mixture in varying degrees, men 97 and all other things in this world are made. 98

It is not necessary for us to review in detail the entire range of Manichaean doctrine and practice into which Augustine fell. As he tells us it is contained in "many and huge volumes" 99 but all its various and fantastic moments 100 derive directly from this dualist position and aim essentially at the liberation of the good or divine substance (light), from its entanglement in matter which is identified with the evil principle (dark), in exactly the same way as any dirt or defilement is washed from a piece of white linen.

Now such a dualist doctrine altogether avoids the
apparent contradictions of catholicism and especially with respect to the question of the origin of evil. But it does so only by regarding good and evil as substantial corporeal realities which, for the reasons we have explained above,\textsuperscript{101} is the only way that Augustine could apprehend them at this time. Thus, as he says, he was seduced and "fell in" with the Manichees because he sought the Truth not with the understanding of his mind but according to the senses of his flesh.\textsuperscript{102}

From this point of view we can now see why Augustine was then unable to appreciate the answers which the catholic apologists proposed to the apparent contradictions in Scripture.\textsuperscript{103} For the church does not suggest that its members shall continue forever as "little ones" (\textit{parvuii}), related to the Truth solely by faith. It does promise and offer a resolution to these seeming contradictions.\textsuperscript{104} However, as Augustine will later show, this understanding depends on the apprehension of a 'spiritual' reality from which he was then excluded by his inability to see any further than the sight of bodies\textsuperscript{105} and the phantasms (\textit{corporalia phantasmata}) or vain imaginings which the mind drew from these bodies.\textsuperscript{106}

Now inasmuch as reason grasps its objects according to universal determination, the sensitive nature of the universe is in no way a proper object of knowledge since it is altogether particular. Thus the Manichees cannot
support their own teachings concerning the nature of the
Truth by rational argument just because they have not
recognized the universal or 'spiritual' nature which alone
makes even corporeal bodies intelligible. Failing this,
they can only offer an irrational account of the nature
of the universe and thus the 'knowledge' which they promise
to their hearers turns out in the end to require belief and
indeed consists in an absolute, unconditioned and
irrational assent to their doctrines. Because of his
inability to see any further than the sight of bodies - his
total ignorance of 'spiritual' reality - Augustine was led
to believe (cred) in these vain and fantastic doctrines,
all of which comes from his perverted desire to know the
Truth immediately in order that he might use it to serve
his own particular ends.

In chapters vi-x of the third book Augustine is at
pains to point out, for those who can hear, both the
absurdity of the Manichaean doctrines and to refute one
by one the objections which they bring to the Catholic
faith. His teaching on these points depends on the appre-
hension of a 'spiritual' reality. In the following books
(VI-VII), he traces the moments by which he discovered the
error of the Manichees, came to the notion of a 'spiritual'
reality and finally arrived at the vision of the Truth.
We shall therefore leave the refutation of Manichaeism to
its unfolding in these books. For the moment we may con-
clude with his own summary of his fall into Manichaeism which is both a statement of what he has already shown and an anticipation of what is to come. He says, "receding from the Truth, I seemed to myself to be going towards it." 111 (III, vi, 12).

Already however in the final two chapters (xii, xiii) of the third book, Augustine includes two episodes which mark the first steps by which he was eventually enabled to reject the Manichees and come to the Catholic faith. 112 The first is his mother's dream. In it Monica saw herself standing on a wooden rule (regula ligna) 113 bewailing the loss of her son to the Manichees at which point she was comforted by a glorious young man 114 who told her if she looked carefully she would see that where she was, there he (Augustine) was too (ubi est illa, ibi est et me), and looking again she saw him beside her 115.

Now the assurance which Monica took from this dream is an instance of just what Augustine himself despised in the Catholics - their credulous belief in things not yet seen as opposed to the certain knowledge which he demanded and thought himself to be acquiring from the Manichees. And yet, as he was to discover from this incident, neither did Monica's belief entail any uncertainty or lack of understanding as to its precise content. For when he
presumed to interpret it that she should not despair of
being where he was, Monica immediately grasped the close
but decisive difference in his words - which Augustine him-
self had not yet seen - and corrected him, saying, "It was
not said to me, 'where he is, there you are too' but 'where
you are, there he also is'". Augustine tells us that he
was more moved by this reply than he was by the dream
itself.¹¹⁶ For he had to allow that the very faith which
he ridiculed as an ignorant superstition was here seen by
him to have an absolute certainty and understanding with
respect to its content which could neither be shaken nor
confused by a false though very close interpretation.

Furthermore, Augustine tells us that as a result of
this dream and simply by her faith in its promise, Monica
allowed him to continue living with her even though she
had begun to be unwilling to do so through a revulsion at his
conceit.¹¹⁷ And though not a whit less opposed to his
error nor ceasing in her care and prayers on his behalf,¹¹⁸
as a consequence of her faith in this dream, Monica showed
herself capable of a charity and compassion which Augustine
accepted¹¹⁹ but which his own presumption of 'knowledge' made
impossible for him to duplicate or return. For his whole and
only delight lay in ridiculing those Catholics whose errors
he thought were clearly manifest.¹²⁰

We have already discovered that Augustine's position
made any real charity and compassion towards another
altogether impossible\textsuperscript{121} and in the following years he was to become painfully sensible of the consequences of this condition.\textsuperscript{122} But in this incident he had before him the example of a true charity whose benefits he enjoyed and which clearly had its origin in the belief that, at the time, he altogether scorned.

In the second incident Monica put before him the reply of a catholic bishop, to her entreaties that he try to show Augustine the errors of the Manichaean position and the truth of catholicism.\textsuperscript{123} The bishop refused saying that at the moment Augustine was so puffed up with his victories in refuting the Catholics that he was incapable of appreciating his errors even if they should be shown to him.\textsuperscript{124} However he tried to console Monica by adding that once Augustine came to study and examine the Manichees own teachings he would become convinced of their utter vanity and foolishness as he (the bishop), himself had been some years before.\textsuperscript{125}

For his part the bishop knew that the Truth could not be shown to Augustine so long as he had no notion of a 'spiritual' reality and also that, in time, the want of this notion in the Manichaean doctrines would make them untenable to anyone who desired the Truth above all else and who was prevented from any complacent satisfaction with
those errors by the care of such a one as Monica. Monica did not understand the logic which informed his words any more than did Augustine at the time and this is shown by the fact that she persisted in her entreaties that the bishop do something. Finally, he dismissed her somewhat tantly saying that it was not possible, *morti non potest*, for the son of such tears to be lost. Ignorant of his reason, Monica nevertheless took this as a sign that it would be so and was satisfied.

In the years which followed, as Augustine discovered the foolishness of the Manichee's teachings according to the bishop's predictions, he could not fail to recognize either the superior knowledge or the Catholic bishop or the fact that Monica, even though she did not understand the reason which justified her belief, nevertheless stood firmly in the Truth while he, who thought he already knew the Truth was actually going away from it.

Monica never possessed the knowledge which the bishop possessed nor was ever able to explain how and why her son came in the end to the same knowledge. However, by her unshakeable belief in such signs she continued to work for his soul's salvation, humbly serving the Truth by serving her arrogant son in the only way in which she could - by her care and prayers - in spite of the scorn and
deceit with which he used her. For nine long years she was content to wait patiently and work in this quiet and humble way, with no visible reward or success from her labours, until the day that she might finally see this belief justified and her hopes fulfilled by Augustine's conversion and baptism in the church. And this, for the reason we have explained, Augustine attributes to her humble and patient service on his behalf.
NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. See also in the same chapter, Conf., III,i,1 "Quaerebam quid amarem, amans amare, ..."


3. Conf., III,i,1 "... et secretiore indigentia oderam mo minus indigentem." This passage is much discussed by modern scholars. For the results of a "séance de travail en équipe", see DA 13, 'Notes Complémentaires', 11, pp. 665-667.

4. In this chapter Augustine says that at the time he was without any desire for incorruptible - that is, rational and objective - nourishments. Conf., III,i,1 "Quaerebam quid amarem, amans amare, et oderam securitatem et viam sine muscipulis, quoniam famis mihi erat intus ab interiore cibo, tc ipso, deus meus, et ca famo non esuriebam, sed eram sine desiderio alimenorum incorruptibilum, non quia plenus cie eram, sed quo inanior, fastidiosior." Indeed, as we will see below, he did not even suspect their existence until the Hortensius episode: see Conf., III,iv,
7-8.

5. **Conf.**, III,1,1 "Rut cedit in avorum, quo cupidam sepi."

6. **Conf.**, III,1,1 "Et ideo non bene valobrat anima mea et ulcerosa proictobrat se foras, miserabilior scalpi avida contactu sensibilium."

7. **Conf.**, III,1,1 "Vetam tigitur amicitiae coquinabam sordibus concupiscenciae occidere mea cius ombabilabam ac tartaro libidinis, ..." In **Conf.**, III,2 Augustine has already spoken of the difficulties that the unbridled gratification of his immediate sexual desires raises against the possibility of a true friendship. "Et quid erat, quod me dolciabat, nisi amare et amari? sed non tenebatur nodus ab animo usque ad animam, quatenus est luminosus limes amicitiae, ..."

8. **Conf.**, III,1,1 "Amare et amari dulce nisi erat magis, si et amantis corpore fruereer."

9. **Conf.**, III,1,1 "Et ideo non bene valobrat anima mea et ulcerosa proictobrat se foras, miserabilior scalpi avida contactu sensibilium. sed ei non habrent animam, non utique amarentur."

11. Conf., III,i,1 "Vocum ignem amicitiae coquinamabam
cordibus sonoritate eius: omnibus de
tartaro libidinis, et tamen foedus atque inhonestus, elegans
et urbanus esse gestiebam abundanti vantia
to. " 'urbanus'
is again used in the same sense for an arbitrary and
wholly artificial good in the third chapter in connection
with the overdors. See Conf., III,iii,6 "... overdors
... - hoc enim nomen saeervum et diabolicum velut insignis
urbanitas est...

12. Conf., III,i,1 "... quia et amatus sum et perveni occulto
e ad vinculum fruendi et conligabor laetus aerumnosis
necessus, ut cadere cor virgis ferreis ardentibus seii et
suspicionum et timorum et inrmium atque rixarum."


14. Conf., III,ii,2 "Rapiemant me spectacula theatrica
plena imaginibus misiriarum meaerum et fomitis ignis mei."
See also Conf., III,ii,4 "At ego tunc miser dolere amabay
et quaerebam, ui esset quod dolorem, quando mihi in
aerumna aliena et falsa et saltatoria ea magis placebat
actio histrionis meque aliociebat vehementius, qua mihi
lacrmae excitiebantur."
15. **Conf., III, i, 2** "Nam eo magis egressa mors, quae minus a valibus auctoibus sanus est ..."

16. **Conf., III, ii, 2** "Quid est, quod ibi homo vult dolor eum spectat lucubrosa et uragica, quae tamen pati ipse nollet?"

17. **Conf., III, ii, 2** "... et auctori earum imaginum amplius favet, cum amplius dolet, et si calamitates illae hominum vel antiquae vel falsae ssc agantur, ut qui spectat non dolet, asectit indi fastidiens et reprehendens; si autem dolet, manet intortae et gaudens."

18. **Conf., III, ii, 2** "... cum ipse patitur, miseria, cum elitis compatitur, misericordia confirm scel.

19. A man cannot maintain the illusion of his omnipotent benevolence unless he can imagine that, according to his sovereign pleasure, he has the power to affect another for the good by extending a merciful disposition towards him - just as, inversely, the same illusion requires that he imagine himself able to harm another with impunity. Augustine has already dealt with this negative relation in connection with the theft of pears in the second book. See **Comm. Conf. II, ii. The sin of childhood against the rational order**
of the universe.

20. Conf., III, ii, 3 "Certo omnis homo gaudere vult. an eum miserum esse nominem libeat, libet homen esse misericoordem, quod quia non sine dolore est, huc una causa amantur dolores?".

21. Conf., III, ii, 3 "Et hoc de illa venia amicitiae cvr."

22. Conf., II, ix, 17 For our interpretation of this phrase see Comm. Conf. II, pp. 88 - 90.

23. Conf., III, ii, 2 "Sed qualis tandem misericordia in rebus fictis et scenis? non enim ad subveniendum provocatur auditor, sed tantum ad dolendum invitatur ..."

24. Conf., III, ii, 4 "... ea magis placet aetio histrionis meque allocetbat vehementius, qua mihi laetimac orontiebantur."

25. This would of course extend to every kind of literature which merely invites one to sorrow (ad dolendum invitatur). Modern scholars, with an almost superstitious respect for antique literature, are embarrassed to find an explanation for Augustine's attack on the theatre. See for example A. Sollignac's 'qualification', in BA, 13, p. 172.

W. Courcelle in Recherches, pp. 52-56, turns Augustine's
opposition to the spectacula theatrica into an attack on the religious festival of Caristis and only in a footnote does he allow that it could equally be directed against the theatre proper. Such criticism as Augustine's is of course by no means unprecedented in the ancient world. Readers of the *Republic* will recall that Plato had attacked Homer and other poets for similar reasons - because, as they stood, they prevented a man from coming to know the Truth or the Good. See *Republic*, II, 376e - 392c. See also Augustine's earlier criticism of the poets in *Conf.*, I,iii,20-22 and I,xvi,25-26.

26. *Conf.*, III,iii,3 "Nam eosi adprobatur officio caritatis qui dolci miserium, mallet tam cum utique non esse quod doleret, qui germanitus miserorum est. si enim est multo multo benivolentia, quod fieri non potest, potest et ulla, qui veraciter sinceriterque miseretur, supereo esse miseror, ut miscreatur. nonnullus itaque dolor adprobandum, nullus amandum est."

27. See *Conf.*, III,ii,2.

28. *Conf.*, III,iii,4 "Talis vita mea numquid vita erat, deus meus?"

29. A marvellously clear statement of the error of this
position - which Augustine refers to as 'fornication apart from God', videantur ab e, see Conf., I, xiii, 21 and II, vi, 14 - is found in Conf., III, viii, 16 "Si ea fiant, cum in devotionem, fort vices, qui se umque et noscor aversor in nocem universitatis, et privata superbia diligitur in parte, umam salutum. ictaque pie taceo humilio velle cur in te, et quae nos a conscientia maius et propitius est pecus, conficientur et eamvis gemitus compositurum et solvis a vinabili, quae nobis fecimus, et tunc non obliviscens adversus se formam falcac liberarum araretis plus habendi et aerno torem emittendi, amplius amando propriam nocean quam se, omnium bonum."

30. Augustine has already reached this conclusion concerning the fault of childhood in the second book. See Conf., II, vi, 14 "In libelli facere consens legem saltem fallacia, quae potestatur non poteram, ut nemoam liberarum captivam imitaver, faciendo lupum quod non llectet, tenbroca omnipotentiae similitudinem?"

31. Conf., III, iii, 5 "... amans vias meae et non tuae, amans fugitivam libertatem."

33. Conf., III,iii,6 "Et multum earum in aula victoriae quae gaudia suum ponde et tumulis styli, quamquam longe sedationem dominum, de ore, ea tumulo omnia ab eversionibus, quae facta sunt eversione ..." See also below, n.37.

34. The primary sense of eversion from e-vertere is 'to turn upside down'. The gang itself understood this name in the sense of 'the Destroyers' and took it as a sign of their imagined freedom and omnipotence which they manifested by destroying whatever did not suit their momentary pleasure.

Augustine, drawing on the more fundamental sense of 'to turn upside down' agrees that this name is most apt.

See Conf., III,iii,6. "Quid intrae vocesque quae eversione vocarentur, evocati plana prae, ipsi atque persori adeuntibus coe et occidentibus fallaciibus occulte spiritibus in coeipsos, quod alios invisere amant et fallaci?" As he has shown in the second book (see above Comm. Conf. II., p.80 ), all such gangs are formed by 'turning upside down' the rational order of the universe so that the good is found in the subjective will of the individual rather than in the objective order of the whole.

35. Conf., III,iii,6 "... hoc est ab eversionibus, quibus proverbe infectabantur ignorantium evocandiam, quam proturbaront gratis inclinando atque inde passendo malvolas lastitias suas."
36. Conf., III,iii,6 "... tunc quoque vivi dierum praece bilitent, qui et illos non numeb..."

37. Conf., III,iii,6 "... et cum eis erat et amicis eorum deo scilicet aliquando, eum quem semper facie to adhorrebat, non est ab eis correctius..." Again in Conf., V,viii,14 Augustine notes that although as a student he had been unwilling to take part in these activities, as a teacher in Carthage he had to suffer it from his students. "Ergo quoque eum simul cum studentem meum esse notit, esse eum deo semper scel erum perfec..." alienos, ..."


39. Augustine becomes able to break with the corruption once he comes to the idea of Wisdom through reading Cicero's Hortensius. See Conf., III,iv, 7-8.

40. Conf., III,i,1 "Pouec meus, misericordia mea, quanto solce nihil suavissat tem illum et quam bonus asperisisti ..."

41. Conf., III,iii,5 "Et circumvolvat super me fidelis a longe misericordia tua." Recall here also the other instances in the earlier chapters, Conf., I,xii,20; I,xviii,29; II,iii,4; where Augustine interprets the painful consequences of his contradictory behavior as the workings of
divine mercy leading him towards the Truth. For a statement of the logic that informs this position see Comm. Conf. I., pp. 29 - 33.

42. For a summary of the division of the first part of the Confessions (Books I-IX), according to the various 'ages' of Augustine's life see above Comm. Conf. i, n.1. In Conf., VI, i,1 Augustine indicates that he is beginning to speak of a time when he had come to maturity (maturitas) from adolescence: see also Conf., VII, i,1.


44. Conf., III, V, 10 "Itaque intzdi in homines superbi delivantes ..."

45. Conf., III, iv, 7-8 "... et usitato iam discendi ordine peruenoram in librum cuiusdam Cicoronis, cuius linguam fore omnes mirantur, pectus non ita."

Modern scholars have produced a score of suggestions to explain why Augustine uses the "astonishing" (See A. Solignac in his 'Notes Complementaires', #12 on this subject in BA 13, p. 667), "cuiusdam Cicoronis" ("a certain Cicero") and to explain how it jibes with the following dictum "cuius linguam fore omnes mirantur, pectus non ita." ("whose tongue almost all admire, but not so his heart"). It is not our intention here to review these various theories for in our view the
only 'problem' is the assumption which all of these scholars have made - that the name of Cicero would be universally known to Augustine's audience in which case the indefinite "\textit{\textit{salutem}}" does indeed constitute a problem. According to our view the reason Augustine uses the phrase 'a certain Cicero' is just that he is writing for an audience whom he thinks may well not know who Cicero is or what those who have had a 'higher education' (i.e. in the school of the grammarians and the rhetors) may think of him (thus the explanation "\textit{\textit{nullo lingueam ...}}" etc.). As Augustine explains in \textit{De Civitate Dei}, VIII,X it is altogether possible that a Christian whose education has been confined to the Church's literature may be quite unfamiliar with the writings of the philosophers or even name of Plato (and presumably, for the same reason, Cicero), and this would no doubt hold true for many non-Christians whom Augustine also included in his audience and who might never have advanced in their education much beyond the mere ability to read.

A brief account of the various solutions which have been suggested for this 'problem' and ample references may be found in Solignac's article quoted above and more recently in H. Hagendahl, \textit{Augustine and the Latin Classics}, Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, Amsquist and Wiksell, Goteborg, 1967, Vol II, pp.579.
46. Conf. III, iv, 7. "Non enim ad amendentur linguae quae videbant omnes nascimini sermoetium, cum apertis animis aequales undique ostendassem bene fundamento patre auto dilectum, non ergo ad amendentur linguae afferabam ilium librum necque mihi locutionem, sed quod loquohatur persueascet."

47. Conf. III, iv, 7. "Ille vero liber mutatis affectum meum et ad te Iovis, Domine, mutati process meae et voae ut secundum novi f actu illa. velit mihi repentem ormi vana specie et immortalitatem sapientiae conuipientem aceru sorile incredibili et surgere corporam, ut ad te vocitem."

48. Conf. III, iv, 7. "Inter hanc ego inscissilla tumse incarcer docebam libros eloquentiae, in qua ominiere cupitchan fine damnabili et ventoso per gaudia vanitaris humanae..."
See also above, n. 46.

Augustine explains the radical sense of 'philosophy' in Conf. III, iv, 8.
"Amor autem sapientiae nomen graccum habet philosophiam..."
The text of the Hortensius is no longer extant though certain fragments remain. A. Solignac provides a brief review of this material in BA 13, "Notes Complémentaires", #13, pp. 667-668.
50. Conf., III, iv, 7 quoted above, n. 47. See also Conf., III, iv, 8 "quia ego audirem, Deus meus, quomodo audirem nescire a secrum ad se ..." In later life Augustine was to recommend the Hortensius to his own students so that it might work in them the same effect that it had on him. At least in the cases of Lacontius and Trygotius his hopes were fulfilled: see Contra Academicos, I, i, 4.

51. Conf., III, iv, 8 "... nec tamen sola in illa exhortatione, quod non illam aut illam securam, sed quemque eodem capientiam ut diligere et quaeque ore et adeoqueque et tenorem atque amplius loquor, cessaverint sornoncillo ..." As we shall see in the sequel, this "illam aut illam securam", refers to the various dogmatic schools of philosophy (such as the Stoics and Epicureans) which do not possess a certain unmistakable knowledge of the Truth.

52. Conf., III, iv, 7 "Viluit mihi repente omnis vana spe et immortalitatem sapientiae consupissebam aceto corde incredibili et singere coeperam, ut ad te redirem."

53. See Conf., VI, xi, 18; VII, i, 1; VIII, vii, 17.

54. Physical adolescence occurs with the onset of puberty - in Augustine's case in his sixteenth year; see Conf., II, iii, 6.

56. Thus in Conf., III,vii,12 we find Augustine saying, "rescripsera a naenata in eam mili vidobar, ..." over and again in the Confessions Augustine speaks of Monica as having twice laboured to bring him to birth - first according to the flesh and again according to the spirit: (see for example Conf., I,xi,17; III,xi,19; V,ix,17; IX,viii,17).

As we shall see, the task which Augustine sets the man (i.e. one who has come to the full possession of his rational nature), is to negate this first, 'natural' and corrupt maturity, becoming 'little' again (parvulus), by humbly accepting in faith the promises of Christ and the teaching of the Church (in baptism), through which he may come in the end to his true maturity in which he will see the Truth face to face (i.e. see it in such a way that he never falls away from it). This is how Augustine interprets the words of Matthew 19:14. See Conf., I,ix,30

"Humiliatis ergo signum in Cristiano pueritiae, rex nostor, probasti, cum aliis: talium est regnum caelorum."

Augustine uses this image when he speaks of the Scriptures or the church and its teaching as the food (bread or especially milk), by which such a 'little one' is suckled and nourished into his true spiritual maturity. See for example,
Conf., IV, i, 1. "Aut quid sunt, cum nihil bene sit, nili Eugenio les summi frueus to sib, qui non corrupsitur?" See also the text from Conf., III, iv, 8 quoted below, n. 60, and Conf., VII, xviii, 24. Again, in De Utilitate Credendi, I, 2 the Catholic Church is spoken of as the breast or teat to which Augustine, starved and exhausted for substantial spiritual food, finally and avidly returns.

In a variation of this image Augustine also speaks of the one who has come to the 'idea' of Wisdom as a soul which has acquired its wings (and so he says in Conf., III, iv, 8 "Quocumque ardor, deus meus, quemque ardor revolare a corpore ad te, ..."), but only if it is nourished with the proper food can it gain the strength to fly rather than fall when it leaves the nest. This image occurs throughout the Confessions - see for example Conf., IV, xvi, 31 - but it is given a particularly clear expression in a passage from Sermo LI, 4, 5 in which he speaks of the reasons why he could not at once find the Truth in the Catholic Scriptures.

"Quanto vos estis beatiores modo! quam secuti discitis, quam tui quiemque adhuc parvuli estis in nido fidei, et spirituali esseam acceipitis! ego autem miser, sum me ad volandum idoneum putarem, rectique ničum: et prius occidi, quam volarem." See also below, n. 73 for a further development which Augustine gives to this image of the soul as a young bird.
57. Conf.: III, iv, 8 "Amor aurem sapientiae nomen gracet
habet philosophiam, ..."

58. Thus Augustine says that, while he desired God (Wisdom)
above all else, he did so without in any way knowing what
God would do with him — that is, he did not yet know in
any concrete sense what Wisdom would require of him. See
Conf.: III, iv, 8 "Quomodo ardebam Deus meus, quomodo ardebam
revoclare a tormento ad te, et nesciam quid agere mecum!"

59. Conf.: III, iv, 8 "... hoc tamen solo delectabar in illa
exhoratione, quod non illum aut illum secum, sed ipsum
quacumque esset sapientiam ut diligam ut quceorem et
adsequor et teneorem atque amplexorum fortiter, esavitabar
sermones illo et accipies et ardubam ..." The five verbs
of the ut clause are clearly chosen (probably from the
'invitation to Wisdom' in Proverbs 1:1-9:18), and ordered,
to suggest those moments which together comprise the begin-
nning (diligo), middle (adlocuer), and end (amplexor) of the
movement to Wisdom, as well as the connecting terms which
join these moments (quaero and veneo). P. Courcelle in
Recherches, Appendix II, p. 272, also notes an order in these
verbs though he does not say in what it consists.
60. *Conf.*, III, iv, 8 "... et hoc column me in tanta flagrantia refrangebat, quod nomen Christi non crat ibi, quoniam hoc nomen secundum misericordiam tuam, domine, hoc nomen salvatoris mei, filii tui, in ipso adhuc lacte matris tenerum cor meum pia hiberat et altae retinebav, et quidquid sine hoc nomine fuisse quavis litteratum et expollitum et veridicum, non me totum rapiebat." (Augustine reaffirms this position in connection with his unwillingness to entrust his soul to the 'philosophers' in *Conf.*, V, xiv, 25 "... quibus tamen philosophio, quod sine salutari nomine Christi essent, orationem languoris animae meae committere omnino recusabam.") See *Conf.*, I, ix, 14 where Augustine mentions his first acquaintance with the name of God which, through Monica, doubtless was associated with the name of Christ. See also the account of his deferred baptism in *Conf.*, I, ix, 17.

61. See for example the discussion on this point in M. Pellegrino, *Les Confessions*, pp. 90-92.

62. From a purely human or finite point of view it is of course quite accidental that Monica was a Christian and that Augustine grew up associating God with the name of Christ. However, from the Christian standpoint from which he writes Augustine can also regard this 'accident' as the
work of divine providence and so does he interpret it in our text: see Conf., III, iv, 8 "... quoniam hoc nomen secundum misericordiam tuam, domino; ..." Behind this there lies the thought of Romans 10:13-14, already announced in the very first chapter of the Confessions, (I, 1, 1), concerning the necessity of a preacher (in this case, Monica), in the Christian economy of salvation.

63. Conf., III, v, 9 "Itaque institui animum intendere in scripturas sanatas et videre, quales essent."

64. Conf., III, v, 9 "Non enim sicut modo loquor, ita sensi, cum adferri ad illam scripturam, sed visa est mihi indigna, quam Tullianae dignitati compararem."


66. Conf., III, iv, 7 "Inter has ego inbecilla luna aetate discobam libros eloquentiarum, in qua omne, a quibus fama fine damnabili et ventoso per gaudia vanitatis humanae ..."

67. If one were to translate this 'sophistication' into Latin a very suitable word would be the urbanitas of Conf., III, 1, 1 and III, 11, 6.

68. See above n. 64.

69. Conf., III, v, 9 "Et eceae video rcm non conpertam superbis neque nudatam pueris, sed inoccu humilem,
"suaeque et voli et mystericum,..." In the argument of the Confessions, Augustine has yet to show that the Truth is indeed contained in Scripture.

70. Conf., III,v,9. "... et non crani ego talis, ut intrare in eum possem aut inclinare cervicem ad eum gressus." See also Conf., III,v,9, "Vorun tam a illa erat, quae crescerat cum parvus, sed ego dediturbar cocc parvulus et turgidus fastu mibi grandis videbar." If on the one hand he was moved by Hortensius to scorn all his former ends and desires (Conf., III,iv,7-9, see also De utilitate creperi, I,3 and Soliloquias, I,17,2), so conversely does he now know his superiority to those who remain in his former delusion, pursuing vain hopes and paltry inanities. By focusing on his superiority, his greatness, he therefore loses the ability to seek, much less to find, the objective content of the Truth. All he can seek is his own aggrandizement which is of one piece with what Augustine has already shown to be the condition of natural man. See also below n. 93 for an explanation of the reason why Augustine could not rise above the immediate and literal sense of the Scriptures.

71. Conf., III,vi,10 "Itaque incidi in homines superbes delirantes, earnatus nimis et leuacoos, in quorum ore

73. Conf., III,vi,10 "Itaque incidit in homines superbus solvantes ...", Conf., III,vi,11 "Offendi illam multorum audax ...", Conf., V,vii,13 "... quo iam quoque modo innuoram ..."). See also BA, 13, 'Introduction', pp. 127-8 where Solignac gives other instances of this incidit - in *De Beata Vita*, I,4 and *De Utilitate Credendi*, I,2 - along with this comment, "... d'instinct, Augustin répète cet incidit pour parler de sa rencontre avec les Manicheens: "...

According to our view it is not so much an inexplicable 'instinct' as a clear grasp of its necessity (which finds expression in the logical force of the itaque at the beginning of Conf., III,vi,10), that governs the use of this word and its synonyms both in the Confessions and elsewhere.

In all likelihood Augustine draws this incidit and its synonyms from Proverbs 7:23. There, the foolish harlot whom Augustine directly and explicitly equates with the Manichees (Conf., III,vi,11), is said to attract
men "as a bird rushes into a snare" ("... velut si avis fecisset ad lacuam ...", Vulgate). This is just the image which Augustine uses in the opening lines of Conf., III, vi, 10 quoted above n. 71. The other side of this image (that into which the foolish man falls), is spoken of as a snare, as for example, in Conf., V, iii, 3 when Augustine speaks of the celebrated Manichaean 'bishop' Faustus as a great "snare of the devil" ("laqueus diaboli") and in Conf., V, vii, 13 where Faustus is called a "snare of death" ("laqueus mortis"). A marvellous explanation of this image is found in De Utilitate Credendi, I, 2 where he is speaking of 'his "fall into" Manichaeism. "Itaque nobis faciabant quod invidiosi aequos solos qui vicinavero surculos propter aquam doliunt, ut sitientes aequo decipiant: obviam olim, et quoque modo coeperunt altas quae sive sunt aquarum, vel inde erat formidolosae moliuntibus denterrent, ut in eorum dolos, non ecectus, sed inopia acceperunt."

M. Conf., III, vi, 10 "Itaque invidii in homines superbus delirantes, animales ymnes et loquaces, ..." Carnales is the central epithet in this description as we may see from the rest of the chapter where Augustine is at pains to show that the Manichees, who claimed that they had the Truth, could only feed him with phantasieorum.
75. So Augustine speaks of the Manichees when he describes them in the *Liber de Haeresibus*, 46.


77. P. Courcelle, in *Recherches*, Appendix, II, pp. 269ff. has collected together this and some other parallels to certain portions of the *Confessions*.

78. De *Utilitate Crendendi*, I, 2 "Nec tamen, Honorate, non aliam ob causam nos in tales homines incidisse, nisi quod se discitant, terribilii auctoritate separate, mera et simulce ratione eas que se audire velitent introducturos ad Deum, et omnes omni libertaret. Quod enim me alium cogebat, nonc fecer novem, spera religione quam mihi puorui a parentibus insita erat, homines illos sequi ac diligenter audire; nisi quod nos superstitione terrerit, et fidem nobis ante rationem imperavi dievent, ac autem nullum premero ad fideam, nisi prius discussa et inodata veritate?"

79. *Conf.*, III, vi, 12 "Nesciebam enim alium, vere quod
... or quasi avutule movebar, ut sufragaveret stultis decepsibus, serva a me quaeuerent, unde moliri et utrum formae corporea deus immuretur et habebat capillos et unguos et


... For the problem of the different genealogies of Christ (in Matthew and Luke), see Sermo LI,4,5. On the especial significance of the 'problem of evil', which is in any case the most universal of these difficulties, see especially De Libero Arbitrio, I,2,4 and the De Genesi Contra Manichaeos, I, i, 3, ff. In Conf. V,x,19-20 Augustine again speaks of the difficulties which he found in Catholic doctrine and adds to the earlier list his inability - which he shared with the Manichees - to give his assent to the Incarnation. See Conf. V,x,20 "Motuebam itaque credere in carne natum, ne credere eogere


On the Manichaean Christology see Solignac's note in BA L3, 'Notes Compléments', #19, p. 674.

80. Modern scholarship agrees with the repeated assertion in Augustine's many anti-Manichaean writings that the Manichees attracted their disciples by the promise of a total rational explanation of the universe. A. Solignac.
gives a general summary of the conclusions of recent scholarship on this question in BA 13, 'Introduction', p.125.

31. In De Duabus Animabus I,1 Augustine mentions that his "fall into" Manichaeism was accomplished in the space of a few days "nulla enim crana, quae facere debuit, ne tam facile ac dicius paucis religione verissimae semina misit a puellis: sed subverter ulla errone vel fraudes falsorum nullius honorum effossa ex animo pellevertur."

32. We recall that this is what Augustine had imagined from the time he stole the pears (Conf., II, iv, 9), until he read the Hortensius (Conf., III, iv, 7-9). See Comm.Conf.II,III.

33. H.-Ch.Puech regards Manichaeism as essentially, a gnosticism. See the passage quoted below n.88.

34. Since the Hortensius had moved Augustine to scorn his former ends and acquaintances (Conf., III, iv, 7-9), the only 'society of men' that had any importance for him was the society of those who loved the Truth. This society he now equated with the Manichees - all the rest of mankind falling as it were beyond the pale. Within the immediate context of sect it is clear that power and authority do derive from the possession of its 'knowledge' or gnosis as one may see from the order of the Manichaean hierarchy.
(See \textit{PA} 13, p. 339, n. 1). Ultimately however from the standpoint of the ancient world, knowledge of the Truth gives one the duty and the right to rule the world and this was just the missionary end that the Manichees set for themselves. See the summary of H.-Ch. Puech's \textit{Conclusions} on the matter in \textit{PA} 13, 'Introduction' p. 121. See also the precept of Mani that the 'elect' Manichee must continually wander in the world to preach the doctrine and to guide all mankind to the sect, reported by the Arabic ethnographer and geographer Al-Biruni (973-1048 AD), in the \textit{Kitab al Afar Abbaqunya}. Texts and an English translation of this work are referred to in F. Decret, \textit{Aspects}, p. 58, n. 5.

85. \textit{Conf.}, III, v, 9 \"... et non eram ego talis, ut iniverc in eam possim qui inclinare servios ad eis tuos pressus.\" See also \textit{Conf.}, III, v, 9 \"... sed ego deflectabar esso parvulus et turgidus fastu mini grandis vidobar.\"

86. Augustine tells us that he then delighted to use the gnosis which the Manichees taught for the purpose of ridiculing the Catholics and thus, as he thought, of establishing his superiority to them. See \textit{Conf.}, III, x, 18 \"Hace ego nesciens inridebam illos sanatos servos et prophetas tuos.\" See also \textit{Conf.}, III, xii, 21; \textit{Conf.}, IV, 1, 1. See also De Duabus Animabus, 9, 11 and De Dono Perseverantiae 20, 53.
The same end is of course equally well served by the successful conversions which Augustine was able to make for the Manichees — of whom we know the following: Romanianus, his wealthy patron from Thagaste (Contra Academicos, I, 2), and his three contemporaries, Alypius (Conf., VI, vii, 12), Honoratus (De Utilitate Credendi, I, 2) and the young friend of Conf., III, iv, 7 whose name we do not know.

The inability to reconcile the contradictions of Scripture which Augustine found in those Catholics with whom he disputed is not in any essential sense a function of their particular philosophical incompetence — as for example P. Courcelle suggests in the following passage from Recherches, p. 67 "Il se sentit bientôt retenu au sein de la secte par une intimité croissante, et la bienveillance qu'on lui témoignait. Mais surtout il se grisa des succès qu'au service de cette secte, il emporta très souvent lui-même contre des catholiques qui affrontaient imprudemment un si habile adversaire, déjà cultivé et brillant causeur."

Such a philosophical sophistication is altogether accidental because Christianity is not a gnosis and does not depend initially on the understanding but rather on a faith in the saving work of Christ beside which the
immediate resolution of such apparent contradictions is of no importance. Augustine has already put this position very plainly in the first chapter in which he commences the 'confession' of his past life. See Conf. I, vi, 10 where, having stated the (difficult) position that all times are present in God at once, he says: "Quid ad me, et quid non intelligat? gaudet et ipse duces: gaudet et hor? gaudet oriens ut et aetem non inventendo inventire potius quam inventendo non inventire te."

It is of course also accidental that the Christians with whom Augustine was then acquainted may have lacked a philosophical culture for the Church did contain within itself men such as Ambrose who was later to explain just these things to Augustine. However, as we will show below, the problem lies rather with Augustine than with the Catholic apologists, for at the time he was unable to appreciate their answers.

87. Augustine presents this Catholic position as against the Manichees, especially in the De Vera Religione, De Utilitate Credendi and De Fide Rerum quae Non Videntur. For a preliminary statement of what Augustine understands by seeing the Truth "face to face" see above n.56.

88. See H.-Ch. Puech's statement of the essential gnosticism of the Manichees in Le Manicheisme, p.72, "... la gnose est en meme temps theologie et cosmologie. Elie
se déploie en une science universelle des choses divines, célestes, terrestres et infernales, où tout - les réalités transcendantes aussi bien que les phénomènes physiques et les événements historiques - trouve sa place et son explication. Nulle part cette prétention à dispenser un savoir encyclopédique n'est plus accentuée que dans le Manichéisme; nulle part le caractère intellectuel, rationnel même du Salut lié à ce Savoir n'est plus marqué qu'ici. La science du Paraclet est totale; elle s'impose à l'intelligence avec une certitude supérieure à la foi."

In response to just such demands as Augustine made, men have produced and continue to produce many a gnostic-cism apart from that of the followers of Mani. Augustine's argument applies of course to each and every manifestation of such a doctrine.

89. *Conf.*, III, vi, 10 "Ite quo incidit in homines superbo delirantes, carnales nimirum et loquaces ..." See also above, n. 74.

90. This is the sense of the image of the harlot who seduces foolish men, which image Augustine takes from Proverbs and uses at this point. See *Conf.*, III, vi, 11 "Offendi illum mulierem audacem, inopem prudentiam, aenigma Salomonis, sedentem super sellam in foribus et
Here the Manichees are likened to a harlot who seduces men to take her wares - the touch of flesh ("stolen water is sweet and bread eaten in secret is pleasant" Pr.9:17. "A popular proverb applied to adultery". R.S.V. annotated edition, ed. H.G. May and B.M. Metzger, 1962) - for the real food or friendship which Wisdom offers (see Pr.9:1-6). In Augustine's imagery the soul commits adultery, fornicatio abs te, when it turns from God and seeks him in his works: in short, when it seeks the Truth in corporeal nature. See Conf., I,xii.

21 "Amicitia enim mundi huius fornicatio est abs te ..."; Conf., II,vi,14 "Ita fornicatur anima, cum avertitur abs te et quaerit extra te ea quae pura et liquida non inventit, nisi cum redit ad tc." See also Conf., V,xii,22.

91. Conf., III,vi,11 "... cum te non secundum intellectum mentis, quo me praestare voluisti belvis, sed secundum sensum carnis quaererem."

92. See Sermo LI,4,5, quoted above n.56, where Augustine likens himself to a young bird who, because it can in principle fly, demands that it actually fly at once and as a result of this proud foolishness falls from the nest into mortal peril in making the attempt.
93. This is the reason why Augustine could not understand the Scriptures (Conf., III,v,9) and was forced to reject them. For, because he had determined that the Truth must be grasped immediately and directly, he was bound to the literal sense of the word and from this point of view the Scriptures are indeed altogether contradictory.

94. Conf., III,x,18 "Hec ego usque incideram illos sanctos corvoe et propheras tuos. ci quid agobam, cum incideram cor, nisi ut incideror abs le sensim atque paulatim perductus ad cos nugas, ut ecederem flere plorare, cum decerpitur, et matrem eius eboram lacrimis laeteis? quam tamen flere si conexisse aliquis sanctus aliquo sanc, non suo coelere descopiam, miscoret visceraibus et anhelaret de illa angelos, immo vero particulas dei gemendo in oratione atque ructando: quae particulas summi et veri dei ligatae fuissent in illo pomo, nisi electi sancti dente ac ventro solverentur." See also Conf., IV,1,1. On this doctrine of the Manichees see BA 13, p.397, n.2. See also Conf., III,vi,10-11 where Augustine says that while he sought for the Truth and the Manichees shouted "Truth, Truth" on every side, they actually served him up, not even the sun and the moon but only phantasies based on these corporeal bodies.
See also Solignac's note in BA 13, "Notes Complémentaires", #10, p.674, "La doctrine manichéenne du 'cuneus'", which comments on this text and refers to a very explicit statement of the Manichaean position in Augustine's C. Epist. Fund., XXI,23.

96. Augustine explains the view which he shared with the Manichees concerning the substantiality of evil in Conf., IV,xv,24 and Conf., V,x,20. P. Courcelle in Recherches, p. 65, notes the following incident. "Il se sentait, en particulier, incapable d'expliquer l'origine du mal, si l'on adoptait le système moniste des catholiques; comme il rapportait à l'évocé manichéen chargé de son instruction la thèse d'un catholique, selon lequel le mal n'est pas une substance, l'autre retorqua par un argument - massue, bien propret à frapper le jeune homme: 'je voudrais mettre un scorpion dans sa main et voir s'il ne la retirerait pas; s'il la retire, il sera convaincu par le fait, non par mes discours, que le mal est une substance.'" The quote from Augustine is translated from De Moribus Manichacorum, VIII,ii. The Manichaean attribution of the evil in the human condition to the presence in man of certain particles of the substance of evil removes it entirely from the province of human responsibility. As Augustine notes
further on in the *Confessions*, this teaching corresponds exactly with his own proud and inflated view of himself. See *Conf.*, V,x,18. "Adhuc enim nihil velitter qui esset cum alibi in sacrisesse naturam et debellabat superbiam inessent extra culpam esse et, cum aliquid malit essisset, non conferret me fecisse, ut eamque animam meam, quantum pessabit tibi, non excusaret me ambum et accusaret nescio quid alium, aci mecum esset et ego non esset."

97. The varying degree or proportion of good and evil in particular men accounts for the various degrees or levels in the Manichaean hierarchy. For a brief statement of this hierarchy see BA 13, p. 339,n.1. As the relative proportions of good and evil are not simply a natural distinction but may be altered by the degree to which one is a pious Manichee and avails oneself of the purifications which they offer we have here the basis of the universal appeal of the sect.

98. M. Pellegrino in *Les Confessions*, p. 99, gives the following summary of the principle doctrines of Manichaeism. "Philosophiquement, le manichéisme peut se réduire à ces idées fondamentales: 1) tout est corporel; 2) le bien et le mal sont deux réalités positives opposées;
3) il y'a deux principes suprêmes indépendants l'un de l'autre; celui du bien et celui du mal; 4) il comporte implicitement un immanentisme, un panthéisme, car les choses bonnes ne sont pas distinctes du principe bon qui, eu se répandant partout, donne lieu à celles-ci; il en ira de façon analogue pour les choses mauvaises.

99. Conf., III, vi.10 "... Libr's multis in ignotibus."

100. Particularly fantastic are the Manichaean notions concerning 1) the particles of God trapped in the matter of vegetables and fruits and liberated by the elect through their digestive processes, (Conf., III, x.18, quoted above, n.94) 2) the five elements and the corresponding five dens of darkness, the intra tenebrarum (Conf., III, vi.11) which play a role in the emanation of the world from the two principles of light and dark and 3) their astrological doctrines concerning the divinity of visible light and the conception of the sun and moon as the ships by which the souls of the elect are transported to the Kingdom of God. Amongst the doctrines which the Manichees share with other gnosticism of the time are the rejection of the Old Testament and Genesis in particular, as being too carnal in its teaching that God created matter, the
interpretation of the Incarnation according to which Christ has only the appearance of a body (Augustine describes the Manichaean Christology in *Conf.*, V.ix,16 and *Conf.*, V.x,29. Solignac provides a brief statement of the Manichaean Christology in his note in *BA* 13, 'Notes Complémentaires', #19, pp 674-676. See also in the same volume the references given on p. 493,n.1), and their absolute condemnation of procreation. Augustine describes these various Manichaean doctrines in the *Liber de Haerisibus*, ch. 46.


102. *Conf.*, III,vi,11 "... cum te non secundum intellectum mentis, quo me praestare voluisti belvies, sed secundum sensum carnis quaererer."

103. See for example the Catholic apologist Elpidius, mentioned in *Conf.*, V,x,21.

104. Augustine has already alluded to this growth into knowledge which catholicism promises to those who begin in faith in *Conf.*, III,v,9 when he says "*Verum tamen illa* (Scripture) *erat, quae cresceret cum parvulis, ..."

105. See *Conf.*, III,vii,12.
106. As Augustine explains in Conf., III, vi, 10-11 and again in Conf., IV, xv, 26, the Manichaean cosmology spoke of certain bodies, quaedam ex infinita, than those which are seen by the eye. His criticism is that they are simply imaginary extrapolations of corporeal bodies, phantastic corpora, raised by the mind to an infinite degree: this is just what he says in Conf., IV, xv, 26 "... ambulabat in eo, quae non sunt necque in te necque in me necque in corpore necque ibi; ambulantque a vanitate tua, sed a rea vanitate fingi ambulant ex corpore, ..." As such they are less real than: -1) the images of real bodies; -2) bodies themselves; -3) the soul or life of bodies and; -4) the life of lives. See Conf., III, vi, 10 "ut in, ame mou, in quod deplor, ut fortis sit, nec sita corpora es, quae videmus quamquam in oculo, nec ea, quae non videmus ibi, quia in ista considdisti nec in summis tuis conditionibus habes. quanta ergo longe es a phantasmatis illis meis, phantasmatis corporum, quae omnino non sunt! quibus certiores sunt phantastic corporum corum, quae sunt, et eis certiora corpora, quae tamem non es. sed neo anima es; quae vita est corporum - ideo melior vita corporum certioraque quam corpora - sed tu vita est animarum, vita vitarum, vivens te ipsa et non mutaris, vita animae meae."
Without involving ourselves in the question as to whether Augustine had read Plato's *Republic*, readers of this work will recognize that, in the passage above, Augustine has come to the same divisions of knowledge as does Plato in the celebrated images of the sun, the line and the cave: (*Republic* 507a-521d). See also *Conf.*, IV, xvi,30 where Augustine uses an imagery parallel to Plato's image of the cave: (see below *Comm.Conf.*, IV, n.100).

107. In *De Utilitate Credendi* I,2 Augustine gives this inability of the Manichees to prove their own positions as the reason why he remained as an Auditor amongst the Manichees and did not aspire to the status of Elect. "Sed quae rursum ratio revocabat, no ápud nos venitus haecere, ut me in illo gradu quem vocavi Auditorum, tenere, ut huius mundi spem atque negotia non dimitterem; nisi quod ipse quoque animadvertebam plus in refolendis allis discretos et copiosis esse, quam in suis probandis firmos et certos manere?" This passage follows the one we have quoted above, n.78; and the sense of the *rursus* in this text is that while on the one hand Augustine fell in with the Manichees because they promised to teach him the Truth immediately, on the other hand (*rursus*), until such time as he actually knew it he was not prepared to
join them altogether, especially since the status of 'Elect' would require that he give up his ambitions in the world. For the reasons we have indicated this promise of the Manichees cannot possibly be realized.

We have here also the explanation of the secrecy in which the Manichees answered the objections of Catholics, for their 'reasons' can in no way stand up to an open, rational inquiry. Augustine describes an instance of the inability and unwillingness of the Manichees to answer openly (palam) the objections of the Catholic apologist Elpidius in Conf., V,xi,21.

108. See A. Solignac's description in BA 13, 'Introduction', p. 125. "Précisons toutefois qu'il ne s'agit pas là d'une science rationnelle en ce sens que chaque affirmation serait rigoureusement démontrée, mais bien d'une connaissance supérieure, d'une intelligence où chacun des éléments est compris dans sa cohésion avec le tout. Une tel doctrine ne peut qu'être absolue en son dogmatisme: elle élimine toute critique, car, ou bien on la 'comprehend' et aucun problème ne se pose plus, ou bien on ne la 'comprehend' pas et tout l'édifice s'écroule à la fois. Aussi, du côté du néophyte, elle exige, sinon la foi du moins un crédit préalable inconditionné; du cote du prédicant, elle permet une assurance dogmatique et une prétension de savoir.
susceptibles d'impressionner les simples et les gens cultivés."

Note also as Augustine puts it in the passage we have quoted above (n. 78) from De Utilitate Credendi I, 2, that the Manichees propose a salvation whose economy is precisely the inverse of Catholicism. As Catholicism moves from faith to understanding, so do the Manichees start from a seeming knowledge and end up in crèdulous belief. In the sequel Augustine’s preferred term for the relation of the Manichee to the doctrines of the sect is "țiubeo", that is, he does not accept the doctrines because he sees their reason but because he is ordered to believe. See for example the "...phantasma in quod operare tuebatur" in Conf., IV, iv,9 and the "... credere tueban..." of Conf., V, iii, 6. See also the "... creanda imperar..." of Conf., VI, v, 7.

In Conf., VI, v, 7 Augustine shows that in time he came to see as more reasonable the position of the Catholics which frankly command belief (tıubeo) because it was neither possible nor desirable to show the reason of all things, as the Manichees promised.

109. Conf., III, x, 18. "... sensim atque paulatim perductus ad eas nugas, ut crederem sicum plorare, cum decerpitur ..."

In the De Beata Vita, I, 4 Augustine allows that although he found certain of the Manichee teachings immediately incredible, nevertheless he continued with them in the
hope and belief that these teachings contained 'great' things which they would in time reveal to him. "Non assentiebam, sed pataham, nec magnum aliquis corpore illis exstatiis, quae essent aliquando iporturi." Note however that this is not a case of the Catholic position, "faith seeking understanding". Here, Augustine's belief is not understood as a function of his immediate inability to grasp the Truth nor is it moved by a humble desire to serve the Truth but rather it is known as a function of the Manichees present unwillingness to reveal the true meaning of their doctrines. This constitutes an evidence of the very power amongst men which Augustine hopes to derive from such knowledge, if and when they let him into the secret. M. Pellegrino in Les Confessions, pp 110-112 finds in this passage from De Beata Vita (1,4) an evidence that Augustine was only lukewarm in his adherence to the Manichees. According to our view this text is rather a testimony of his complete confidence in the Manichees and in this we agree altogether with the position that Decret brings against Pellegrino in Aspects, p.33.

110. We can now see why Augustine prefers the fables of the poets whom he has already criticized in this book (Conf., III,11,2-4), to the totally vain and fantastic imaginings of the Manichaean cosmology. The former he
knew to be fictional (images), whereas the latter fictions
(images), he believed to be real. Conf., III, vii, 11

"Quantum enim meliores grammaticorum et poetarum fidem
quae illa desiderabat, vel versus et carmen et Medea vel Dea
... quae omnino nulla sunt vs
... quae officium carmen etiam ad vera
pulmenta transferam, quoniam autem Medeae etiam cantabam,
non recedebam, etiam cantari audiebam, non recedebam: illa
autem credidi."

111. Conf., III, vii, 12 "... recedens a veritate ire in
... 'hic vicarius...'"

112. As we can see from his introduction to these two
episodes, Augustine regards them as instances of divine
mercy by which he was, in part, led out of his error.

Conf., III, xi, 19 "Et misisti manum tuam ex alto et de hae
prospectu oculique orasti animam meam, ..."

O'Connell in Saint Augustine's Confessions, p. 53

has noticed the 'happy' ending of this third book. "Whereas
each of the preceding books has ended with a description
of the 'fall', the Third Book terminates on a different
note entirely, with two consoling and encouraging
'admonitions' to Monica, and, indirectly to Augustine
himself."

113. Conf., III,x,19 "Vidit enim se stanton in quaedam regula liquida ..." Compare with Conf., VIII,xii,30 "... stante in ea regula sise ..."

114. O'Connell, in Confessions, p. 53 in a likely interpretation, takes this glorious young man to be Christ.

115. Conf., III,x,19.

116. Conf., III,x,20 "Confiteor tibi, domine, recordationem meam, quantum posse volui, amplius me isto per ramen vigilanter responso tuó, quod tam vicina interpretatione salutate turbata non esset tam oitum vidit quod videndum fuit quod ego vere, antequam dixisset, non videram eiam tum falsae cœnémium quam ipse somnie, ..."

117. Conf., III,x,19 "Nam unius illius somni, quo eam consolatus es, ut vivere meum oedere et habere meum cœdon mecum in domo, quod nolite occiderat aversans et detestans blasphemias eronis mei."

118. Conf., III,x,20 "... cum tamen illa vidua casta, pia et sobria, quales amas, iam quidem spe alacrior, sed fletu et gemitu non sequior, non desineret horis omnibus orationum suarum de me plangere ad te ..."
119. Although Augustine eventually left Monica, (Conf. V, viii, 15), he continued for the time being to live with her.

120. Conf., III, x, 18 "Hanc ego vos deditam illos amator servos et prophetas Iuos."

121. See above pp. 120 - 121.

122. Augustine dwells at length on this matter in connexion with the death of his young friend which he discusses in the following book (Book IV).

123. Conf., III, xii, 21 "Quam eum illa foma rogasset, ut dignaretur mecum conloqui et refellere errores meos et dedere me mala ac deare bona - faciebat enim hoc, quae forte idoneus invenisset - ..."

124. Conf., III, xii, 21 "Respondit enim me adhuc esse indolemen, eo quod inflatus esset novitate haeresis illius et nonnullis questionibus iam multos ingentis exagitasse, sit num illa indicaverat ei. 'sed' inquit 'sine illum ibi. totum rogavit pro eo dominum: ipse legendo perpessit, quae ille eit error et quanti inpietas.'"

125. Conf., III, xii, 21 "Simul etiam narravit se quoque
126. **Conf.**, III, xii, 21  "Quae cum ille dixerat atque illa voleret aquisse corde, sed instaret magis opprimeundo et acerim flendo, ut me videret et mecum discoperet ...

127. **Conf.**, III, xii, 21  "... ille in subscionem inaelio: 'nudo' inquit a me: ita viras, fieri non potest, ut filius istarum laevisimorum peerat ...

128. **Conf.**, III, xii, 21  "Quod illa lea se accerisse inter senloquia sua mecum saepe recordabatur, ac si de caelo sonuisset."

129. **Conf.**, III, xii, 21  "... noluit ille, prulenter sane, quantum sensi postea."

130. **Conf.**, III, vii, 12  "... et recensens a veritate ire in eam' mini vidicobar ..."  See also **Conf.**, III, xi, 20

"Nam novem ferme anni sequi sunt, quibus ego in illo limo profundi ac tenebris falsitatis, cum saepe surgere conarer et gravius alliderer, volutatus sum, ..."
131. Monica seems frequently to have recognized such signs in her 'visions'. In Conf., V, lx, 17 Augustine mentions that he has recorded some in his Confessions, and others he has not set down. (See for example Conf., VI, i, 1). Augustine speaks of these visions in Conf., VI, xiii, 23, where he says that Monica herself claimed to be able to distinguish between divine revelations and mere dreams although she did not know how this was done. Augustine himself does not venture to explain this business but merely records his mother's testimony.

The point to note about these signs is that although Monica does not in any way know if her belief in the visions is justified, they are not simply subjective fantasies on her part since they require, in the most objective and concrete sense, to be worked out in pain and suffering through her humble and patient service. In this they are altogether distinguished from Augustine's purely subjective fancies which require no activity on his part - of which he has already spoken in connection with the theatre in Conf., III, xi, 2-4.

132. As we have seen, Augustine testifies over and again to his scorn of the Catholics during his Manichaean period and this general scorn made no exception for Monica. A
particular instance of the deceit with which he used his mother is found in the scurvy way in which he ran away to Rome: see Conf., V,viii,15.

133. See Conf., III,x1,20.

134. See Conf., IX,viii,17 "Sed non praetoribo quidquid nihii unum parvumit de illa famula tua, quae me parvumit et carm, ut in hanc temporalem, et corde, ut in aeternam lucem nascere". See also Conf., V,vii,13 and Conf., V,ix,16.
CHAPTER FOUR

COMMENTARY ON THE FOURTH BOOK OF AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS

III. The fault of adolescence. Continued from Book III.

In this book which covers the nine year period
from his nineteenth to his twenty-eighth year, Augustine
discusses the kind of life he led as a result of his fall
into Manichaeism, as, in the first three chapters of the
third book he showed the kind of life he led as a result
of the theft of pears and before he came to the idea of
Wisdom. In the fifth book he treats of the moments by
which he came to abandon the Manichees and their teachings.

Since we have already discovered the reasons for his
fall we have now to determine the consequences which such
a position necessarily entails. Because he has identified
the Truth with corporeal bodies, or more precisely with
the imaginary and fantastic extrapolations of corporeal
bodies such as the Manichees taught, Augustine says, in
the introductory chapter (Conf., IV,i,1), that, during
this time with his Manichaean companions he both seduced
others and was seduced (se-duco, to lead away [from the
Truth], deceiving and deceived in all his various activities. Such a remark is made from a position which has already discovered and knows that the Truth is not to be found in the sensible nature of the universe and this Augustine has yet to show in the course of his argument. But, while in this and in other such statements, Augustine gives notice to his readers that his argument is moving in just this direction, he does not in any way presume the conclusion before he has arrived at it. We ought not therefore to assent to this teaching prematurely lest we altogether lose the sense of this fourth book. So far, all that has been established is that, during these years, Augustine did identify the Truth with corporeal bodies and in this book he is simply concerned to show the consequences that actually resulted and must necessarily result from any dualistic position.

Now the primary inadequacy of such a position and the one which this book is mainly concerned to show is the discrepancy which appears between theory and practice, between what the Manichees propose and what actually results from their position. Augustine points to this division in the first chapter of the book when he distinguishes between those activities which he did openly in public (pāλαμ), by which he intends various 'worldly' pursuits
and those that he did privately in secret உரைந்து, in the name of the Manichee religion⁴ and by means of which he sought to be liberated from the former.⁵

If we recall Augustine's account of the Hortensius episode from the third book where he has told us that, having come to the idea of Wisdom, he immediately despised all his former aims and ambitions,⁶ both he and we are faced with a serious question as to why he found himself very much embroiled in just these activities which he despised in spite of the fact that he then thought he had found the Truth in the Manichaean doctrines. We do not have far to look for an answer. For while on the one hand he has been led to love, follow and honour Wisdom above all else⁷ and thus to scorn his worldly aims and ambitions (popular glory, the applause of an audience, prizes for eloquence, empty spectacles and unrestrained lusts),⁸ on the other hand the form in which he believes he has found Wisdom and Truth — in the Manichaean religion — makes it altogether impossible to do this.

There are many ways in which this consequence of the Manichaean position can be stated but ultimately it derives from the fact that they find the Truth in the sensible nature of the universe and consequently divide the universe itself into two substances, good and evil.
And likewise, the soul of man is divided into two souls, a
good soul from God and an evil soul from the Prince of Dark-
ness. Thus, while a man may seek to be liberated from his
evil soul by 'doing the Truth', precisely because this takes
the form of negating the evil soul and its activities, this
latter is perpetually presupposed as the very condition of
'doing the Truth' and thus cannot be overcome. In
short, in the Manichaean religion, Augustine holds the Truth
in a form in which it cannot be grasped or done. And thus
the distinction which he brings to our attention between
those things done openly and in public (publicam), which from
a Manichaean position belong to the promptings of his evil
soul, and those things done privately in secret (occulte),
in the name of the Manichaean religion, which belong to the
activities of his good soul and by means of which, as he
says, he sought to be liberated from the former. However,
as these activities depend in every instant on the same
evil soul from which he aims to be liberated, while on the
one hand he cannot accept the workings of his evil soul
nor on the other hand can he escape from them. In this
fourth book Augustine examines the consequences of this
contradiction as they manifest themselves in the course of
his life.

If we recall the passage from Conf., III, iv, 8 where
Augustine speaks of the things he was positively moved
to do as a result of having come to the idea of Wisdom through reading Cicero's Hortensius (as distinguished from those things which he rejected on the basis of this notion), we will remember that he used five verbs to characterize the task that lay before him: "... ut diligere, quaere, asequere et teneere atque ampliare fortiter...". In the commentary on the third book we made the following observation: "The five verbs of the ut clause are clearly chosen (probably from the 'Invitation to Wisdom' in Proverbs 1:1 - 9:18), and ordered to suggest those moments which together comprise the beginning (diligere), middle (asequere) and end (ampliare) of the movement to Wisdom, as well as the connecting terms which join these moments (quaere and teneo)."

We are now in a position to give this more precision and to suggest the proper sense of these verbs. From Hortensius Augustine conceived a love (diligere) of Wisdom in the sense that it was 'valued or highly esteemed' above all else and as we have seen he immediately began to search for it (quaereo), first in the Scriptures which he rejected and then in the Manichaean teachings in which he believed he had found it. However, as we have indicated, in this fourth book he shows us the inadequacy of this position which primarily derives from the fact that, in this form, Wisdom cannot be 'followed in order to come up to it'
(adseguor), and it is in this sense that we say, Augustine holds the Truth in a form in which it cannot be grasped or done. In this and the following books Augustine will show us how he became sensible of this inadequacy, by which he was eventually moved to seek again for the Truth in a form in which it could actually be pursued (adseguor), and this he achieves in the vision described in Book VII, (ix,13 - xvii,23). However, even there he discovers that he can neither hold to the Truth (teneo) nor realize the end of this entire movement (amplexor). For reasons which only become apparent when Augustine explains these difficulties in the seventh and eighth and ninth books, the proper meaning of the final verb amplexor is, once again, 'to love' but now, (unlike the initial diligo), in the sense of honouring - that is, to love a thing for its own virtue rather than loving it for its value to the one who loves. We shall not try to demonstrate the later moments of this thesis until they appear in the course of the Confessions but for the time being this statement may be left to stand as an indication of the direction in which Augustine's argument is moving.

There is one final matter in this introductory chapter that requires an explanation. For in it we find the curious phrase, "Et quis homo est quilibet homo, cum sit homo?" (Conf., IV,i,1). "And what man is any kind of
man while he is a man? 16 Augustine comes to this in the following way. Having indicated the (ridiculous) contradiction into which he fell through his superstitious 17 belief in the Manichee's teachings, he notes that some of his readers may be prompted to laugh at his foolishness in this business. 18 However, as he points out, such mockery is altogether misguided since it presumes that the one who laughs both knows of and is free from such contradictions. But this opinion can only arise from a proud and arrogant spirit which presumes that the Truth is an instrument in its possession to be used for the aggrandizement of its possessor and this view itself is a contradiction and indeed the root of all such contradictions. For however free a man may be from this or that particular contradiction and however truly he may know the Truth - as Augustine will show in the seventh book - the mere knowledge or vision of the Truth is not in itself an adequate cause for this presumption since such Wisdom does not give its possessor the power to hold to the Truth (teneo) or make it his home but that rather, by this knowledge, he is altogether separated from the Truth which he knows. 19

Now such knowledge a man can acquire by the exercise of his own natural powers, by the exercise of his reason - but to move beyond this condition he depends altogether on the redemptive work of God in Christ which can only
be appropriated in faith. In due course Augustine will explain the logic of this argument but, having said this much, we propose the following sense for this difficult sentence. "What man, even if he does know the Truth, may on this account presume to laugh at another, while he (who laughs) is merely a 'natural' man?" (i.e., while he can see the goal but cannot see the road by which he may come to it - as opposed to the 'spiritual' man, the Christian, who through faith, has been reborn and actually holds to (hence), the road which leads to the Truth.)

This passage raises a question which may already have arisen in the minds of certain readers of the Confessions concerning Augustine's treatment of laughter. From the very beginning (in Conf., I, vi, 7), he frequently speaks of the laughter of man, as a kind of obstacle in the face of which he makes his confession. Without attempting to prove the thesis here, either with regard to Augustine in particular or to the Ancient World in general, we nevertheless suggest that his treatment of such laughter arises from the following consideration.

From the standpoint of the Ancient World (that is, the world in which the Christian gospel has not been received), man's good lies in the recognition of the Wisdom which governs the universe and consequently evil for man lies
in his ignorance - in the failure to recognize the objective divine order by which the universe is actually governed. To those then who have seen the Truth and who know it in such a way that they cannot be mistaken (the position which Augustine later arrives at and which he describes in Book VII), the condition of the rest of mankind is simply and properly speaking laughable. For, those who do not see the Truth are quite literally foolish - scurrying about in the vain imagination that they know the Truth and that by their activities they help or hinder its course - while all the time, as the others plainly see, they are actually being swept along on the majestic and inexorable current of the Truth itself, of which the first sort are altogether ignorant.

From the standpoint of just such a view as this, laughter is indeed divine and the perogative of God and those who are truly wise. And inversely, the condition of being laughable is, so far as his spiritual life is concerned, the worst thing that can happen to a man.

However, as we have just indicated, Augustine was to discover that the mere knowledge or vision of the Truth was not in itself an adequate cause for laughter since, however unmistakable the vision might be, such Wisdom did
not give its possessor the power to hold to the Truth or make it his home but that rather, by this knowledge, he is indeed altogether separated from the Truth. It is then from a Christian perspective in which this difficulty has been recognized and overcome that Augustine both anticipates and denies the ultimate propriety of such laughter at the points in his confession where it would be generated amongst those pagan readers who have actually come to the vision of Wisdom. And thus from this Christian viewpoint, such laughter, far from being divine is rather daemonic and the man who prides himself on his knowledge of the Truth, on his greatness, and presumes to laugh at another on this account has merely made himself the subject of the pleasure and derision of devils. For it is precisely by this presumption that he strays from the Truth imagining all the while that he is going towards it.

We have now to examine the particular activities into which Augustine was driven by his attachment to the Manichees. And here, as ever, he is concerned to treat of the universal significance of these events for he aims to show us how the kind of activities which he then did and the difficulties which he suffered are but a particular instance of the necessary consequences that must come to everyone who places his confidence in any dualistic
understanding of the universe such as the Manichees taught; any position, that is, which proposes to teach man, immediately and directly, an altogether certain knowledge of the Truth and which as a result is bound to find the truth in certain moments of the sensible nature of the universe. 27

In the realm of practical activities, the Manichees proposed to free man from the workings of his evil soul by which he is enmeshed in the world, through the application of their doctrine of the three 'seals'. 28 These are, the seal of the mouth, which forbade apostasy from the sect, lying, perjury, oaths and blasphemy, by which means the evil soul works against the truth. This seal also included the many peculiar dietary restrictions of the sect. 29

The seal of the bosom aimed at preventing the propagation of evil through reproduction, for this causes a further quantity of God to become imprisoned in the domain of darkness (matter). Total chastity is the ideal but from this point of view the simple gratification of sexual desire with a concubine was far less heinous than a marriage contracted for the purpose of getting children. And finally, the seal of the hand aimed at preventing harm to any of the particles of divinity already entrapped in matter and took the form of forbidding homicide and the killing of animals or plants 30 or in general any disturbance of nature.
since all things in the world contain some portion of divinity or of the substance of God.31

Augustine begins his recollection of the events of these years with what is surely a reference to this doctrine of the three seals. For he begins in Conf., IV,ii, 2-3 by noting that he was deeply involved in various worldly activities of which he distinguishes three main kinds: 1) the love of money - or more generally, power32 - which he acquired by the practice and sale of rhetoric; 11) the love of the flesh which he satisfied with his mistress; and iii) the love of glory which he sought by entering into poetic competitions.33 However, at the same time he also tells us of the steps which he took as a believing Manichee - to the degree that befitted an Auditor in the sect34 - to purify himself from this attachment to the world.

Thus, he tells us that while on the one hand he sought wealth or power from his teaching, on the other hand, in accordance with his faith in the Manichee's doctrines, he applied as it were the seal of the mouth to his teaching, which meant that he did not seek after power or money by the sale of eloquence in an altogether unscrupulous manner. For he did not sell it with the intention that it be used in a totally unprincipled fashion, to slay the innocent, but only that it might be used to free the guilty and to
this end he desired only like-minded students.  

Similarly, while he desired and enjoyed the pleasures of sex, he also thought to purify himself from them by adhering to the restrictions of the seal of the bosom which meant that while he should neither fornicate at random or indiscriminately (on account of the danger of begetting many children), neither would he enter into a lawful marriage for the purpose of begetting children.  

And finally, he recalls an instance in which he sought after worldly glory by entering a contest for theatrical poetry. But here also he remained faithful to the Manichaean doctrine, this time to the seal of the hand. For he tells us that he rejected the advances of a soothsayer (haruspex), who promised him victory, preferring to lose the competition rather than win at the cost of the death of an animal such as the soothsayer would have sacrificed on his behalf.  

Now while these restrictions which Augustine placed on his activities - in conformity with his belief in the Manichee's teachings - may actually have resulted in some good when considered in the light of the Truth such good as they do produce is an altogether accidental consequence from the side of the doer and for this reason Augustine does not fail to criticize his intention in these
activities.

In the first chapter of this book Augustine has already shown us the contradiction that is found in all such behavior which derives from the assumption that the Truth can be grasped immediately and directly and which must in consequence find its in certain aspects and actions in the sensible world — while other moments which can neither be rationally distinguished from the former nor in any way avoided, are nevertheless regarded as evil. And because there is no rational principle of this division of the unity of the sensible world into these good and evil sections, such a division is and can only be, altogether arbitrary. Thus, while in adhering to the three seals of the Manichaean morality, Augustine may actually have done the good, from his side this is quite accidental since he neither knows the Truth nor believes in it but only imagines that he knows it and on this account, at the time of writing the Confessions, he judges that in all these actions he erred.

We can grasp something of the intense self-righteousness and indignation which is generated by such a position as Augustine then held from the incident with the soothsayer where the haughty pride and the scorn with which Augustine rejected his advances come through very clearly. And yet, because all the while such actions derive from his belief in
this fictitious division of the sensible world into good and evil, Augustine accuses himself of fornicating away from God and playing shepherd to the winds - i.e., seeking and desiring the creature rather than its principle and engaging in an altogether vain and foolish activity. For, as he says, while he proudly refused to have the soothsayer sacrifice to devils on his behalf, he nevertheless offered himself as a sacrifice to the devils precisely by ignoring the Truth and acting in this way, solely in accordance with the vain imagination of his heart.\(^{39}\)

In the remainder of the fourth book, Augustine examines in closer detail the kind of difficulties he suffered as a result of the contradiction of the Manichee's position as they appeared in each of these three areas of his activity - that is, in relation to his pursuit of worldly power (in Conf., IV, iv, 7-9, in the business of the astrologers); of love (in Conf., IV, v, 10 - IV, xiii, 20, in the matter of the death of his friend); and of glory (in Conf., IV, xiv, 21 - IV, xvi, 31, in relation to his writing and studies). We shall briefly look at each of these.

1). The pursuit of worldly power. If, on the one hand, Augustine would not employ the services of a soothsayer because such men sacrificed animals and prayed to dark spirits against the tenets of the Manichaean morality, on
the other hand, just because he was determined to grasp the Truth immediately and directly and so was bound to find it in the sensible nature of the universe, he tells us in Conf., IV, 111, 4 that he therefore (sic quoque), did not forbear to consult with the astrologers to guide him to a successful outcome of his worldly activities. That is, with men who pretended to predict the future on the basis of mathematical calculations derived from the position of the stars and planets at the time of a man's birth. And this he did at this time and also no doubt for many years, against the kindly advice of the proconsul Vindicianus and the scorn of his friend Nebridius.

Now the reason why Augustine was susceptible to the claims of the astrologers and proof against the arguments of Vindicianus and Nebridius is precisely because such claims cannot be ignored nor rejected so long as any man is determined that the Truth is to be found in this way in the sensible nature of the universe and so long as he is determined that the opposition between good and evil as it appears to man must also be reflected in the principles of the universe itself. For, if the Truth is contained here, then the causes of all things are already present in nature and it is therefore possible that there should be an art or 'science' which can foretell a man's future from an understanding of the constellation
of the universe at the time of his birth (i.e., from an understanding of the position of the stars and planets which were regarded in antiquity as those natural entities that were the prime movers of all the lower orders of nature). And from this it follows that, since any success which an astrologer might have in his predictions could be regarded as a product of his art, the contrary contention that such a prediction can only be a shrewd guess which is entirely dependent on chance for its confirmation, can in no way have the force of a certain argument to a man such as Augustine then was. And in this way he delivered himself over to these vain and senseless pursuits, from which as he also points out, the cause of evil is entirely removed from man's responsibility and placed on God as the creator and ruler of the stars and planets. And this, as we can easily see, is altogether in accord with both the attraction and the conclusions of the dualism of the Manichaean position even though astrology itself does not seem to have had any formal or doctrinal status in the Manichee's teachings.

11. The pursuit of worldly love. Augustine deals with this matter in a lengthy and marvelous discussion of the great grief he suffered through the untimely death of his young Manichee friend. In a part of this discussion he aims to show how this grief is a deserved punishment and a necessary consequence of the position he then
held. For, whoever takes any part of the sensible nature of the universe as the absolute good — as Augustine makes clear that he then did in relation to his friend since, apart from his friend, nothing but tears and his own sorrow held any attraction — whoever does this is bound to suffer and to be disappointed in this way, for it is in the nature of each and every part of the sensible universe that it rise, run its course and then perish. "Miserable I then was and miserable is every soul bound fast by the love of mortal things and torn to pieces when they are lost, and then it becomes sensible of its misery, by which it is miserable even before it loses them." (IV, vi, 11). That is, while on the one hand it is by no means necessary that a man actually lose any one of these sensible goods, as did Augustine his friend; on the other hand, since they all must perish in principle, in principle the man who finds the Good in any one of them pours out his soul on the sand and his possession of the good is nothing but an illusion and an accident. It is an illusion inasmuch as the Truth of all such things is that they end and that in their end they are nothing but a dusty desert ruled by death. And the actual possession and enjoyment of any one of these goods is, from a human point of view, altogether accidental since no man knows the times of their coming into existence
or of their passing away.

And so Augustine tells us that because of the death of his friend he now saw death and darkness lurking behind the bright surface of all things and acting everywhere as the great destroyer of human aims and ambitions. In the face of this he could only groan and weep since he was now left with nothing more than his impotent indignation at a universe which would not align itself with his own particular aims and aspirations and so he took his sole pleasure in trying to negate it in this way. This is the sense of Augustine's brief meditation on the cause of his grief in Conf., IV,v,10.57

Such an interpretation is confirmed in the following chapter (Conf., IV,v,11), where Augustine reflects on the reason why he then feared his own death. He concludes that although he hated his life, he was nevertheless unwilling to die and so lived as it were simply to revenge both himself and his friend on the universe by raising his complaint against it.

"He spoke well who said of his friend: 'Thou half my soul'. For I felt my soul and his soul to have been one soul in two bodies, and so life was a horror to me because I was unwilling to live as a half. And perhaps on this account also I did not wish to die, lest he should altogether die whom I had so much loved."58 (IV,v,11).
In the Retractions, I, xxxi, Augustine finds in this last sentence the only substantial correction that he would make in the Confessions. In our view this retraction is unnecessary. It comes from the fact that a mere change in emphasis can altogether alter the sense of this passage and, at the time of writing the Retractions, Augustine must have taken it in the positive sense according to which it would mean that he did not want to die because he actually thought that if he died then his friend, whose soul he shared, would then be wholly dead: as if his purpose in living was the positive one of somehow keeping his friend alive because he really thought that his body was now the only 'home' of their single soul. And this is, as he says in the Retractions, simply "silly" (inoptia). However the passage can also bear the negative interpretation we give to it according to which it means that, while he had no thought of actually keeping his friend alive (as he clearly says in Conf., IV,v,10), he nevertheless determined to live in order that through his hatred and negation of the universe he might avenge the wrong which the universe had done to his friend - assuming that in this spirit (animus), he was wreaking on the universe the justice that the spirit of his friend would have willed. As it happens this assumption on Augustine's part is quite arbitrary since
his friend did not any more bear the same spirit with Augustine as is shown by the reaction to his unconscious, deathbed baptism which he refused to ridicule with Augustine. 61 Such an interpretation is by no means "silly" and is quite in accord with the sense of his argument to this point but neither does it appear in the text to anything but a very close reading which is perhaps less than Augustine gave it at the time of writing the Retractations.

Because these difficulties are a direct consequence of his faith in the Manichee's doctrines, he was then unable either to understand the cause of his grief or again to bear with it by placing his hope in the God of the Manichees: in the sense in which the Psalmist - whom Augustine quotes here - could always find solace in the reflection that, however much evil might seem to triumph for the moment and however much the godly suffered at the hand of the wicked, in the end the justice of Yahweh would inexorably bring to each his deserved reward. 62 Augustine describes his position with great accuracy when he says:

"All things were loathsome, even light itself,
And whatever was not what he himself was
was wicked and repulsive, except complaints
and tears: For in these alone there was some little respite."
However, when from these my soul was withdrawn, it bore me down with a huge burden of misery. To you, O Lord, it should have been lifted up to also be cured, This I knew, but I neither would nor was I able, ..." (IV, vii, 12).

Now the point of this last line is just that, while on the one hand, Augustine recognized (se lo) that there is an objective, universal Truth in terms of which his misery ought to be supportable, on the other hand as he also believed in a fantastic and imaginary Truth which was merely an instrument to serve his particular desires, he was therefore unwilling to surrender these desires to this Truth and was likewise unable to draw any comfort or cure from it. 64 However, just because he did not actually know the Truth but only imagined that he did, so was he bound to fall back on the particular. And thus, as he tells us, he was in time restored to the enjoyment of his former pleasures. 65

To this point in the argument, everything which Augustine has said in relation to the death of his friend is in complete conformity with the principles of the Ancient World. This finds its perfect expression in Conf., IV, x, 15 66 where, as we have seen, he shows that in the love of
any part of the sensible nature of the universe, a man necessarily departs from the Truth. The alternatives are perfectly clear: either, a man may love the things of this world in which case he is bound to ignore the Truth and must suffer the consequences of this declension: chief of which is the fact that his soul must be torn to pieces (conscinio), since he seeks in these things a rest and contentment which they cannot possibly give as it is in their very nature to pass away into nothing; or, he may renounce every worldly goal and by turning to the objective, universal Truth and loving it alone, find there the peace and contentment which he seeks, since it alone does not perish but abides forever. 67 Now because at this point of his life Augustine did not yet know the Truth and refused to serve any truth which did not serve his particular desires, the second alternative remained altogether closed to him and so he was torn apart by a necessity which he could not understand. However, the absolute disjunction which he presents to his readers is one that would have been readily comprehensible to the Ancient World for it represents the sum of practical wisdom where the Truth is known only in its objective, universal form — for then one must either renounce the world to love the Truth, or love the world and renounce the Truth. 68
But Augustine does not quit his discussion of the matter at this point as if this were the last word. The last word is found in the eleventh and twelfth chapters in which he begins by rebuking himself for the folly (vanitas), he has just uttered and reminding himself to listen to the Word: 70 and here he points to something which is quite beyond anything which the wisdom of the Ancient World could comprehend and in the light of which such wisdom is reduced to folly. For the moment we shall merely take note of what he says in these two chapters which have to do with the Incarnate Word, 71 since the sense of this position and the argument by which he arrives at it are not fully developed until the seventh, eighth and ninth books of the Confessions. What we find here is the teaching that it is possible to love both the Truth and the world when it is believed that in Christ the eternal Truth joined (married - nubo), himself to our flesh, overcame its mortality and carried it with him back to the place whence he came. 72 In Christ the absolute disjunction of antiquity is therefore overcome since the flesh (or particularity in general), is no longer known simply in its derivation from the Truth but also as it is held actually and immediately within it qua particular. 73 As a result it becomes possible to love the Truth and not to lose anything thereby, 74 for in
Christ the particular is itself known as the Truth where also it takes on its true form in the resurrection body. So long therefore as this is what is loved in the creature, a love of the creature now becomes possible which does not at the same time make it necessary for a man to turn away from the Truth. And as this possibility can only be realized through a faith in the Incarnate Word, it can only be grasped if a man will first "come down" (descendo), from that knowledge of the Truth which he has acquired by the exercise of his own rational powers and in terms of which he is caught within the disjunction of the world and the Truth. This then is the only 'true' love of the creature and that to which Augustine urges his readers - first, those who, like himself, ignored the Truth and were in love with the creature in its fallen, corrupt and mortal state and secondly those who, having actually seen the Truth, scorned the creature even while they prided themselves on their own wisdom.

111). The pursuit of worldly glory. In the final four chapters of this fourth book, Augustine discusses the difficulties and contradictions which he suffered during these years from his pursuit of worldly honour. The first three consist of a treatment of the particular form which this effort took immediately following the death of his
young friend through the publication of his first work, the De Pulchro et Apto and in the last he reviews the course of his studies throughout this period. As may easily be seen, this whole section revolves around a discussion of his studies and researches into the Truth— all of which he criticizes as a vain and foolish pursuit of worldly glory. The reason for this desire is by now clear; for, wherever the Truth is recognized and sought in its objective, universal form, there, true honour and glory amongst men consists precisely in a knowledge of the Truth. Thus, as Augustine makes abundantly clear, while he sought after the Truth in all these various efforts, he sought it solely for the sake of the honour and glory which such a knowledge would bring him in the society of man—and on this account also he was unable to find it.

Augustine raises both these points—in order—in his treatment of the De Pulchro et Apto. For, after a very brief description of the work in chapter xiii, he devotes a long chapter (xiv), to the apparently insignificant question of its dedication to the famous Roman orator, Hierius whom Augustine knew only by his brilliant reputation. However, the whole purpose of this chapter is precisely to show us that, on the one hand, worldly honour was just what he was seeking in this business and also, on the other
hand, the contradictions from which he suffered as a result of this position. For, imagining that he was seeking and had also in some measure found the external, unchanging Truth, he had actually delivered himself into the totally irrational and inconstant hands of human fashion and opinion - both his own\(^4\) and that of other men.\(^5\)

In chapter xv, Augustine briefly treats of the content of the *De Pulchro et Apto* to show the reason why he was unable to find the Truth in this inquiry. There have been many efforts to reconstruct the work which even Augustine himself had lost,\(^6\) and there are numerous theories to suggest its possible 'sources',\(^7\) but these questions lie beyond the scope of this inquiry. We have only to note that Augustine attributes this inability to his persistent unwillingness to conceive of a spiritual reality - arising from his determination to grasp the Truth immediately. The result, as we have seen, is that it must then be sought in the sensible and where this is the case, the obvious division of the world into the beautiful and the ugly, good and evil, can only be explained by a duality of principles - here, the 'monad' and the 'dyad'.\(^8\) Taking the monad, or unity, as the principle of goodness and virtue and identifying it with his rational mind\(^9\) - which he understood to be in conflict with the irrational dyad in his
flesh - Augustine thus falls into the arrogant and foolish contradiction that his changeable mind is identical with the eternal and changeless Truth. 90

"I was presumptuously trying to grasp you but was actually being thrust away from you so that I might know the taste of death: for you resist the proud. And what greater pride than to assert, as I did in a terrible madness, that I was by nature what you are? For whereas I was mutable - and this was manifest to me inasmuch as I desired to be wise, that out of a worse I might become better - nevertheless I preferred to suppose that you were mutable rather than to think that I was not that which you are ..." 91

(IV, xv, 26).

Now whatever may be the 'sources' of this particular treatment of the 'monad' and 'dyad', 92 the doctrine of the De Pulchro et Apto is clearly of a single piece with the Manichee's teachings with this sole difference that Augustine is no longer content simply to profess these things but now also aspired to the greater 'honour' of being their author. Otherwise, it springs from the same old determination to grasp the Truth immediately and directly for the sake of his own glory amongst men and its ends with exactly the same results which he has already shown to be the necessary consequence of this position: "... receding
from the Truth, I seemed to myself to be going towards it ..."93 (III,vii,12).

In the final chapter (xv), Augustine brings the same criticism against the spirit in which he sought after knowledge during this period through the reading of Aristotle's *Categories* which he mentions by name94 and also in his wide study of the various sciences of antiquity.95 Studies such as these were by no means required of any Manichees96 but neither were they forbidden and though Augustine was enabled to pursue them as a result of his particular and unusual ability,97 he was driven to them by the same desire for worldly glory that had moved him to join the Manichees in the first place98 - although this had now been taken to its logical conclusion inasmuch as he was beginning to strive after a wider reputation for knowledge than is possible within the narrow confines of an exclusively 'Manichaean' learning. Always however he remained bound by his own sordid ambition which tied him to the notion that, "... you Lord God, Truth, were a bright, immense body and I a piece of that body."99 (IV,xvi,31). As a result, Augustine was quite unable to understand the real source of whatsoever was true or certain in the books that he read, mistaking his own vain imaginations for the eternal Truth.100

And so Augustine concludes this book by asking what good his great ability and learning brought to him when he
only used them for his own advantage\textsuperscript{101} and in consequence remained as far from the Truth as ever, dragged down by the weight of his pride, while those humble and faithful "little ones" (parvulis), in the church who were ignorant of all this learning nevertheless stood firmly in the Truth and grew in it daily.\textsuperscript{102} However, even as he was tossed about on this bitter ocean, Augustine was later to see how all the while he was actually being led to a safe harbour.\textsuperscript{103} For, as he will show us in the next book, it was precisely through these same studies that he was eventually enabled to advance beyond the level of images and phantasy in which he had been a willing captive for nine whole years.
NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Conf., IV, i, 1 "Per idem tempus anno et non, ab
undécimo anno aetatis meae usque ad duodecimési-
mum, seducebamus et seducebamus ..." In Conf., V, iii, 3
Augustine indicates that he is there speaking of events
which took place in his twenty-ninth year.


3. Conf., IV, i, 1 "... seducebamus et seducebamus falsi
atque fallentes in varie cupiditatisibus ..."

4. M. Pellegrino in Les Confessions, p.117, takes the
sense of this occulte to refer to the fact that the Mani-
chees were proscribed by law and thus were obliged to
secrecy. "La 'séduction' n'était pas seulement celle des
extravagances manichéennes qu'Augustin répandait clandest-
ine, car la secte était condamnée par les lois, ..."
Following A. Solignac's chronology in BA, 13, pp.201-
206, Augustine became a Manichee sometime in 372/73 and
P. Courcelle in Recherches, p.71, n.5, notes that by the
law of 2 March 372, the Manichees were forbidden to hold
public assemblies - although he says that, "... cette
interdiction n'était pas respectée." Courcelle also
(Recherches, pp. 74-75), recounts an incident reported by Augustine in De Moribus Manichaeorum, XIX, 68ff., in which the Manichaean hierarchy refused to punish certain of the Elect who had been caught in flagrante delicto of certain tenets of Manichaean morality, on the grounds that they might then betray the sect, or rather their superiors in the sect, to the authorities. But from this, as Courcelle says, we can only conclude that, "... dès les dernières années de son séjour à Carthage, si des réunions avaient lieu, néanmoins les chefs de la secte craignaient les dénonciations." We know that; somewhat later, around 385 AD, the celebrated Manichaean 'bishop', Faustus, then living in Carthage, was denounced as a Manichee and exiled to an isolated island. Augustine in Contra Faustus, V, viii attributes this light sentence - which was subsequently revoked in 387 - to the intervention of the Catholics; on these dates see F. Decret, Aspects, p. 60, n.7-10.

However this may be, in the Confessions itself, Augustine gives us no indication that this official proscription and the demand for secrecy which one might presume to have arisen from it figured for him in any decisive way in the years of his Manichaean attachment. In Conf., V, x, 19, Augustine does say that "... plurès enim cos (Manichees)
"Roma occulta ...", but this does not necessarily bear even
the interpretation which Courcelle gives to it: "Tout ce
que l'on peut dire, c'est que les Manichéens de Rome se
cachaient lors du séjour d'Augustin ..." (Recherches, p.71,
n.5.). For Augustine does not say that "... many Manichees
were hiding in Rome ...", but rather that "...Rome was
hiding many Manichees ...". In any event, whatever the
view which the Manichees in general may have held about
the legal restrictions to which they were subject, Augustine
never speaks as if he regards his Manichaean activities -
either the proselytizing or the practice - as having been
significantly affected by the official proscription in the
sense that, as they could only be conducted in private,
occulta is the natural and proper term to describe them.
Rather, from the Confessions we know that Augustine did
much of his work for the Manichees quite openly. For
example, the proselytizing against the Christians in which
he was eager to display his Manichaean gnosis (Conf., III,x,
18), and as he also tells us, his Manichaean connections
assisted him considerably in his public career, especially
when he was named to the chair of rhetoric at Milan by the
Roman prefect Symmachus on the recommendation of his
(known) Manichaean friends (Conf., V,xiii,23).
Thus, while there is no doubt that the Manichees were officially proscribed, this fact alone does not adequately explain the sense of Augustine's use of \textit{occulte} in our text (Conf., IV,i,1), and thus leaves room for the wider interpretation which we give to the matter and indeed makes some such wider interpretation essential.

5. \textit{Conf.}, IV,i,1 "... seducebamur et seducebamus falsi atque fallentes in variis cupiditatis et palam per doctrinas. quas liberales vocant, occulte autem falso nomine religionis, hic superbi, ibi superstitionis, ubique vani, hoc popularis gloriae sectantes inanitatem usque ad theatricos plausus et contentiosae carmina et agonem coronarum faeneorum et spectaculorum nugas et temperantiam libidinum, illae autem purgari nos ab istis sordibus expetentes, cum eis, qui appellaretur electi et sancti, afferremus escas, de quibus nobis in officina aqualiculi sui fabricarent angelos et deos, per quos liberaremur."

6. \textit{Conf.}, III,iv,7 "Ille vero liber mutavit affectum meum et ad te ipsum, domine, mutavit presces meas et vota ac desideria mea fecit alia. voluit mihi repente omnis vana spes et immortalitatem sapientiae concupiscebam aequus cordis incredibili ..." Another account of this effect of the \textit{Hortensius} may be found in \textit{Soliloquia}, I,x,17.
7. Conf., III, iv, 8 "... hoc tamen solo delectabatur in illa exhortatione, quod non illam ad illam rectam, sed ipsam quoscumque esset sapientiam ut illigerem et quarem et consequerem et tenorem atque amplectorem positionem, oscilabar semper filio et ascendebam et ascihum, ..." For a discussion of this passage, see Comm. Conf. III, n. 59.

8. See Conf., IV, 1, 1, quoted above, n. 5. These aims and ambitions have already been discussed by Augustine in Conf., III, i, 1 - III, iii, 6.

9. Augustine specifically treats of this Manichaean doctrine in De Duabus Animabus. In the Retractations, I, xvi, 1 Augustine gives a brief account of the position that he opposes in this treatise.

10. Inasmuch as the Manichees have come to the 'idea' of the Truth they too are resolved to give up all 'worldly' aims and ambitions just as Augustine had been moved to do by the Hortensius. For a good statement of this position see Contra Faustus V, where Faustus claims to have fulfilled the demands of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount.

For an especially lucid account of Manichaean practice, see J. J. O'Meara, The Young Augustine, pp. 69-79. Here he brings out very clearly the absolute importance which the Manichaean position must give to activity, to 'doing the
Truth'. As he says for the Manichees, "The test is to do what Christ commands us to do; it is not merely to believe, but to act." (p. 75). P. Alfaric in L'Évolution, pp. 126-143 discusses the Manichaean morality in terms of the three 'seals' imposed, in differing degrees, on all Manichees. These are the seal of the mouth, of the hand and of the bosom and they aim at controlling the evil soul in each of these three areas of its activity.

11. That this is indeed the sense of those things which Augustine says he did pulam is confirmed by the words he uses to describe them. Conf., IV,i,1 "... istic sordibus expotenios ...", "... these defiling expediencies ...".

12. According to this view, occulte properly refers to the private character of the Manichaean gnosis. 'Private or secret', inasmuch as it is only the Manichees who recognize the division between the good and evil soul and who can therefore act according to the good. See also Comm. Conf. III, n.84. Augustine uses this word in the same sense in describing the evercorces (in Conf., III,iii,6), and here it is clearly not used to indicate that their activities had to be conducted in secret because proscribed by Roman law. In Conf., V,viii,14 Augustine says of his own students whom he taught in Carthage and who behaved like the evercorces that although they ought to be punished by the laws, custom protected them: "Multa iniuriosa faciunt, mira hebetudine et punienda legibus, nisi consuetudo patrona sit.
... Likewise, in relation to certain theoretical rather than practical questions, the Manichees would only—and could only—defend the gnosis that they claimed to possess, privately (coru lecte), rather than in public (palam). Augustine describes such an instance in Conf., V, xi, 21.

13. The two passages are quoted above, n. 6 and 7.


15. See the 'tuncro viam' in Conf., VII, xxi, 27, quoted below, n. 21, and also the passages from Conf., VII, xx, 26, and Conf., VIII, i, 1 quoted below n. 19.

16. O'Connell in Confessions, p. 1 points to our sentence as an instance of the difficulties that face the translator of the Confessions and on p. 55 he proposes the sense of this text. "Far from being ashamed at this childish posture, he asks 'what man is any kind of man while he be a man?'—by which he means us to infer that only when we become disembodied 'souls' again will we be 'grown-ups' in the truest sense." This is altogether of a piece with the Neo-Platonic interpretation which O'Connell gives to the Confessions—whether and to what extent such a view is adequate is a question which we cannot pursue here, except in the limited sense of proposing and supporting another interpretation of this text.
17. See Conf., IV,i,1 quoted above, n.5 and also Conf., IV, ii,3 quoted below n.25. Note that Augustine here turns this superstitious against the Manichees, who themselves accused the Catholics of just this fault — for example in the passage from De Utilitate Credendi, I,2: see above Comm.Conf.,III, n.78.

18. Conf., IV,i,1 "Invidiam ne arrogantes et nondum salubriter praevati ut Elizabeth a te, Iesus meus, ...

19. Conf., VII,xx,26 "... dicemorem atque distinguem, quid interesset inter praeceptum et confessionem, inter videntes, quo cunctum sit, nce videntes, qua, et viam ducentem ad beatissimam parviam non tanum sernendam sed et habitandum." In Conf., VIII,i,1 Augustine makes it plain that, having once seen the Truth, he no longer desired to know more clearly, but that his problem was now to be able to hold on to and stand firm in what he knew. "... nec certior de te, sed stabilior in te esse cupiebam."

20. Thus Augustine says in Conf., IV,i,1 "Quid enim sum ego mihi sine te nisi dux in praecipio? aut quid sum, sum mihi bene est, nisi eugas lac tuum aut fruens te oibo, quo non corruipitur?"

21. See Conf., VII,xx,26 quoted above, n.19 and also Conf., VII,xxi,27 "Et altud est de silvestri cacumine videre patriam pacis et ite ad eam non invenire et
funatus essendi per invia astra mobsidentibus et instanibus fugitivis devoratoribus cum princepe suo leone et dracone, et addit occres viae illius chœrencom erae ecclesiæ imperatoris muniment, ubi non latrocinantur qui ecclesiæ militiam deserventur; vident enim cum clam supplianter."

See Comm. Conf. III, n 56 for a preliminary explanation of the allusion that the Christian is reborn as a 'spiritual' man. There we say that, "the task which Augustine sets the man (i.e., the one who has come to the maturity of his rational nature), is to negate this first, natural and corrupt maturity, becoming 'little' again (parvulus), by humbly accepting in faith the promises of Christ and the teaching of the Church (in baptism), through which he may come in the end to his true maturity in which he will see the Truth face to face." Augustine proposes this opposition between the 'natural' and 'spiritual' man, between the 'strong and mighty' and the 'weak and needy' in our text in Conf., IV, i, 1 "Sed invicem nos fortes et potentes, nos autem infirmi et inopes consileamus tibi: ..., and again in the last chapter of this book where he now explains this distinction in the following way:

Conf., IV, xvi, 31 "Tu portabas, tu portabis et parvulos et usque ad canos tu portabis, quoniam firmitas nostra quando tu es, tunc est firmitas, cum autem nostra est, infirmitas est".
22. A full treatment of this question would involve amongst other things a discussion of the origin and end of comedy in antiquity.

23. See for example the laughter which Augustine ascribes to God in the opening lines of *Conf.*, I,vi,7 "... sine tamen loqui, quoniam ece miscrisordia tua est, non homo, invisor meus, oui loquor, et tu fortasse invides me, sed conversus miscorberis mei."


25. Thus Augustine, bringing this accusation against himself, says in *Conf.*, IV,ii,3, of the pride he felt in rejecting the advances of a soothsayer (haruspex) on the basis of his Manichaean gnosis: "Sed videlicet sacrificiari pro me nomlem daemonibus, quibus me illa superstitione ipse sacrificabam. quid est enim alium ventos pascere quam ipsos pascere, hoc est errando eis esse voluptati atque derisui?" See also his account of the *eversores* in *Conf.*, III,iii,6. "Quid itaque verius quam eversores vocarentur, eversi plane prius ipse atque perversi deridentibus eos et sedentibus fallacios occulte spiritibus in eo ipso, quod alios invidere amant et fallere?" Augustine has already acknowledged in the third book that he delighted to use the gnosis or knowledge of the Truth which he thought he had from the Manichees for the purpose of
ridiculing the Catholics. See the references in Comm.Conf., III, n.86.

Against this arrogant and demonic laughter and those who think of themselves as great and wise, Augustine also places what we might call the humble and holy laughter which may be generated in the faithful by the consideration of their past errors and folly. Augustine describes such 'holy' laughter in Conf., V,x,20 when he says "Nunc spirituales tui blandce et amanter ridebunti me, ci has confessiones meas legorint tamen talis cram." The conditions under which this kindly laughter becomes possible, are developed by Augustine in the seventh, eighth and ninth books of the Confessions.

26. Recall Augustine's statement in Conf., III,vi,12
"... rcedere a veritate ire in eam mihi videbar ..."

27. According to our interpretation, Augustine's treatment of the Manichees is essentially a treatment of any dualistic position whatsoever and as such it has no small significance as a criticism of the many dualistic doctrines which the Modern World has produced from the side of both the Liberal and Marxist ideologies.

28. See P. Alfaric, L'Évolution pp. 126 - 143. A good English account of the Manichaean doctrine of the three
seals may be found in J. J. O'Meara, _The Young Augustine_, pp. 75-9. See also A. Solignac's note and bibliography in _BA_ 13, p. 134, n. 1.

29. See _Conf._, IV, i, 1 quoted above, n. 5.

30. Augustine does not fail to note the contradiction in the Manichee teachings which results from the application of their doctrine of the seal of the hand. For while on the one hand, the particles of God which are imprisoned in all plant life are liberated by the grinding and dissolving powers of the teeth and bellies of the Elect (see _Conf._, III, x, 18 and _Conf._, IV, i, 1), on the other hand, the necessary agriculture and horticulture by which such food is grown and harvested for the Elect to eat was regarded as a wicked activity, harmful to the good soul trapped in the plant (see for example Augustine's description of the weeping fig-tree in _Conf._, III, x, 18). Likewise, the feeding of a starving man who was not a Manichee with food destined for the Elect, seemed to the Manichees a capital crime: of this, Augustine says in _Conf._, III, x, 18: "Et credidi miser magis esse misericordiam praestandum fructibus terrae quam hominibus, propter quos nascerentur. si quis enim esuriens peteret, qui maniohaeus non esset, quasi capitali supplicio damnanda buccella videretur, si ei daretur."
Other examples of the contradictions which result from the doctrine of the seal of the hand may be found in RA, p. 398, n. 1. Courcelle in Recherches, pp. 70-78 lists a number of instances of the contradictory behaviour of the Elect in which they acted against their own tenets and which are reported by Augustine in various texts.

31. P. Alfaric in L’Évolution p. 136 notes that as the Manichees held that the divine substance was mixed with all matter and not only in living beings, the good Manichee, in order not to harm the particles of God, tried to live in complete harmony with the whole of nature. This took the form of refusing all labour or any kind of activity whatsoever (as for example, washing), which, by disturbing matter could harm and torture these divine particles.

32. Although Augustine says that he made a sale of loquacity, being overcome by a desire for gain - Conf., IV, ii, 2
"Doobam in illis annis aetem rhetoricae et victoriocam loquacitatem viatus cupiditate vendebam." - he has already shown that the purpose of acquiring eloquence for the 'natural' man (and no doubt of money also), was chiefly as a means of gaining power and authority in the society of man. When the love of money is viewed in this light, it
becomes apparent that the three moments of Augustine's worldly ambition which he distinguishes here - the love of power, love and glory - are just a perverted image of the Trinity (compare Conf., II,vi,13 - 14).

33. See Conf., IV,ii,2 - 4.

34. The doctrine of the three seals was applied in its strictest form to the Elect and only in an attenuated form to the Auditors whose name derives from the passage in Paul's letter to the Romans (2:13). "For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified." (R.S.V.). While taking part in all the rituals of the Manichaean 'church', the application of the doctrine of the three seals was relaxed in the case of the Auditors. The seal of the mouth was relaxed inasmuch as they were permitted to eat meat and drink wine; the seal of the hand was altered to allow them to be farmers or even butchers and to take part in public life and aspire to its honours; and the total chastity demanded of the Elect by the seal of the bosom was relaxed to allow them to marry and fornicate, though not for the purpose of begetting children. (On these questions see J. J. O'Meara, The Young Augustine, pp.78-9).

Ps.68: 35. Conf., IV,ii,2 "Malebam tamen, domine, tu sais, bonos habere disipulos, sicut appellantur boni, et coe sine.
dolore devotionem dolorem, non qui buse contra eam iniocentiam inpecun, sed aliquando pro capite noventiam."

36. Conf., IV,ii,2  "in illis annis umer habeiam nee se quem legitimum vocatur euniciul cognitum, sed quem in-
dignitatem vagna auroto inops prudential, sed quam varam, et quaque servans tevi fidem; ..."  The translation of
this last phrase servans tevi fidem is difficult.
Literally, this means "serving the faith of the bed" but
we understand its sense to be, 'serving his promise to
the Manichees not to fornicate for the purpose of begetting
children'. This interpretation is confirmed in the rest
of the sentence where Augustine says, "... in qui sane
expariter exemplo nesci, quid distaret iner conjugial
plaeiti modum, quod foederatum essei generandi gratia, et
pastum libidinosi amoris, ubi proles eiam contra volem
nascitur, quamvis tam nata cogat se diligi."

37. Conf., IV,ii,3  "Recolo eiam, cum mihi tnoaivici
earinis servam inicre placuissel, mandasse mihi nescio
quem haruspicem, quid ei dare vellem mercedis, ut vincerem,
me aum foeda illa sacramenta detestatum et abominatum
respondisse, nec si corona illa esset immortarier
aurca, musem pro victoria mea necari sinere. necaturus
enim crat ille in sacrificiis suis animantia et illis
honorable invitaturus mihi suffragatura daemonia videbatur."
38. That is, inasmuch as he was restrained by the Manichee’s teachings from the totally unlimited, aggressive and self-seeking pursuit of power, love and glory in complete disregard of the good of the universe as a whole—such an action as Augustine has already discussed in the second book of the Confessions in connection with his theft of the pears.

39. Conf., IV, ii, 3  "sed hoc quoque malum non ex tua castitate separarit, Deus veritatem, non enim amare te novaram, quae nisi fulgorc orporosum solum non novaram. tatuibus enim ignominio surgirens anima nonne formicatur ab eo et fuli in falsa et pacere vocitam? sed videlicet cecinnificari pro me nollem daemonibus, quibus me illa superstitiones ipse sacrificabam.  quid est enim aliquo venien papeere quam ipso paseere, huc est opprando et cecin voluntati atque diceri?" A. Solignac gives a brief note on the phrase ex tua castitate in BA, 13, p. 410-411, n.l.

40. Conf., IV, iii, 4  "Idoque illos planos, quos mathematicos vocant, plane consulerer non desiderabam, ..."

See below, Comm. Conf. V, n. 3, for a brief discussion of the various senses of mathematici which can mean either 'astrologers', as here, or 'astronomers'.
41. These astrologers were also called *genethliaci* because they drew their horoscopes from the time of a man's birth (*γενεθλιασμόν*). See *Conf.*, IV,iii,5 "... libris
*genethliacum* ...

42. See P. Alfaric, *L'Evolution*, pp. 27-8 for a brief account of the popular understanding of the powers of these astrologers. In *Contra Academicos*, I,vi,17 Augustine tells us how he once sent Licentius to the famous astrologer Albicerrius to discover the whereabouts of a lost spoon which was recovered on the latter's advice. In *Conf.*, IV,iii,5 Augustine tells us that he made a study of the books of the astrologers and in *Conf.*, VII,vi,8 that he himself on occasion both cast and read horoscopes for others.

43. In *Conf.*, VII,vi,8 - 10, writing of the youthful maturity of his early thirties, Augustine tells us that he came to reject the divination of the astrologers through an incident with a man called Firminus, coupled with his recollection of the words of Vindicianus and Nebridius. A. Solignac remarks in *RA*, 13, p.595, n.3 that since it is not known for certain who this Firminus was nor when Augustine knew him, we cannot say with precision when he gave up astrology. Although we cannot provide a precise date to the time of Augustine's meet-
ing with Firminus we can say with certainty at what point in
his spiritual development he gave up the belief in
astrology since as we argue below (see Comm.Conf.VII,
p. 403), it becomes impossible to hold on to the belief
in astrology in the instant that a man comes to the
recognition of the divine incorruptibility. As this could
only have occurred with Augustine sometime during his
'sceptical' period and presumably towards the end rather than
the beginning (see below, Comm.Conf.VII, n.11) we propose
a date in the year before he read the Libri Platoniciorum
- i.e. at the end of 385 or the beginning of 386AD, (follow-
ing Solignac's Chronology in BA 13, pp204-205).

44. Although Vindicianus is not mentioned by name in the
text in Conf., IV,iii,5, Augustine identifies him farther
on in Conf., VII,vi,8. (See BA 13, p. 413, n.2 for a very
brief note and bibliography concerning this man and also
the long note in M. Pellegrino, Les Confessions, p.118, n.2.

45. See Conf., IV,iii,6.

46. Augustine uses 'art' (art) of astrology; see Conf.,
IV,iii,6 "... artc inspectorum sidorum ..." and Conf., VII,
vi,8 "... artem futura praevidendi ...". In Contra Academicos,
I,vii,19, Trygetius (speaking here with Augustine), explains
that one cannot properly use 'science' (scientia), of the
activities of astrologers, soothsayers and augurs because a science does not merely understand something, but understands it in such a way that it is never and cannot possibly be mistaken - which as he goes on to point out is certainly not the case with the astrologers: "Scientia enim non soli comprehendit, sed etiam comprehensum rebus non esset, ut novam in ea quae auctor errare, nec quidnisi debeat adversarii usque quandam naturae debat. unde veritatem a quibusdam philosophiae dissitatur, in nullo omne possum nisi in sapientis inventari; qui non modo percepit habitum debet sed quod sequitur se sequitur, verum etiam inconessum tenere. scimus autem illum quem comororasti, multa suae falsa" dixisse: ..."

47. Thus Augustine tells us in Conf., IV, i, iii, 6 that, at this time, he was not moved by the arguments of Vindicianus and Nebridius because they did not appear to him to be a certain refutation of the astrologers:

"... quoniam me amplius ipsorum auctorum moverat auctoritas et nullum certum quale quaerebam documentum adhue inveneram, quo mihi sine ambiguitate apparet, quae ab eis consultis vora discreverunt, forte vel sorte, non arte inspectorum siderum dici. " At a later date when he had come to the recognition that the divine nature (i.e. the Truth), must be incorruptible he was then assisted to
see the falsity of the astrologers' claims through these same arguments: see Conf., IV,iii,6 and Conf., VII,vi,8-10).

48. See Conf., IV,iii,4

49. P. Alfaric, who notes the close connection between the doctrines of the astrologers and certain parts of the Manichee's teachings and who seems to want to maintain that astrology formed a part of the 'canonical' teachings of Mani, notes in L'Évolution p.221,n.5, that, D'après Epiphane (Haer.LXVI,13), Mani avait écrit un libre Sur l'astrologie. In the same place he also gives us the view of Isaac de Beausobre in his Histoire Critique de Manichée et du Manichéisme, Amsterdam, 1734 - 1739, Vol. II, pp.428-429 who argues that there is reason to suppose that Mani did not admit the influence of the stars on the birth of men (citing Contra Faustum, II,1 where Faustus rejects the story of the star at the birth of Christ). Although Alfaric is not convinced by this argument, he does not bring any evidence which would prove that Mani definitely taught astrological doctrines and so never actually affirms anything more than the close connection that exists between the teachings of the Manichees and the astrologers (see also L'Évolution, p.253,n.1). On the other hand there is solid evidence that certain astronomical calculations (the other

This confusion of the senses of *mathematician* as well as the similarity of their teachings no doubt contributed in the popular mind to the view that astrology actually formed a part of the Manichee’s doctrines.

50. See *Conf.*, IV, iv, 7-8.

51. *Conf.*, IV, iv, 9 *Quo dolore contemnabratum est cor meum, et quidquid aspicio est mors earum, est crat mihi patria supplicium et patria domina mira infelicitas, et quidquid est illo communicavero, sine illo in crux iactam in manum vererat.*

crepitabant cum muliere oculi mei, et non debatur; et odores erma, quod non habebant cum, nec mihi iam dicere poterant; *secus venient*, sicut cum vivereat, quando absens erat. factus erant ipsi mihi magna quae visio et interrogaabam animam meam, quare tristis est et quare conturbatur me valde, et nihil nevrat respondere mihi. et si diebem: *spera in domum*, iustice non obterem erat, quia verior erat et melior homo, quem aequalisum amisit, quam phantasma, in quod operare tutebatur.

Ps. 138: solus flctus erat dulcis mihi et succedere amico meo in

Pr. 29: *doliciis animi mei.*” See also *Conf.*, IV, vii, 12, quoted below n. 25.

52. *Conf.*, IV, vii, 12 *O dementiam nescentem diligere homines humaniter! o stultum hominem inmoderata humana patientem! quod ego tunc eram. itaque aetubabam, suspira-
bam, fiebam, turbabar, nec requies erat nec consilium.
portabam enim concileam et cruentam animam meam inpatientem
porturi a me, et ubi eam ponerem non inveniebam. non in
amoenis nenomibus, non in ludis atque cantibus nec in
suave olintibus locis nec in conviviiis apparatis nec in
voluptate subilis et lecti, non denique in libris atque
carminibus aquiscecebat. horreabant omnia et ipsea lux et
quidquid non erat quod ille erat, inprobum et odiosum erat
praeter gemitum et lacrimas: nam in eis solis aliquantula
requies."

53. Augustine gives us a marvellous statement of this position in Conf., IV,x,15
"Deus virtutum, converte nos et
ostende faciem tuam, et salvi erimus. nam quoquoversum se
verterit anima hominis, ad dolores fitur alibi praeterquam
in te, tamesi fitur in pulchris extra te et extra se.
qua eam nulla essent, nisi essent abs te. quae oriuntur/
et occidunt et oriendo quae esse incipient et crescent, ut
perficiantur, et perfecta senescent et intereunt: et non
omnia senescent et omnia intereunt. ergo cum oriuntur et
tendunt esset, quo magis oeleriter crescent, ut sint, eo
magis festinant, ut non sint. sic est modus eorum. tantum
dedisti eis, quia partes sunt rerum, quae non sunt omnes
simul, sed decedendo ac succedendo agunt omnes universum,
cuius partes sunt. ece ece peragitur et sermo noster per
signa sonantia. non enim erit totus sermo, si unum verbum
non decedat, cum sonuerit partes suas, ut succedat aliud.
laudei tecum illic anima mea, Deus, in ea, in omni animo, sed non
quia iniquus gloriatur amor eorum corporis, quia animo
que ibant, ut non sine, et sese simulcum detrauerunt
pestilentia, quoniam ipsa esse vult et requiescere amatur
in eis, quae amar. in illic autem non est ubi, quia non
stant: fugiunt, et quis ecce acquirur sensus carnis? aut
quia ea comprehendit, vel est praeceplum? tundus est
enim sensus carnis, quoniam sensus carnis esse ipso est
modus eis. sufficit ad alium, ad quod factus est, ad
illud autem non sufficit, ut teget transcurrentia ab
initio debito usque ad finem debitum. in verbo enim tu,
per quod orcantur, ibi audient: 'hinc et hunc usque'.

54. Conf., IV, vi, 11 "Miser eram, et miser est omnis
animus virorum amicitia rerum mortalium et dilaniatur, cum
eas amittit, et tunc sentit miseriam, qua miser est et
autoquum amittat eas."

55. Conf., IV, viii, 13 "Nam unde me faciliisse et in intima
dolor ille penetraverat, nisi quia fuderam in harenam
animam meam diligendo moriturum acce non moriturum?"

In EB 13, p. 430 no Biblical reference is given for the
phrase "... fuderam in harenam ...". We have not found
any direct reference but it does bear a close similarity
to II Sam. 14:14(a). "Omnes morimur et quasi aquae
delabimur in terram quae non revertuntur ..." See also Conf., IV,vi,11 quoted below, n.56.

56. Conf., IV,vi,11 "Credo, quo magis illum amabam, hoc magis mortem, quae mibi cum absitelerat, tamquam atrociissimam inimicam odoram et timebam et eam repente consumpturam omnes homines putabam, quia illum potuit. sic eram omnino, memini. ecce cor meum, deus meus, ecce intus: vide, quia memini,
Ps. 70:5 spec mea, qui me mundas a talium affectionum inmunditia,
Ps. 24:15 dirigens oculos meos ad te et currens de laeque pedes meos. mirabar enim oteros mortales vivere, quia ille, quem quasi non moriturum dilexeram, mortuus erat ..."

57. M. Pellegrino entirely misses the significance of this passage when, in Les Confessions p. 120 he says, "Mais comment peut-on trouver de la douceur a verser des larmes? Dans le besoin torturant de se fournir une raison de tout ce qui arrive dans son intérieur, Augustin pose aussi ce problème, mais il renonce à le résoudre 'car ce n'est pas maintenant le moment de poser des questions, mais de Vous faire ma confession' (6,11)." Not only does Augustine's question arise quite naturally out of what has gone before since it is indeed a question why he could actually take pleasure in tears (see Conf., IV, iv, 9; IV, v, 10; IV, vi, 11;
IV, vii, 12), when he found no delight in anything else in the universe (see Conf., IV, vii, 12 "... horribent omnia et ipse lux ...") but also he does resolve the matter or at least suggest its resolution in the sense we indicate when, in the last sentence of Conf., IV, v, 10 he asks, "An ei florus res amara est et prae factidio rerum, quibus prius fruebamus, ei tune ab eis abhorreo mus, deletar?"

58. Conf., IV, vi, 11 "Bene quidem dixit de amico suis: dimidium animae meae, nam ego sensi animam meam et animam illius unam fuisse animam in duabus corporibus, et ideo mihi horrore erat vita, quia nolebam dimidium vivere, et ideo forte mori metuebam, ne totius ille moreretur, quem multum amaveram."

59. Retractiones II, xxxii "In quarto libro, cum de amici morte animi mei miseriam confiterer dicens, quod anima nostra una quodam modo facta fuerat ex duabus: 'et ideo', inquam, 'forte mori metuebam, ne totius ille moreretur, quem multum amaveram'; quae mihi quasi declamatio leviss quam graviss confessio videtur, quamvis utqueque temperata sit haec ineptia in eo, quod additur 'cet forte'."
60. Conf., IV,v,10 "Neque enim sperabam reviviscerco illum aut hoc petebam laetimie, sed tantum dolobam et flebam."

61. See Conf., IV,iv,8.

62. See Conf., IV,iv,9 quoted above, n.51. Of the passage "... quare tristis esset et quarc conturbaret me valde, et nihil novetat respondore mihi. or ei dicbam 'spera in deum', ..." Solignac in BA 13, p.422 indicates a reference to Psalm 41:6 & 12 and 41:5 but does not treat it as a direct quote. While it is difficult to know what text Augustine had before him, we note that in this case "spera in Deum" is a direct quote from the "Gallican" Psalter (Jerome's early revision of an Old-Latin text on the basis of the LXX which Augustine may or may not have had before him and which reads for Ps.41:12 "quare tristis es anima mea et quarc conturbas me, spera in Deum ...". Jerome's later translation of the Psalter, the Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos has in the same place, "quare incurvaris anima mea et conturbas me, expecta Dominum ...". Since it is possible, it seems more than likely that Augustine actually understood "spera in Deum" as a direct quote.

63. Conf., IV,vii,12 "Horribant omnia et ipsa lux et quidquid non erat quod ille erat, inprobum et odiosum erat praeor gemitum et lacrimas: nam in eos solis aliquantyula
seuipsa. ubi autem inde a superbat multa nec, omne vacat

Ps. 24:1

grande sacra miseriae. ut te, domine, terrando crevi et
curando, scelivam, sed nec volobam nec volobam, ...

64. Conf., IV,vii,12 "... scelivam, sed nec volobam nec
volobam; ce magia, quae non mihi eam aliquel solidum et
firmum, sum de te cogitabam. non enim tu eam, sed vanum
phantasma et error meus cert dene meus. et venabas eam ibi
ponere, ut requiescere, per banc lababantur et illorum
vocebant super me, et ego mihi remanseram infelix locus, ubi
nec esse possem nec inde recedere. quo enim nec eam fugeret
a corde meo? quo a me ipse fugerem: quo non me sequerem?"

See also Conf., IV,iv,9 quoted above, n.51. Notice that
Augustine's difficulty "... et ego mihi remanseram infelix
locus, ubi nec esse possem nec inde recedere ..." is just
the problem and the contradiction that he showed us in the
introductory chapter of this book; Conf., IV,1,1.

65. Conf., IV,viii,13: "Non vacant tempora nec otlose
volvuntur per sensus nostros: faciunt in animo mira opera.

Ps. 60:9
cave veniebant et praeteribant de die in diem et veniendo
et praetercendo inscribant mihi epis alias et alias memorias
et paulatim rescribant me pristinum genoribus delocationum,
quibus oceebat dolor meus ille; sed succedebant non quidem
dolores alii, causae tamen aliorum dolorum."
66. Quoted above, n.53.

67. This is the sense of Augustine's meditation on friendship in Conf., IV.ix.14 where he says that while we cannot help loving our friends for themselves, in this we are bound to be disappointed; whereas that friendship only is secure and happy (beatue) in which the friend is loved not as he is in himself but only as he is in God: "Quia amar te et amicum in te et inimicum propter te. solus enim nullo eam amittit, qui omnes in illo esse curat, non amittit. et qui eost ratio nisi deus necever, deus.

Gen.1:1 2:1
qui fugit aerem et terram et impie! ea, quia implendo ea secolt ea? ic nemo amittit, nisi qui dimiriit, et quia dimiriiit, quia in quo fugit nistae te plando ad te iratum? nam ubi non invenit legem tuam in poena sua? et

Ps.118: 142
i.e., first the love of
God (the Father, creator of heaven and earth), and of the creature only as it is in God. The "Iex tua veritas" comes from Ps.118:142 but in BA 13, p.432, "veritas tua" is given as a direct quotation from Jn.14:6. This is not the case and moreover, because Augustine is speaking here of the proper form of friendship in relation to the objective Truth (the Law), and the punishment exacted from those who neglect the Law, we would argue that such a
quotation probably comes from the Old Testament rather than the New. Augustine speaks of the kind of friendship which is made possible in Christ in Conf., IV, xi, 16 - IV, xii, 19.

68. For the moment we must leave this statement to stand without any further explanation. In the seventh, eighth and ninth books of the Confessions, Augustine develops the logic of this position in his discussion of the limits and inadequacies he was to discover both in Greek philosophy and Hebrew theology.

69. Conf., IV, xi, 16 - IV, xii, 19.

70. Conf., IV, xi, 16 "Nulla esse vanus, anima mea, ut obscuro corne in aves corde tumultu vanitas tuae. audi et ven: verbum ipsum alamat, ut redcas, ..."

71. Much of the modern commentary on the Confessions has turned about the discovery of its neo-Platonic 'sources' and sought to interpret it in various ways on the basis of this discovery. Chief amongst these latter works and by far the best and most sustained effort at interpretation (as opposed to the discovery of parallels and 'reminiscences;), are the recent books by R. J. O'Connell; the Confessions, (1969) to which we have already referred and its slightly elder sister, St. Augustine's Early Theory of
in which he interprets the Confessions as an elaborate and marvelously orchestrated work on the Plotinian theme of the fall of the soul and its return.

If it is not already clear, it will become increasingly apparent that we find this interpretation quite inadequate to the text of the Confessions; for, as we hope to show, it altogether ignores both the Trinitarian structure and content of the Confessions. But until we have shown this, at least in relation to the Trinitarian structure which we discern in the first part of the Confessions (i.e., Books I - IX; see above, "Introduction" pp i-iii), we can scarcely demonstrate or do much to press our objection against the position for which O'Connell is such an eloquent spokesman.

However we do at least raise the question here because these chapters in the fourth book (Conf. IV, xi, 16 - IV, xii, 19), constitute one of the earliest instances where the Plotinian scheme leads its proponents into a serious misunderstanding of the text if, as we argue, Augustine is here distinguishing between the old and the new, the Hebrew-Platonic (Plotinian!) and the Christian (Trinitarian).

Thus, O'Connell sees no difference between the position which Augustine states in Conf. IV, x, 15 and that of
IX, xi, 16-17 and IV, xii, 18 and the reference to the Incarnation in IV, xii, 19 he sees as an evidence and assurance that "it still fits neatly into the Plotinian scheme." (Confessions, p. 57). Now while there is no doubt a 'neo-Platonic Christianity', the question is whether this is what Augustine is actually teaching and in our view there is an absolute difference between the (acknowledged) 'Plotinian' position of chapter x and that of xi and xii, which difference Augustine explains precisely in terms of the Incarnate Word. For the moment we can only support this contention by asking the reader to consider which account is more adequate to the text. This question will recur at many points and can only be finally resolved in the demonstration of the differences between the Platonic vision of Book VII and its Christian 'counterpart in Book IX. Here is what O'Connell says of these three chapters in Confessions, p. 57. "'Convert us', Augustine prays to God. Indeed, Book IV, 15-18 is a marvelously orchestrated plea for the soul to 'return' to the 'happiness' it left when it turned away from God in pursuit of some 'part of the bodily universe, when it left the Eternal in quest of the temporal, when it 'deserted' God and found itself confined, in punishment, to particularity. As though to assure us that it still fits
neatly into the Platonian scheme of fall and return, the
incarnation as invoked at the end of this effusion (19) -
cour Life came down to bid us 'go back,' 'return,' 'ascend'
o once more through the fire of charity to the God from Whom
we fell."

73. Conf., IV, xii, 18 "Si placent corpora, dorum ex illic
lauda et in artificem eorum relorque amorem, ne in his,
quae libi placent, tu disciplices. si placent animae, in
deo amentur, quia et ipsoe mutabile sunt et in illo fixae
stabilitur: alloquium irent et perirent. in illo ergo
amentur, et vae se cum tecum quae potes et dice eos:
'hunc amorem: usque fecit haec et non est longe'. non enim
feuit atque abitit, sed ex illo in illo sunt."

As distinguished from the teaching of Conf., IV, x, 15,
where any love of the creature turned man from God, here
Augustine speaks of the possibility of a 'true' love of the creature qua creature 'in' God. Augustine will show in the discussion of his vision in Book VII that it is of course the case that the objective, universal Truth (the Father), holds all things in his hand so that one can indeed say that all things are 'in' God. But just the point which he shows there, is that when the Truth is seen in this form, the creature is 'in' God but in a different manner (i.e., not according to space and time [see especially Conf., VII,xv, 21 "Et reperxi alia et visi tibi dolores quia sunt et in tua invenies finita, sed aliena, non quasi in loco ..." etc.]), which is to say that the creature is present 'in' God but not qua creature. In these two chapters of Book IV (xi and xii), Augustine proposes a radically different doctrine according to which the creature is present 'in' God qua creature. The difference may be subtle but it is significant!

Compare also the exhortation of Conf., IV,ix,14 to love God (i.e., the Father, the objective Truth), rather than the creature, because the Truth alone stands while all other things pass away "Te nemo amavit, nisi qui dimittit ...", and the similar but significantly different teaching of Conf., IV,xii,16 where, in the Word (i.e., in Christ), a
man's 'true' love of the creature (see below, n.74 & 75), is not forsaken because here is the quiet and stable place where the purified creature does stand and does not pass away; "Et ibi seors quisQUE impensabilis, ubi non decevit amor, et ipse non decevit. Occi illi discedunt, ut alia eumvenant et omnibus uto partibus connu in finito universae. 'Neque ego aliquum discor? ' Alii redunt del. Ibi filia narrationi inam, ibi conmenda antiquy inad habeb, anima mea, saltem fatigata fallacite." See also below, n.75.

74. Conf., IV,xi,16 "Veritati conmenda quicquid ibi est a veritate, et non pordos aliquid ..." As the rest of this sentence makes clear, this aliquid means precisely the 'particular' and thus Augustine is not at all here expressing the insignificance and worthlessness of the particular over against the Truth: see below, n.75.

75. Conf., IV,xi,16 "... et reflorescent putrria tua et canabuntur omnes languores tui et fluma tua reformabuntur et renovabuntur et constringentur ad te et non te deponent, quo descendent, sed stabunt teum et permanebunt ad semper stantem ac permanentem aem. See also the next sentence at the beginning of Conf., IV,xi,17 "Ut quid perversa sequeris carnem tuam? Ipsa te sequatur conversa." That
the flesh should follow man (to the Truth), is either
inconceivable or blasphemous where the Truth is only known
in its objective, universal form (the Father).

Ps. 4:3 76. Conf., IV,xii,19 "Fili hominum, quo uoce gracce voce;
numquid ei, post discension uitae non valtis ascendi co-
vivere? sed uoces ascenditae, quando in alto cavis ei pes-
Ps. 72:9 vistis in caelo os vestrum? ascendite, ut ascendatis ac
dom. ecclesiastic enim ascendendo contra donum." See also
Conf., IV,xii,18 quoted below, n.77.

77. This we take to be the distinction between chapters
xii and xiii. In the first he speaks of the resurrection body
(the ascent of the particular), and the possibility of the
blissful apprehension of all the parts together as a whole
(compare the similar but different discussion of syllables
in Conf., IV,x,15, where the whole and part are mutually
exclusive and the whole preferable to the part), and in
this he exhorts his readers to move up from the depths and
away from a love of their immediate, fallen nature to love
the creature in its true form of the resurrection body. In
the second, which speaks of the Incarnation (the descent of
the Truth), he again urges his readers to love the particu-
lar in its true form, but this time, speaking to those who
have already seen the objective Truth, he calls them back
to the particular, back into themselves and down from the "difficult and laborious paths' to which they have moved in their search of the objective, universal Truth and from which exalted position they scorn the creature, but where, as he says, they can in no way find what they seek since they seek a blessed life in a land of death (i.e., in the disjunction of the universal and the particular): Conf., IV, xi, 18 "Non enim fecit a quae abit, sed ex illo in illo sumi. cecum ubi coi, ubi capit veritas? Inimicus cordi coi, sed cor erravit ab eo. ridicic, praecavincates, ad cor et inhaerente illi, qui fecit vos. state cum co et stabitisc, requiscitis in eo et quieti oriris. qua tibus in aerora? qua tibus" bonum, quod amatisc, ab illo coi: sed quantum est ad illum, bonum est et cuivis; sed amo rum crisc instis, quia inimicus amatur accerto illo quidamquid ab illo est.

Wis. 5: 7 quo vobis adhuc et adhuc ambulare viae difficiles est laboriosas? non est requies, ubi quaeritis cam. quaerite quod quaeritis, sed ibi non est, ubi quaeritis. beatam vitam

Is. 9: 2 quaeritis in regiones moriis: non est illas, quomodo enim beata vita, ubi nec vita?" The explanation of these last sentences is not fully developed until the latter chapters of Book VII and in Book VIII. The sense of "quaerite quod quaeritis" is that unlike Augustine at this time and those
to whom chapter xi is addressed, these men do at least seek the Truth, (rather than the creature in its corruption).

78. Conf., IV,xi1,20 - IV,xv,27. Augustine tells us that at the time of writing the De Pulchro et Apto he was perhaps twenty-six or twenty-seven years old: Conf., IV,xv,27. According to Salignac's chronology in BA 13, p.203 this was in 380-81 A.D.

79. Conf., IV,xvi,28-31. Augustine begins this chapter with a specific reference to the time when he read Aristotle's Categories - when he was 'about' twenty;

"... annos natos ferme viginti ...". No doubt because the reading of the 'books of the liberal arts' are mentioned in the same chapter (Conf., IV,xvi,30), Salignac in his chronology (BA 13, p.202), places this in the same year. Augustine obviously intends us to understand that he read these books throughout this whole period; see Conf., IV, xvi,30 "... omnes libros artium, quas liberales vocant, ... quocumque legere potui?" (emphasis ours); and also recall the opening lines of this book which introduce the whole period, Conf., IV,1,1 "... seducebamus et seduechamus ... palam per doctrinas, quas liberales vocant, ...".

80. That is, those who had come so far as to recognize the Truth as had Augustine through reading the Hortensius, must
also have come to the recognition that man's true honour and glory lies not in his power or possessions, but only in his knowledge of the Truth.

81. Conf., IV,xv,26 "Sed ego conabam ad te et repellam ahs te, i saperem mortem, quoniam superbis resiclis."

I Petr. 5:5, See also Conf., IV,xv,27 and Conf., IV,xvi,31.

Jac.4: 6,

Pr,3: 34 82. Conf., IV,xiv,21 "Quid est autem, quod me movit, domine dous meus, ut ad Hiorium, Romanae urbis oratorem, scriberem illos libros? quem non noweram facio, sed amaveram hominem ex doctrinae fama, quae illi clara erat, et quaedam verba eius audieram, et placuerant mihi. sed magic, quia placabat alios et eum efforebant laudibus oruptices, quod ex homine Syro, docto prius graeci facundiae, post in latina etiam dictor mirabilis extitiscet et esset scientissimus rerum ad studium sapientiae pertinentium, mihi placabat. laudatur homo et amatur absens."

In Augustine's eyes Hierius thus stood as the epitome of the worldly honour and glory ('a man praised and loved even when absent'), that 'properly' belonged and would accrue to anyone "most knowledgeable in the things which pertain to the study of wisdom".

83. Conf., IV,xiv,23 "Et magnum quiddam mihi erat, si sermo meus et studia mei illi viro innotescerent: quae si probaret, flagrarem magis; si autem improbaret, saudiareur
84. Augustine shows the irrationality of his own opinion of other men in Conf., IV,xiv,22.

85. In Conf., IV,xiv,23 Augustine shows that his admiration of Hierius depended on the opinion which other men bore towards his talents rather than on his own estimate of these talents.

86. Conf., IV,xiii,20 "Non enim habemus eos, sed aberraverunt a nobis nescio quo modo."

87. For a review of this material see Solignac's 'Notes Complémentaires' #16 in BA 13, pp.670-673.

88. Conf., IV,xv,24 "Et aum in virtute pacem amarem, in vitiositate autem odissem discordiam, in illa unitatem, in ista quandam divisionem notabam, inque illa unitate mens rationalis et natura veritatis ac summi boni mihini esse vidobatur, in ista vero divisione irrationalis vitae nescio quam substantiam et naturam summi mali, quae non solum esset substantia, sed omnino vita esset et tamen abs te non esset, deus meus, ex quo sunt omnia, miser opinabam. et illum monadem appellabant tamquam sine ullo ocetu mentem, hanc vero dyadem, iram in facinoribus, libidinem in flagitiis, nescione quid loquerer."

1 Cor. 8:6
89. The point, as Augustine explains in Conf., IV, xvi, 31, is that he thought his mind to be actually a piece of the monad (God, the Truth, the Good). "Sed quid mihi hoc prōderet putandi, quasi tu, domine dux veritas, corpus esse luatīum et inmensum et ego frustum de illo coipsero?"

90. Conf., IV, xv, 24 "Non enim nosteram neque didiscram nondae vim substantiam malum esse nec illam mentem nostram cùmmnum atque ineornmutabile bonum." See also Conf., IV, xv, 25 "Qualis in me tua crat vocentem altum lumino illum in- lustrandum esse, ut eii particeps veritatis, quia non eipsa nōtura veritatis; ..."

91. Conf., IV, xv, 26 "Sed ego nonbar ad te et repellēbar abe, ut caperem mortem, quoniam superbia resistit. quid autem superbia, quam ut ascercem mira demēlia mo ες esse naturaliter, quod tu es? omn enim ego eosom mutabilem et co-miti manifestum esse, quod unique idem captione-cense cupieram; ut ex detegitore melior fierem, malacham lamen cium te opinari mutabilem quam me non hoc esse, quod tu es, itaque repellēbar ...". See also Conf., IV, xv, 26. "Si contendebam, magis ineornmutabilem tarn substantiam coquitam ornare quam meam mutabilem apote deviasco et poena ornare confitebar."
92. It is perhaps worth noting that Aristotle characterizes Plato as holding two principles which he (Aristotle) calls the 'one' and the 'dyad', see *Metaphysics*, 987b. Augustine might have taken these words from some account of the Platonic doctrine which treated it in terms of these categories.

93. *Conf.*, III,vii,12 "... reedem a veritate, tue in cam mihi vidcebar ..."

94. The terms in which Augustine describes the reputation of the *Categories* makes it quite clear that, amongst his acquaintances, it was regarded as a great and divine work and one which would bring a considerable reputation for knowledge to whoever professed to understand it: see *Conf.*, IV,xvi,28. Augustine probably read a Latin translation of the *Categories* by Marius Victorinus but see P. Hadot's collection of scholarly opinion on this question in *Marius Victorinus, Recherches sur sa vie et ses œuvres*, Etudes Augustinianennes, Paris, 1971, pp.187-188.

95. *Conf.*, IV,xvi,30 "Et quid mihi proderat, quod omnes libros artium, quas liberales vocant, tue novissimum malum cupiditatum servus per me ipsum legi et incoleri, quocumque legere potuit?" On the subject of these disciplines liberales, see Solignac's brief account in
96. See for example the want of a much more elementary education in the famous Manichaean 'bishop', Faustus—
in Conf., V,vi,11.

97. Conf., IV,xvi,30 "Non enim semel habam illas aures cicam ab studiis et ingeniis difficilem in intellegi,
nisi cum eis cætera conahabere et eam illæ excellentissimæ in eis, qui me exponentem non tardius sequeretur."

98. Conf., IV,xvi,30 "Itaque mihi non ad num, sed ad
perniciecm magis val·bat, quia tam bonam partem substantiae
meam alegi habere in potestate et continuum munum non
ad te custodiham, sed profectus sum abs te in longinquum
regiæm, ut eam dissiparem in meretrices cupiditates.
nam quid mihi proderat bona res non utenti bene?"

99. Conf., IV,xvi,31 "... quod tu, dominus deus veritas,
corpus esse lucidum et inmensum et ego frustrum de illo
corpori?"

100. Conf., IV,xvi,30 "Et quid mihi proderat, quod omnes
libros artium, quas liberales vocant, tune nequissimus
malarum cupiditatem servus per me ipsum legi et intellexi,
quosumque legere potui? et gaudebam in eis et nescie
bam, unde esset quidquid ibi scerum et certum esset.
This is surely a reference to the image of the prisoners in the 'cave' in Plato's Republic (514a - 513c). Augustine uses it here in precisely the same sense as Plato when he speaks of himself as a slave who mistakes the images of things for the Truth itself.

101. See Conf. IV.xvi.30, quoted above, n.98.

102. Conf. IV.xv.27 "... vocibus erroris mei replicant
foras et pondere superbiae meae in ima obsidebam." and,
Conf. IV.xvi.31 "Quid ergo vane mihi prodere ingenti
per illas doctrinas agile et nullo adminiculo humani magi-
cerit et nodiosissimi libri onubati, cum deformiter ci
saevilega turgiditudo in doctrina pictatis errorem? aut quid
lanum obcrat parvulis vues longe tardius ingenti, cum a te
longe non receverant, ut in nido coelestiae tuae tuti plum
cerent et alas caritatis alimenta sanae fidei nutriment?"

For an explanation of this image of the souls of the faithful as little birds in the nest of the church, being fed on the food of faith, which appears over and again in the Confessions, see above, Comm. Conf. III, n.56. As we may see from the following lines, "O domine Deus noster,
Augustine understands the phrase, "in the shelter of thy wings", in relation to the same image of the church; but now as it is seen as the protective mother of the fledgling souls of the faithful in the shelter of whose mighty wings they may safely grow up to their true maturity. This is distinguished from its (the church's, the mother bird's), other function of nourishing these souls with a true and wholesome 'spiritual' food.) Again, on both these points, see above, Comm. Conf. III, n.56.

The understanding of the phrase "in volamonto alarum tuarum" is especially important to the interpretation of Book X where Augustine uses it or its variants on many occasions.

The full development of the reason and meaning of this teaching is only discovered in the seventh, eighth and ninth books of the Confessions and we must leave its explanation to these books. However, we recall that Augustine has already indicated what is the logic behind this position when he discussed Monica's reaction to his fall into Manichaeism at the end of the third book: see above, Comm. Conf. III, pp. 141-145.

103. Conf. IV, xiv, 23 "... et errabant typo et circum-
This recalls the phrase "veneex of Conf., IV, ii, 3."
CHAPTER FIVE

COMMENTARY ON THE FIFTH BOOK OF AUGUSTINE’S CONFESSIONS.

III. The fault of adolescence. Continued from Book IV.

As he has shown in the fourth book, Augustine was led, by his adherence to the Manichees teachings, into certain contradictions and difficulties in his practical activities. The same teachings also involved him in other difficulties of a theoretical or scientific nature which he now treats in this fifth book. As a result of the inability of the Manichees to resolve these latter difficulties, Augustine first became disenchanted with the sect and then adopted a Sceptical position from which he was led to abandon the Manichees altogether. The logic of this movement constitutes the argument of the fifth book and took place in the course of his twenty-ninth year.¹

For some time before this, Augustine had both read and retained in memory many works of the "philosophers" ("... multa philosophorum loci..."). From the immediate context we can gather that by these works he intends certain treatises of natural philosophy, especially of that science which is concerned with the movement of the
sun and planets, the explanation of solstices and equinoxes and the prediction of eclipses—though more generally he intends the whole science or wisdom which men have acquired concerning the natural world (the σακρ. ζύγ. 3 and in which he found a more probable account of nature than the Manichees were able to provide.

As we have already seen, Manichaeism presented itself as a universal science where everything found its place and explanation,5 and Mani himself had written copiously on these questions concerning the movement of the heavenly bodies.6 His deliberations on this subject, as on others, the faithful Manichee was expected ('ordered'), to believe ("... ὰρδαρε ἴνοβαρ ..."), but Augustine could not find in them anything which accorded with the evidence of his senses or with the reasonable explanation governed by numbers which he had both found and understood in the books of the 'secular scientist'.7 Nevertheless, he was not altogether certain that in Mani's writings, if only they were properly explained, he could not find as adequate an account of these matters as he found in the natural philosophers. In which case (both accounts being equally acceptable), he allows that he would have preferred that of Mani accepting his authority because of his "credit for sanctity"8 and thus remained a Manichee.
Augustine himself was unable to make any sense of Mani's teachings about these subjects and the problem of comparing the two accounts had been present to him almost from the time that he first fell in with the sect. During those nine years none of the other members whom he happened to meet had been able to answer his questions but all had promised him Faustus, the Manichaean 'bishop' of Rome by whom these and any other questions that he might have could easily be resolved. Finally Faustus arrived in Carthage and although the man was both pleasant and eloquent, Augustine was sorely disappointed. For he soon discovered what Faustus himself did not try to conceal — that he was altogether unable to resolve Augustine's questions by providing an exact, comprehensive account of the Manichaean teachings concerning the movement of the heavenly bodies. And, as the celebrated Faustus had failed his expectations, Augustine now despaired of finding any other Manichee who could answer his questions. From this moment Augustine began to lose interest in the Manichees in the sense that he abandoned his efforts to advance in the study of that gnosis or knowledge which the sect claimed to possess. And although he continued for a while to maintain his relations with these men, he did so only because he could not yet find a compelling reason to prefer any other course.
This whole history is certainly quite peculiar to Augustine but here as elsewhere he is concerned to show its universal significance by demonstrating that anyone who has reached a point similar to his own is bound to abandon his confidence in the authority or credibility of a teacher such as Mani—and what this point is he tells us when he says that he had so far learnt to distinguish between truth and eloquence. Now this is not to say that Augustine had discovered the Truth but rather, that he had recognized the form which Truth must have. Namely, that it cannot be contradictory, and as a consequence, that it must be comprehensible not merely in the sense that the words in which it is heard must be understood, but that they must also be capable of being understood in such a way that they may be seen to contain no contradiction. In Conf., V, vi, 10 Augustine tells us that God had already taught him that a thing was neither truly said merely because it was eloquently phrased and false because awkwardly put, nor false because pompously spoken and true because bluntly stated.

The universal significance of this moment and one sense in which it can properly be interpreted as the working of divine providence arises from the fact that anyone who
understands what is meant by 'Truth; must already know that it cannot be contradictory. Thus, while the eloquence or barbarity with which any doctrine is propounded may initially attract or repel a man, neither eloquence nor barbarity in itself has anything to do with this, the essential condition of Truth. And, while it is not necessary that a man move behind the words in which any doctrine about the Truth is expressed, it is necessary, if he is to discover the Truth, that he look beyond the form of its expression to determine whether the sense of the words in which it is expressed is self-contradictory or not.

This demand can of course make itself felt at any number of points in a man's life and equally providential, but now in a particular rather than a universal sense, are the 'accidental' means, the "wonderful and secret" ways, by which Augustine understands that he was led to this position. In his particular case he interprets this demand as having arisen primarily in relation to his discovery of the account of certain natural phenomena such as he found in his studies of the disciplinae liberalis, in comparison to which the teachings of the Manichees that he had determined to accept as the Truth, did not seem to be capable of the same comprehensible, non-contradictory explanation.
We can now explain the reason why Augustine gave up his efforts to advance in the study of that gnosis or knowledge of the Truth which the Manichees claimed to possess. For Mani proposed, and the Manichees believed, that he was in all his teachings directly inspired by the Holy Spirit—that is, by Truth itself. But if—as Augustine had now become convinced—his teachings about natural phenomena were incomprehensible (incomprehensible (deltrans)), while others could provide a reasoned account of these matters, then the credibility of Mani as a teacher of the Truth must thereby be destroyed in other matters as well. For, if he who pretends to speak with the voice of the Holy Spirit cannot explain what others who do not make this claim can be seen to explain, then his credibility as a teacher of Truth must be altogether vitiated. And this is the case not only for Augustine but, for all others in a similar position wherever and whenever they may be.

It is important for our grasp of the sequel where Augustine adopts the position of the sceptics that we understand this business as clearly as possible. There is no doubt a modern prejudice that that explanation of natural phenomena which is seen to 'work' is therefore true. And since Augustine allows that the explanations of the
natural philosophers were successful — that things did indeed turn out as they predicted\textsuperscript{27} — we may too easily assume that he likewise regarded them as true in an unqualified sense\textsuperscript{28} and so concluded that the Manichaean teachings about nature which neither accorded with the principles of mathematics nor the evidence of his senses — which in short could not be seen to 'work' — were therefore contradictory and detestable. And since moreover the 'religious' and 'secular' theories of the Manichees did indeed form a single whole, the discovery of a contradiction in this one part would therefore provide the reason why he abandoned the whole of their teachings at this point. Some modern readers\textsuperscript{29} have supposed this to be the form of Augustine's argument but this is not the case as we may see from the following considerations.

In the first place he has not yet actually discovered any contradiction in the content of the Manichaean teachings. For while their teachings about the movement of the heavenly bodies seem to be at variance (\textit{longe diversum erat}),\textsuperscript{30} with the principles of mathematics and the evidence of his senses, Augustine was in exactly the same position with respect to these questions after his conversations with Faustus as he had been in for most of the preceding nine years. That is, they remain for him merely unexplained and he still does not know whether they can be explained or not.
Furthermore, we should also be careful to note that, however 'successful' the natural sciences might be in describing and predicting those events which the senses reveal and however comprehensible on account of their conformity with the principles of mathematics, it is clear that Augustine himself regarded such explanations as merely probable, providing at best a likely account of the matter. This we may judge from the fact that although he had known and understood the account of the 'secular scientists' for almost nine years, in itself this was not a sufficient cause for him to reject the Manichees' teachings. And furthermore, as we have seen, he allows that if the Manichees could have provided a comprehensible explanation of these things he would then have been uncertain (*incertum*), as to which account to accept and would have had to decide the question on other grounds.

The reason for this uncertainty is that the connection between such rational mathematical calculations and the events which they describe is only to be found at the level of the senses—that is, in the fact that things are actually seen to happen as they predict. And yet, however 'successful' these accounts may be, in themselves (*qua* calculations), they do not nor can they establish the necessity that things must happen according to their predictions.
In short, they depend on experience for their justification and thus Augustine calls such knowledge, *veritas*,\(^3\) that is, a practical knowledge or skill gained by and depending upon experience. But the 'certainty' of any knowledge that depends in this way on experience can only be a greater or lesser degree of probability. For experience, which is tied to the senses and thus to the particular, can never rise to a universal grasp of its objects which is required for an (absolutely), certain judgement. And likewise, what is merely probable can never be used to determine whether or not any doctrine is logically (i.e., rationally and universally), contradictory.

Thus we say that, as a result of this affair, Augustine had not yet discovered any contradiction in the content of the Manichaean teachings. And the reason why he altogether gives up his efforts to advance in gnosis of the sect at this point is not because the Manichaean doctrines themselves have been discovered to be contradictory in this 'secular' part - and consequently in the whole - but rather, as we have explained above, because the credibility of Māni as a teacher of the Truth has been altogether destroyed for Augustine. It is then on this account that, as a result of this incident, Augustine can no longer assume that in his other teachings he (Māni) knows or possesses the Truth. In other words, he cannot merely ignore that part of their sys-
tem which proposes to explain the movement of the heavenly bodies but otherwise remain as he had before, firmly convinced that Mani knew the Truth and that by following his teachings he (Augustine) was actually on the way to the Truth.

Thus, while on the one hand, he can no longer continue a Manichee as he had during all those years between the time when he first discovered the account of the 'secular scientists' and his meeting with Faustus, on the other hand, precisely because, so far, it is only the authority or credibility of Mani as a teacher of the Truth that has been discredited, Augustine was not bound by his desire for the Truth to separate himself altogether (επείγοντας σπαραγων), from the Manichees since he does not yet know that their teachings are false.\(^\text{34}\) And so, as he tells us, he continued to associate with members of the sect, both in Carthage and at Rome, even though he no longer thought it certain that the Manichees did actually possess the Truth which they claimed to know.\(^\text{35}\) As we shall see Augustine was eventually brought to relinquish altogether his association with the Manichees through his encounter with the Sceptics (Academics), on the one hand and Ambrose on the other. He deals with the logic of this movement in the second half of the fifth book.\(^\text{36}\)

Before we turn to this business there is a further point to notice in the first part of the book. This is Augustine's
criticism of the 'secular scientists' and of his own desire for such knowledge as they possessed. For, in spite of the fact that their theories concerning the movement of the heavenly bodies are at best a likely account because they depend on experience, at the same time and for the very same reason, in comparison to the Manichee's teachings about these matters, Augustine also maintains that the theories of the natural philosophers are true and those of the Manichees false. The reason for this is that the former do at least conform to what the senses reveal, while the latter which claim to offer a true explanation of the sensible but are not even bound by the evidence of the senses are therefore simply the products of a 'fantastic' imagination. Of course at the time Augustine could not make this judgement about the Manichees because he did not yet know whether or not their theories could be shown to conform to the evidence of the senses. However, in principle, explanations of natural phenomena such as the 'secular scientists' provide occupy an intermediate position between purely subjective, fantastic accounts like those of the Manichees on the one hand and, on the other hand, the objective, universal Truth itself, to which, as we have explained, the senses cannot directly attain because they are bound to the particular. It is then
in relation to the former fantastic conjectures which are necessarily false, insofar as they do not even conform to the evidence of the senses, that the theories of the natural philosophers are properly called 'true'. While, at the same time, in relation to Truth itself, the latter are merely a probable or likely account—a matter of opinion, which, even though it might be true, is not grasped in the form of a certain, indubitable knowledge.

But although the opinions of the natural philosophers are true in the sense that they may be seen to conform to the evidence of the senses and in this they are closer to the Truth than the fantastic notions of the Manichees, Augustine nevertheless criticizes both the 'secular scientists' and his own desire for the kind of knowledge which they possessed. The reason for this criticism is that such a knowledge (peritia), in itself, does not and cannot reveal the Truth. And yet, because the skill to predict eclipses of the sun and moon accurately to the day and hour, causes wonder and astonishment in those who do not know this art, they that do know it do thereby both triumph and are extolled, vainly imagining themselves great and wise on this account even though they have no knowledge of the Truth itself. So long therefore as these sciences ignore the search for Truth itself, such skill as they do
confir can only serve and be sought as an instrument that brings to its possessor power and glory in the society of man. And thus the desire for this knowledge involves essentially the same fault that Augustine has already criticized in his earlier desire for that knowledge of gnosis which the Manichees claimed to possess. 45

However, Augustine also recognizes - at least at the time he wrote the Confessions, though not indeed at the time of his meeting with Faustus 46 - that the knowledge of nature, such as the 'secular scientists' possess (eriticia), could lead to a knowledge of the Truth (gnoissementum), if, rather than merely resting with experience and opinion, an inquiry is made into the conditions which are necessary for such explanations to achieve that degree of accuracy and certainty of which they are manifestly capable. 47 We shall not investigate this matter here since the discovery of the Truth (God, first principle), from the study of creation (nature), is fully treated by Augustine in the seventh book 48. There also he explains what he notes here, that just when men do come to a knowledge of God through the creature, if they neither know nor acknowledge Christ, the Word of God, they are bound to fail to honour God and as a consequence they remain altogether separated from the Truth which they know 49 and their Wisdom turns into folly. 50
Finally, having indicated that one can come to an altogether certain knowledge of the Truth through the study of nature, Augustine is at pains to insist here— for those of his readers who, on the one hand, have already come to this knowledge or, on the other hand, who may desire it as he then did—that this is not the only manner, in which the Truth can be apprehended—as if only those who are skilled in these matters can come to God. Indeed, inasmuch as Augustine will show that the knowledge of the Truth that a man can come to through the study of creation necessarily separates him from the Truth known, this manner of knowing the Truth is in the end wholly inadequate, ineffectual and undesirable as a means of grasping *Deus* God.

Against this scientific and philosophical knowledge Augustine places the faithful man (*homo fidelis*), whose 'knowledge' of God is of an altogether different order. For this one may be quite ignorant of the explanation of natural phenomena such as the 'secular scientists' profess and have, even less, that scientific grasp of its principle (i.e., the first principle of nature), to which the philosopher has attained, yet he does 'know' the Truth in the form of belief in an established authority. But precisely because he does not know it as the direct result of his own activity (thought), while on the one hand he cannot be certain that the Truth to which he holds is the Truth indeed,
on the other hand, because he has received the Truth, he
cannot regard it as an instrument, the uses of which lie
within his power but rather he must know himself as a ser-
vant of the Truth. And, by serving the Truth in a humble,
pious, dutiful and fearful manner, the Truth is honoured
rather than the man. 54 Thus, although the faithful man
does not directly and immediately know the Truth, his piety
is indeed wisdom, for by it he avoids that presumptuous
relation to the Truth which Augustine claims is the in-
evitable consequence of that knowledge which the scientists
and philosophers possess and which is altogether false since
it is bound to confuse the universal Truth with the particu-
lar ends of the man so that as a result he ends up in the
contradictory position of worshipping the creature rather
than the Truth. 56

Although the full exposition and justification of these
teachings has not yet appeared, we nevertheless note here
that, so far, Augustine had placed before his readers both
the following dilemma and what he also maintains as its
resolution. On the one hand he allows that one can come to
a certain knowledge of the Truth through the study of nature
- but, such a knowledge prevents the knower from doing and
coming to the Truth and thus ultimately his wisdom becomes
folly. On the other hand he says that he who believes in
the Truth as received from authority may both do the Truth
and be actually on his way to it — but, immediately he cannot 
know if it is the Truth that he serves. And finally, August-
ine has proposed that this dilemma is resolved in Christ in
whom alone it is possible both to know and to do the Truth.
The sense of these positions and the reasons for which Augus-
tine maintains them are fully developed in the seventh,
eighth and ninth books of the Confessions but we now return 
to the argument that is immediately before us.

At this point Augustine tells us that he was then 
persuaded by his friends to go to Rome to teach there what 
he had been teaching in Carthage. However, in addition to 
recounting these events he also means to show us that, even 
in matters like these which seem to be altogether particular 
and arbitrary it is possible to see the most secret workings 
of divine mercy by which men are led to the Truth.57

"But in truth you, my hope and my portion in the land 
of the living, you moved me to change my earthly 
place for the salvation of my soul, vexing me at 
Carthage with goads by which I might be driven thence 
and offering enticements at Rome by which I might be 
drawn thither, through the agency of men who loved 
a dying life; the ones doing insane things here, 
the others promising me vain rewards there: and 
for the setting-straight of my ways you secretly 
used both their and my own perversities. For on
the one hand those who disturbed my tranquility
were blinded by a foul madness and on the other hand
those who invited me to other things had only a
taste for the world and I, who shunned a true
misery here, strove after a false happiness
there". 58 (V,viii,14)
In considering the reasons for which he moved to Rome
Augustine thus distinguishes on the one hand, the attraction
of the greater riches and honours which that city promised, 58
and on the other hand - what he counted much more important
- his repulsion from the unruly and destructive behaviour of
his students in Carthage. 60 Such are the altogether worldly
reasons which then moved him to leave Carthage - but his
whole purpose in this chapter is to show the reason why he
was moved by these reasons. For at this level he discovers
the workings of the divine providence by which he and all
other men are led by the Truth to the Truth. Now such an
argument has two sides and in this chapter Augustine develops
both of them: the first in relation to his motives for
leaving (Conf., V,viii,14) and the second in relation to
Monica's efforts to restrain him (Conf., V,viii,15).
In the first place such a move as he then made can
properly be understood as the working of divine providence
- regardless of the worldly reasons for which it was then made - if only it (or any similar move), can also be understood as the consequence of a man being led by the Truth to abandon an even worse position. And it is precisely this which Augustine aims to show us in his statement of the number and relative importance of the reasons why he left for Rome. For, in the destruction of his assumption that Manī knows and possesses the Truth, Augustine's own desire for the Truth has not been destroyed and so he has in a certain sense returned to the position that he held immediately after reading the Hortensius when he desired the Truth above all else and scorned his worldly aims and ambitions but did not know where to look for the Truth. And, having come there to the idea of the Truth, while he cannot now mistake his own subjective aims and ambitions for the objective Truth, on the other hand, since for the moment he has no idea where to continue his search for the Truth, these worldly aims and ambitions which were always present both before and during his years as a Manichee, remain the only positive goods which are now able to attract him. However, inasmuch as they appear and are recommended simply in themselves, apart from any connection with the Truth, they cannot greatly attract him. On the other hand, because he no longer
believes that he is in any way on the way to the Truth; nor can he any longer suffer in his worldly pursuits (and this means, above all else, his teaching), that he be subjected to those students who neither know the objective nature of the Truth nor can be restrained by the bonds of human law. For such conditions in his worldly activities were tolerable only so long as he actually thought himself to be on the way to the Truth. And so as he tells us, his desire and even compulsion to go to Rome was somewhat moved by the hope of worldly success but more so, and indeed almost exclusively, by this negative consideration. To the degree that his worldly reasons for going to Rome were themselves moved in this way by the Truth, Augustine has then shown this incident as an instance of the workings of divine providence.

In the second place, this same affair can also be interpreted as a manifestation of divine mercy if one looks to the future, to the Truth to which Augustine was to come through this move. And so he says, "You knew, O God, for what reason I went away from here and went there, but you did not make it known either to me or to my mother." (Viii,15). Now the discovery of this reason belongs to the sequel where, as we shall see, Augustine is moved from Rome to Milan and his acquaintance with Ambrose, to the books of the Platonists, to the direct vision of the Truth.
which he describes in Book VII and finally to the conversion in the garden and his subsequent baptism. And only when we have arrived at this last position will it be possible, in retrospect, to see how in each of these moves he was actually going towards the Truth. But, while neither Augustine nor Monica knew at the time that his move to Rome was actually a step towards the Truth, Augustine not only criticizes the reasons which then moved him to go, but he also criticizes his mother's too eager desire either to restrain him in Africa or to go with him to Rome. For although she prayed daily for the salvation of his soul and in this expresses both her own desire that her son be led to the Truth and her utter dependence on the Truth to lead Augustine to itself, at the same time she also contradicts herself in refusing to be parted from him. For this desire either has nothing to do with the salvation of his soul but springs from another source, or else it presumes that, apart from her, he cannot come to the Truth.

That the latter alternative is not the case is testified by the fact that Monica soon resumed her prayers for his soul's salvation even though he was in Rome and she in Carthage and this would not be possible if indeed she held that her tears and prayers for Augustine were only instru-
mental in leading him to the Truth insofar as he was made constantly aware of them by her continual presence with him. Rather, Augustine places this desire of Monica's in the legacy or inheritance of Eve (veliquirium Evaej, referring to that consequence of the fall which, according to the Genesis account, women in particular, are bound to suffer. Women, that is, in their unique, natural capacity as mothers, as distinguished either from mankind in general, or men considered in their natural peculiarity. Augustine interprets this legacy as the natural inclination (carnale occiderium), of a mother to keep her children with her which, as he says must lead her to seek in sorrow what she had brought forth in sorrow when, as here, her children are also bound to leave her in order to come to the Truth.

Now although this is clearly the case in this particular instance, it lies beyond the scope of Augustine's purpose and argument in this text to show whether and how it is always the case that, in order to come to the Truth, the children must in some sense leave their mother or, on the other hand that such a natural affection for their children is a necessary consequence of woman's particular and natural capacity as a mother. However on this latter and for modern readers perhaps the more obscure point, something of the reason of Augustine's position could be brought out in an
adequate translation of the difficult phrase *sensus* 
*aestimation*. For although *aestimation* is *in general* any 
longing or ardent desire, it is *properly* a desire for some-
thing once possessed. 78 And thus, the Latin reader would 
understand by this phrase, a desire which necessarily 
belongs to woman's immediate nature (*carnealis*, opp. 
*spiritualis*), 79 just because it arises from her separation 
from what was once a part of her nature.

But Monica was not only moved by this natural attrac-
tion for her son since she also even more ardently desired 
his spiritual birth. 80 And, though suffering on account 
of these natural desires 81 which she had momentarily pre-
ferred, 82 she was nevertheless soon turned about (*conversa*), 
and once again sought the spiritual good of her son in the 
only way in which she could 83 and was eventually to see 
her principal (*cardinis*) desire realized through this same 
voyage that had first taken him from her. 84 

Soon after he arrived in Rome, Augustine was struck 
down by a serious illness that almost killed him 85 and 
he notes that at this time he did not desire to be bap-
tized 86 as he had on the only other occasion when he seems 
to have been in danger of dying from bodily sickness. 87 
Now the point of this remark is simply to show us that, 
even though he had now for a long time understood that
there is an eternal, imperishable Truth and desired it above all else, and while he had now also altogether lost the confidence that, through the Manichees, he was actually on the way to it; nevertheless, when faced with the immediate possibility of his bodily death, because he still thinks and is determined that the Truth can be grasped immediately and directly, he is still bound to reject the Christian position since immediately it does seem to be contradictory. And this, even though, apart from the Manichees, Christianity was the only other way that he knew of, which promised him a part of the eternal life of the Truth. In short, by refusing to relinquish his claim to grasp the Truth immediately and directly (which makes it an instrument within his power and which as we will recall was the principal attraction of the Manichees), — by refusing that is to confess his sin — his utter incapacity to come to the Truth he prefers to die apart from the Truth rather than come to it in any other manner than this one which pleases his vanity. And thus as he says, by the logic of his own position as by the logic of the universe itself, had he then died he neither would nor could have had any part in the eternal life of the Truth.

We can now see both the reason and the precise nature of the association that Augustine maintained with the Manichees in Rome. For although his confidence in the
authority of Mani as a teacher of the Truth has been destroyed, he does still hold in common with the Manichees the same view of man, of the Truth and of man's relation to it. And it is just in terms of this common view — that it can be grasped immediately and directly — that he still finds his friends amongst the Manichees and is resolved to rest content with their views until he should find something better. 96

At this point there arose in Augustine the notion that the position of the Academic philosophers (Sceptics), 97 was more prudent (prudentior), than any other that he could adopt 98 and from this he was, in time, moved to abandon altogether his association with the Manichees. 99

The precise terms of Augustine's association with the thought and teachings of the New Academy have been the occasion of no small interest amongst modern scholars and are complicated by a certain difficulty in ascertaining both what the various members of this school taught and what, at different times, Augustine understood them to be teaching. However, for our purposes we can understand this business quite adequately by taking a close account of what Augustine has to say in the fifth book of the Confessions.

He first mentions the Academics in V, x, 19 where he says that, during his stay in Rome, there arose in him the
thought that the Sceptics were more prudent \(\text{prudentior}\), than the rest. For, allowing that he did not yet understand the real intention of their teaching,\(^{100}\) he tells us that then held the common view \(\text{vulgus}\), that they resolved \(\text{censeo}\), that all things ought to be doubted, and judged \(\text{decerno}\), that men were not able to know or grasp \(\text{comprehendo}\), any Truth.\(^{101}\)

In a certain obvious sense the attraction of this view follows directly from the position Augustine has already developed. For just because his former certainty that the Manichees possessed the Truth has now been destroyed, so has he arrived at a position from which he can distinguish with certainty between belief and knowledge. And thus, knowing that he does not know any way to the Truth,\(^{102}\) he concludes that the position of the sceptics is (seems) more prudent \(\text{prudentior}\), than any other.

If we are to grasp the precise sense of what Augustine took from the Sceptics we must pay very close attention to our text and the first thing to note is that, as a consequence of this position, Augustine is not moved to leave the Manichees immediately. For, in the following sentences, he tells us that he continued to hold their beliefs and to use the friendship of the Manichees although he now did not
hesitate to try to dissuade his Manichee host from placing too much confidence in their teachings.\textsuperscript{103} And, as we know, in the following year\textsuperscript{104} he received the position of municipal rhetor at Milan from Symmachus, the prefect of Rome, through the recommendation of his Manichaean friends.\textsuperscript{105}

Now from this continuing association with the Manichees we can see that what Augustine must have taken from the Sceptics is at any rate not a knowledge that man cannot grasp the Truth. For, if he had come to know this, then the claims of the Manichees that they actually grasped the Truth would be proven false and his desire for the Truth would then have forced him to break with them altogether. However, at the end of this book - of a time when he had moved to Milan, we find him saying that he then began to look for a certain proof to convict the Manichees of falsehood.\textsuperscript{106}

Thus, we would say that what Augustine took from the Academics was the knowledge of his own ignorance. For, while he continues to hold to the Manichee doctrines (for want of anything better), he now does so knowing that he does not know whether or not they can lead a man to the Truth and it is of this that he tries to persuade his Manichaean friends. Namely, that is, that unless and until they actually know the Truth themselves, they should not think
that they know that Mani knows it.

Furthermore, Augustine now sees that in holding to the Manichaean doctrines, while he may be on the way to the Truth, if this is so he does not know it but merely holds to it in the form of belief. And it is just on this account that he no longer maintains their teachings with his former zeal.\textsuperscript{107} For, the original attraction of the Manichee's position was just their claim to give an immediate and direct knowledge of the Truth which would not put him in the dependent relation of belief. And yet as he now sees, this is precisely what his acceptance of their teachings amounts to. However, as he has just shown us in connection with his illness, for his part, Augustine was still quite unwilling to give up his claim to know the Truth immediately and directly although for the moment he has no idea how this goal might be realized, and it is in just such a situation that the position of the Sceptics will indeed appear more prudent than any other that a man can adopt.

Now this understanding of what Augustine took from the Sceptics is confirmed in the sequel where we shall discover both the reason why he adopts this position and also its consequences. As we have already noted, Augustine soon moved from Rome to Milan and, as he tells us, he did so be-
cause the students in Rome had devised a scheme whereby they avoided paying their masters. At Milan Augustine was met by Ambrose, the Catholic bishop, who was most kind towards him and took him in a fatherly way, from which Augustine says, he began to love him. Now in the heyday of Augustine's Manichaean attachment such a thing would not have been possible. For, as he then thought that he knew that the Manichees had the Truth, he had only scorn and ridicule for the Catholics and could only refuse their friendship. But once he knows that he does not know the Truth he can be moved by such kindness from a Christian. However, for the very same reason, he is at first attracted to Ambrose only by his kindness and not as a teacher of the Truth (doctor). That is, as he now knows that he does not know the way to the Truth he is left with nothing more than his worldly interests. And so, moved by his friendship for Ambrose and his old abiding concern with eloquencia, he went to hear Ambrose preach. "Unknowing, I was led to him by you, that through him I might be led to you, knowing." (V, xiii, 23).

At first Augustine was simply interested in his manner of speaking but, with the words (verbi), he could not avoid taking in the sense (res), for as we have seen
Augustine had already learned to distinguish between truth and mere elocution. And from this, little by little, he began to see that the Catholic faith could be maintained without absurdity (impudenter), against those objections of the Manichees which, for so many years, had seemed to him to be unanswerable. For he found certain difficult passages from the Old Testament quite credible when spiritually (spiritualiter), expounded which, when taken literally (ad litteram acciperem), in their immediate sense seemed altogether contradictory, and therefore untenable. 116

As a result, Augustine says that while he had come to see that the Catholic way could be held without absurdity, he did not on this account judge that the Manichees should be abandoned altogether. For, in terms of their defensibility, both positions seemed equal 117 and thus he judged that, although the Catholic side no longer seemed to him to be vanquished, neither yet was it victor. 118

The following logic lies behind this business. Insofar as a man merely assumes that the Truth can be grasped immediately and directly, he is bound; as we have already seen, to look for it in the immediate, the sensible, the literal sense. 119 But just as the whole course of the development
that Augustine has put before us in this fifth book has brought him to the recognition that he had indeed made such an assumption, so, by the very knowledge of his ignorance is he freed from the assumption that the Truth must necessarily be sought in the immediate and the literal sense. And thus, just because he knows that he does not know whether or not the Manichees possess the Truth, he becomes capable for the first time of actually understanding a 'spiritual' explanation such as Ambrose gave and by means of which the immediate contradictions of the Catholic position can be resolved so that Catholic Christianity does at least become credible.

And now that the positions of both the Manichees and the Catholics were seen to be equally credible, since Augustine had also seen that Manichees were mistaken in what they said about the Catholics, he then began to look around to see if he could find certain proofs (certis documentis), by which he could show the falsehood of their own teachings. But although Augustine is no longer bound by the assumption that the Truth can only be found in the immediate or sensible nature of the universe, he does not yet know that it cannot be found there nor, if not, where else it might be found. And because he does not know, it is still possible for him to hold on to his claim to grasp the Truth in an immediate and direct way, which claim he is still totally unwilling to relinquish.
But if one is determined to grasp the Truth in this way, then it must be grasped through the senses, and so as he says, he was still unable to think of a spiritual substance by which he could easily have proven the falsity of the Manichaean doctrines. 121

Finally, in the last chapter of this book Augustine once again speaks of the Academics and it is here that we can see most clearly what he understood them to be teaching and the reason why he adopted their position. We can state the matter in this way.

As we have already seen, Augustine knows full well that, insofar as the Truth may only be grasped through the senses, then the only kind of knowledge that a man can have is a greater or lesser degree of probability. Now on the one hand, the affair with Faustus and the 'secular scientists' had destroyed the credibility of Mani as a teacher of the Truth. That is, Augustine no longer simply and immediately believed or assumed that Mani knew the Truth although, as he does not know whether or not his teachings are true or false, it was still possible to hold to the doctrines of the sect until something better should appear. On the other hand, while he is doubtful that Mani can make good his claim to teach the Truth immediately and directly, for his part Augustine is still determined not to give up his own claim
to know the Truth in this way. But if, as Augustine was resolved, the Truth must be grasped immediately and directly, then it must be grasped through the senses, and if through the senses, then for a certainty the only knowledge that a man can have is a greater or lesser degree of probability. And thus Augustine came of necessity to the position of the Sceptics which we have already indicated. That is, he came to know for a certainty that he does not know and cannot know anything for certain insofar as the only source of knowledge is in experience and the senses. Now this is of course very different from the knowledge that all knowledge comes from the senses and is consequently uncertain which, if it were known, would constitute a certain proof of the falsity of any position, such as the Manichee's, that claims to have a certain knowledge or grasp of the Truth.

Now as we have seen, Augustine does not yet know that the Manichee's teachings are false and indeed he is now looking for a certain proof to convict them of falsehood. However, on the basis of the recognition that, insofar as all knowledge comes from the senses it is merely probable, Augustine is now moved to leave the Manichees altogether for in this case, wisdom (sapientia), must be reduced as it were to prudence (prudentia), and consists in determining and
selecting the more probable. And thus, although he does not know that all knowledge must come through the senses, he does now know that Mani's claim to possess the Truth from some other source than the senses (i.e., by direct inspiration from the Holy Spirit)\textsuperscript{122} is not something about which he has any certain knowledge. But as he is still totally unwilling to recognize any other truth than that which can be grasped immediately and directly, so on the one hand is he no longer willing to accept and act upon those teachings about the way to the Truth which, as he now sees, can only be accepted on Mani's authority, and, on the other hand, \textit{insofar as} the Manichees actually teach that the Truth is to be found in the sensible nature of the universe, Augustine is bound by the logic of the Sceptical position to determine and prefer as the greater truth the more probable account of the sensible nature of the universe.

And so, as he tells us, he took a closer look at the theories of the natural philosophers concerning the body of the world and the whole of nature to which the senses of the flesh can attain. And being convinced anew that the views of no small number of these natural philosophers were indeed more probable than those of the Manichees, he therefore resolved (\textit{decerno}) to abandon the Manichee's position altogether, being moved in this by what he then understood to be the scepticism of the New Academy.\textsuperscript{123}
In the last sentences Augustine also tells us that he was quite unwilling to give the care of his soul to these 'philosophers' because they were without the saving name of Christ.\textsuperscript{124} We have already suggested the reason for this position when Augustine first mentioned it in connection with the Hortensius,\textsuperscript{125} and to understand why he restates it here we have only to recall that, during all these years Augustine had most certainly regarded Manichaeeism as the true form of Christianity.\textsuperscript{126} Therefore (\textit{ergo}), having given up this 'form' of Christianity (i.e., the Manichaean), he says that he determined to continue as a catechumen in the Catholic church, commended to him by his parents, until such time as something certain would appear by which he could direct his course.\textsuperscript{127}
NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. Conf., V,iii,3 "Pro liquor in conspectu dei mi annun illum univisimum aetatis meae."

2. Those who possessed this science and whom we would today call astronomers were known by Augustine as mathematici - appropriately, as we shall see, because their science consisted primarily in the calculations which they made on the basis of certain mathematical models of the universe and by means of which they could explain and predict the observed movements of the stars and planets.

In De Diversis Quaestionibus, LXXXIII, q.45,1 Augustine distinguishes between this strict, scientific sense of the word and a certain vulgar sense which it had acquired by his time according to which mathematici also referred to those who read horoscopes. In Conf., IV,iii,4 Augustine uses the word in this vulgar sense (...ille plano, quos mathematicos vocant ..."), speaking of the Manichee astrologers whom he then consulted. However, in the context of our passage in Conf., V,iii,4 it is clear that he speaks here of the works of astronomy rather than astrology.
3. In Conf., IV, xvi, 30 Augustine speaks of the books of the liberal arts ("... omnes libros arvium, quae librorum redunt ..."), which he had read and understood without the help of any human teacher. In Conf., V, xiv, 25 Augustine once again allows that he found a more likely account with the 'philosophers' than with the Manichees not only concerning the movement of the heavenly bodies but also of the body of this world and of the whole of nature which the senses can perceive. We take these books of the 'philosophers' of which Augustine speaks here to refer in general to certain works concerning the science or philosophy of nature and so indeed does he specify them at the end of Conf., V, iii, 6 "... libris saecularibus sapientiae ...". A. Solignac in his 'Introduction' to BA 13, pp. 92-3 comes to the same conclusion: "... il s'agit cette fois de physique, selon tout l'entendu de ce terme dans la philosophie ancienne."

4. Conf., V, iii, 3 "Et quoniam multa philosophorum legérar memoriæque mandata retinebam, ex eis quaedam comparabam illis maniachorum longis fabulis, et mihi probabiliora ista vidébatur, ..."


6. Conf., V, iii, 6 "Multa tamen ab eis ex ipsa creatura vera dicta retinebam, et occurrebat mihi ratio per numeros et ordinem temporum et visibiles attestationes siderum et
confessior sum dicite Manichaei, paro de vis ujus multo
septem ephoresine delinuimus, et non rqui securabat
ratio non antiquiorum et antiquiorum nec objectum
luminisiam nec quidquid ita in libris sacris ut sic
tentisc diuorum."

In Contra Pellicem Manichaeum, iix Felix makes the
following statement in which he shows the scientific pre-
tension of the Manichees with respect to the questions of
astronomy that troubled Augustine. "Et quia venit
Manichaeus, et per quam praestititionem docuit nos initium,
medium et finem: docuit nos de fabrica mundi, quae facit
est, et unde facta est, et qui fecerunt; docuit nos quare
dice et quare nos; docuit nos de eurou solis et lunae; quia
hoc in saulo non audivimus, nec in easterorum Apostolorum
scripturis: hoc eredimus, quia ipse est Paraclitus."

7. Conf., V,11,6 "Ibi autem eredere iubebam, et ad illas
ratiocines numeris et oculis meis exploratas non occurrerat et
longe diversum erat."

8. Conf., V,v,9 "Sed tamen nondum liquido conpereram,
utrum etiam secundum eius verba vicissitudines longiorum et
breviorum diierum atque noctium et ipse noctis et diei et
deliquia luminum et si quid eius modi in aliis libris
logorum, posset exponi, ut, si forte posset, incertum quidem
"ibi flover, utrum ita se rect haec et a in fidem
nec illius veritatis propter pravilum sanatissimam
praecipuam." 

9. Conf., V,vi,10 "Et per annos ferme ipsos novem, quibus
vos animo vazabundus audivi, nimia estendior decidere ven-
turum expectabam istum Faustum. oculi enim corum, in quae
forte incurrexsem, qui valium rerum quaestionibus a me
obieicis describant, illum mihi promittebant, autus adventu
etiamque colloquio facillime mihi hace et si qua forte
maiora quaevis encedatissimo expedirentur." In Conf.,
V,iii, 3 Augustine speaks of Faustus as a 'bishop' accord-
ing to the Manichaean fashion, "... quidam manichaeorum
episcopus, Faustus nomine ...": See BA 13, 'Notes Complé-
mentaires', 17, pp. 673-674 for a brief article and bibli-
ography on Faustus. To this bibliography should also be
added the very thorough analysis of Augustine's contro-
sories with the three Manichees, Faustus, Fortunatus and Felix,
in the recent work of F. Decret, Aspects. Chapter III,
pp.51-70 provides a review of what little is known about
the man.

10. Conf., V,vi,12 "Quae tamen ubi consideranda et dis-
cutienda protuli, modeste sane itel nec aecus est subire
ipseam sinceram."
11. Conf., V,vii,12 "Libri quidque eorum pleni sunt longissimis subscriptis de aetate et aetoribus et sole et luna: quae mihi cum, quod utique expiabam, omnibus memorabatibus, quae alibi ego legeram, utrum potius illuxisset, ut Manichaeci libris continebantur, in certo vel parvi tempore redderetur, subtilem explicare posse iam non arbitrabam."

12. Conf., IV,vii,13 "retracto itaque studio, quod intenderam in Manichaeci litteras, magisque desperans de eteris eorum doctoribus, quando in multis, quae me movebant, ita ille nominatus apparuit, ...

13. Conf., V,vii,13 "Ceterum consilium omnium mecum, quod praeceps in illa scata statueram, illo homine cognito proruit: intercedidit, non ut ab eis omnino separaver, sed quasi melius quicquam non inveniens eo, quo iam quoque modo inrureram, contentus interim ecce declaraveram, nisi aliquid forte, quod magis eligendum esset, elucideret." This same position is restated in Conf., V,x,18.

14. Conf., V,iii,3 "Quam ego iam tametsi laudabam, discernem am a veritate rerum, quarum discernendum avidus eram, nec qualsi vacuo sermo exit, sed quid mihi scientiae comodum addoneret nominatus apud eum ille Faustus in-
trahur." See also Conf., V,vi,10 "Iam rebus exilibus sae-liqui etiam avero meae, nec idque mihi moliora videbantur, quia meius discebantur, nec idque vere quia diserta, nec idque expio anima, quia vultus congruos et decorum elo-quiwm. illi autem, qui eum mihi promissabant, non non verum exolveratores erant, et idque illos videbatur prudens et sapiens, quia delectabat eos locumce."

15. Conf., V,vi,10 "Iam ergo abs te didiceram nec eo debeo videri aliquid verum dict, quia eloquentior ille-tur, nec eo falsum, quia inconposito consistit signa labiorum; rurum nec idque verum, quia inpolite enuoitatur, nec idque falsum, quia splendamus sero est, sed perinde esse sapientiam et statutiam, sicut sunt cibi ubiles et inutilis, vertic autem ornatus et inornatus sicut vacis urbanis et rusticarum utrosque cibos posse ministrari."

16. Conf., V,vi,10 "Me autem docuerai deus meus mirac et occultis modis (on this last phrase see also the miris modis of Conf., V,vi,13 quoted below, n.20 and the com-ments of M. Skutella in his critical edition of the Confes-sions, Bibliotheca Teubneriana, Verlag von B. G. Teubner, Leipzig, 1934, p.83,26), et propterea credo, quod tu me docueris, quoniam verum est, nec quisquam praeter te aliud doctor est veri, ubi cumque et in omnium claruerit."
17. On this point see Comm. Conf. II, p. 135. The locus classical of this position is in Aristotle’s Metaphysics, Book IV, 1005b ff.

18. Augustine does not hesitate to testify to Faustus’ eloquence; see Conf., V, vi, 11. In Conf., V, xiii, 23 he judges it (the manner of speaking though not the content), even more “... hilaroscientis atque muloentis ...” than that of Ambrose. A summary of the texts which testify to Augustine’s praise of the accomplished eloquence of Faustus may be found in F. Decret, Aspects, pp. 51-55.

19. So, for example, all those who, without actually knowing still thought that they knew that Faustus could answer all of Augustine’s questions: see the passage from Conf., V, vi, 10 quoted above n.14.

20. See the miris et occultis modis of Conf., V, vi, 10 (quoted above, n.16), and Conf., V, vii, 13 “Manus enim tueae, deus meus, in abdito providentiae tuae non decerabant animam meam, et de sanguine cordis matris meae per lacrimas eius diebus et noctibus pro me sacrificabant tibi, et egisti mecum miris modis. tu illud egisti, deus meus. nam a domino aressus hominis dirigatur, et viam eius volet. aut quae procuratio salute praeter manum tuam reficiementem quae fecisti?” The same “miris et occultis modis” occurs also in Conf., VI, xii, 22.
21. Conf., V,v,8 "Non enim nami se accipiarvi voluit, sed solum sanctum, consolatorem et illae illam, sanctitatem pleb marriages personas in se esse persuasore eosst. See also Conf., V,v,9 "In illo 
raec, qui doctor, qui auctor, qui dux et princeps eorum, quibus illa suaderet, ita fieri ausus est, ut qui eum sequerentur non 
quentibe hominum, sed spiritum tamen sanctum se requiraretur ...

22. Conf., V,iii,6 "... est monstratur non habitis 
Monichacis, quae de his rebus multa scripsit coriosissimo 
delirmis, ...

23. Augustine knows these accounts to be reasoned because 
they are based on calculations which conform to the principals of number. See Conf., V,iii,6 "... et occurrerat 
mihii ratio per numeros ..." and "Ihi autem credere iubebar, 
et ad illas rationes numeris et seulis meis exploratas non 
ocurrebat et longe diversum erat." Also see Conf., V,vii, 
12 "...qua mihi eum, quod utique cupidabam, conlatis numeri 
orum rationibus, quas alibi ego legeram, ...

24. See Conf., V,v,8 and Conf., V,v,9 "In illo autem, qui 
doctor, qui auctor, qui dux et princeps eorum, quibus illa 
suaderet, ita fieri ausus est, ut qui eum sequerentur non
25. That is, when anyone discovers that someone who claims and is thought to possess the Truth, is seen to be unable to give a rational explanation of any matter that others who do not make such a claim can be seen to explain.


27. Conf., V,iii,4  "Menie etsi enim quodcum letz et ingenio, quod tu dedisti eis, et multi inveniunt ut praenuntiaverunt ante ruitos annos, defectus luminarum solis et lunae, quod, qua hora, quanta ex parte futuri essent, et non eos soflii numerus, et ita factum est, ut praenuntiaverunt, et scripsereunt regulas indagatas, et leguntur hodie atque ex eis praenuntiatur, quo anno ei quo mente anni et quo die nonde et qua hora dixi et quanta parte luminis sui defectura sit luna vel col: et etsi, ut praenuntiatur."

28. As we shall see, even when these explanations and predictions are seen to work, Augustine merely regards them as true in a qualified rather than in an absolute sense since there is in these explanations no necessary connection
between the rational calculations and the events which they predict.

29. M. Pellegrino argues this way in Les Confessions, p. 129. He says, "Or dans les libres mêmes attribués à Mani qui se prétendait porteur de l'Esprit-Saint, il y avait de longs développements sur les doctrines astronomiques qui ne sont pas indispensables à l'esprit religieux; mais ils ne savaient presenter aucune raison valable des phénomènes naturels, et même enseignaient des théories manifestement contredites par la science. Évidemment ce fait compromettait aussi les thèses proprement religieuses puisque, en ce système, la position scientifique était solidaire du problème religieux."

30. Conf., V,iii,6, quoted above, n.23.

31. Conf., V,iii,3 "Et quoniam multa philosophorum legaveram memoriaeque mandata retinebam, ex eis quaedam comparabant illis manichaeorum longis fabulis, et mihi probabiliora icta videbantur, quae dixerunt illi, ...". See also Conf., V,xiv,25 "Verum tamen de ipso mundi huius corpore omnique natura, quam sensus carnis attingeret, multo probabiliora plerisque sensisse philosophos magis magisque considerans atque comparans indicabam."

32. See Conf., V,v,9 quoted above n.8.
33. Conf., V,iii,3 "... nec inveniebo a superbia, nec si illi curiosis potiriu numerent stellas et haecen ar et dierum solentur obi ndas et vestiges viae obscurem."

34. Conf., V,vii,13 "Ceterum conatus tene meus, quo proficere in illa costa elaturam, illis hominum cognitae praevae insecridit, non ut ab eis omnino separaverem, sed ivam velut quidam non inventos eo, quo tam quoque suas injurias, contentus inter im cceco locaveram, nisi aliquid forte, quam magis elogium exist, elucidet."

35. In Conf., V,x,19 Augustine speaks of his continuing association with the Manichees during his stay in Rome: "Nec dissimulati cander hospiter roum repri-vere a nimia fidulis, quam sensi sec habere de rebus fabulosis, quibus manichaei libri pleni sunt. amisitam tarnen corum familiarius utabar quan notiorum hominum, qui in illa haesit non fuisse. nes sem defendebam pristina animo etate, sed tarnen familiaritas eorum - plures enim eae Roma occultat - pigrus me factobat allud quaerere ..."


37. On the truth of the positions of the 'secular scientists' see, Conf., V,iii,5 "Et multa vera de creatura dixunt ...", also Conf., V,iii,6 "Multa tamen ab eis ex ipsa creatura
vera litteri vetinexerum ..." and again Conf., 5,5,8 "Unde ille deus si hoc ista multum locutus est, ut convistus ab eis, qui ista vero dixissent, quis esset eius sensus in veteris, quae ab illorum cont, manifeste cognosceretur."

On the falsity of the Manichees' teachings about nature see Conf., 5,5,8 "Itaque cum de caele de stellis et de solis de luna motibus falsa dixisse deprehensurur ..." and also Conf., 5,5,9 "... qui tantum dementiam, siculi falsa dixisse convinseretur, ...".

38. In Conf., 5,iii,3 Augustine allows that the 'secular scientists' are able to evaluate the sensible world, whereas the Manichees cannot. "Et quoniam multa philosophorum legores remoracque mandata retinebam, ex eis quaedam comparabam illae manichaeorum longis fabulis, et mihi probabiliora ista videbantur, quae dixerunt illi, qui tantum potuerunt valere, ut possent aestimarc saeculum, quamquam eius dominum minime invenirent."

39. Augustine always uses phantasma in its strict scientific sense - parallel to the 'images' (ē ἑικόνα), in the 'line' of Plato's Republic (509d ff.) - as the proper description of the Manichees' position. See above, Comm. Conf. III, n.106 and below, n.41.
40. See *Conf.*, V, v, 9 where Augustine uses *opinio* as the proper term for this kind of knowledge (cf. probabilities).

"Cum enim audio Christianum aliquem fratrem illum aut illum ista voci centem et alium pro alio sentientem, patienter intueor opinantem hominem ..."

41. Again (see above, *Comm. Conf.* III, n. 106), without involving ourselves in the question of whether or not Augustine had read Plato's *Republic*, readers of the *Republic* will immediately recognize that Augustine has been moved in this matter from the conceit that the Truth can be found at what Plato, in the image of the 'line', calls the level of images and conjecture, to seeking it through the senses in the form of opinion.

With regard to the lower division of Plato's 'line' which treats of the visible world and which is the only reality which Augustine then recognized (see *Conf.*, III, vii, 12, and V, xiv, 25), we can observe a precise and direct correspondence between the divisions which Plato teaches and the moments through which Augustine moves. We can compare the two in this way in relation to a diagram of the lower parts of the 'line':
Plato

Intelligible world

Visible world

πύετος (S11e1) of the apprehension of ὑπὸ τοῦτον ἐδοκεῖν, τα τα ἡμᾶς εἰς καὶ τὰ τὸ φυτευτικὸν καὶ τὸ σκευαστὸν ὄλον γενομ. (510a5).

 Conrad (Conf., V,v,9) of the apprehension of "ipse mundi huius corporis omnius natura, quam sensus animi attingere!" (Conf., V,xiv,25).

εἰκάσων, καὶ τὰς ἀντανάλων (511e2) of the apprehension of τὰς εἰκόνας πρῶτον μὲν τὰς σχῆμα, ἔπεται τὰ ἐν τοῖς ἔσοπτης φαντάσματα καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς τε καὶ λειτοπίαν φανατὶ συνέζτηκεν, καὶ καὶ τὰ τολοῦτον, ... (509e1).

Imaginor (Conf., III,v,10) of the apprehension of "phantasiae corporum." (Conf., III,i,v,10).

42. "The criticism of the 'secular scientists is the general burden of Conf., V,iii,3 - V,v,9.

Ps.137:6 43. Conf., V,iii,3 "Quoniam magnus es, domine, et humilia respicis, excelsa autem a longe cognoscis nec proximas nisi obbritte corde nec invenitis a superbis, nec si illi curiosa peritia numerent stellas et harenam et dimetiantur sidcreas plagas et vestigent vias astrorum."

Ps.33:19 44. Conf., V,iii,4 "... et ita fiet, ut praenuntiatur. et
minuiur habe homines et stupent qui nesciunt ea, et ex- reluunt atque extolluntur qui sciant, ..."

45. Augustine's desire for the knowledge of the 'secular scientists' is therefore identical to the desire which moved him to fall in with the Manichees in the first place (see above Comm. Conf. III, pp. 135-136); namely, that he might learn the Truth in order to use it for his own profit and aggrandizement. This proud and arrogant effort to turn the universe to his particular desires is of course just what is common in the fault of all men in each of the ages (aetas) or stages of their lives. So far Augustine has shown this in relation to the particular form which it takes in infancy, childhood and adolescence. In the sixth, seventh and eighth books Augustine discusses the final forms which it takes in a man's maturity (iuvetns). In its spiritual sense this stage is reached in the moment that a man moves beyond the level of images and phantasy and this is precisely the movement that Augustine is making here in this rupture with the Manichees.

46. Augustine did not discover that the knowledge of nature could lead to a knowledge of the Truth until he came across the libri Platoniacorum: see Conf., VII, ix, 13 ff.
47. Augustine maintains that in general those who possess such a knowledge of nature (peritia), do not move beyond this to the knowledge of God. On the other hand he recognizes that it is always possible to come to a knowledge of God (the Truth), through the study of nature: see Conf., V,iii,5 "Et multa vera de creatura dico et veritatem, creaturae artificem, non pie quocum et ideo non inventunt, aut si inventunt, cognoscentes deum non scit deum honorant aut gratias agunt et evanescunt in cogitationibus sua et dico ut esse sapientes cibis tribuendo quae tua sunt, ac per hoc student perversos incultos etiam tibi tribuere quae sua sunt, mendacia autilice in te confirit, qui veritas es, et inmutantes gloriam in corrupti dei in similitudinem imaginis corruptibilis hominis et volucrum et quadrapedum et serpentinum, et convertunt veritatem tuam in mendacium et colunt et serviant creaturae potius quam creatori."


49. Conf., V,iii,5 "Sed non noverunt viam, verbum tuum, per quod fecisti ea quae numerant et ipse qui numerant et sensum, quo cernunt quae numerant, et mentem, de qua numerant; et sapientiae tuae non est numerus. ipse autem
unigenitus factus est nobis sapientia et iustitia et
sanctificatio et numeratus est inter nos et soluit tributum
Caesari. non noverunt hanc viam, qua descendat ad illum
a se et per eum ascendat ad eum. non noverunt hanc viam
et putant se excelsos esse cum sideribus et lucidos, et
ece vereunt in terram, et obscuratum est insipiens cor
eorum." See also the rest of this chapter quoted above, n.
47.

50. In short, although they know the Truth, they do not
know the way (via) to it; (see above Conf., V, iii, 5
(n. 49) and also especially Conf., VII, xx, 26 - VII, xx, 27),
and in consequence they are unable to "hold to" the Truth
(the teneo of Conf., III, v, 7-8: on this text, see above,


52. This position is developed in Conf., VII, xvii, 23 ff.

53. See Conf., V, iv, 71.

54. We have already seen (see Comm. Conf. III, pp. 141 - 145).
that this is the kind of service which Augustine attributes
to Monica. However here in Conf., V, v, 8 he says, "Dixisti
Job 28: enim homini: esse pietas est sapiencia," and by quoting (LXX) from Job (compare Pr. 1:7,9:10; Ps.110:10), we should take it that he has in mind, specifically those Old Testament servants of Yahweh (i.e., the Truth in its objective, universal character), such as the patriarchs of Israel and above all, Job, instead of Monica who is rather a servant of Christ (i.e., the Truth in its subjective and particular character). The full treatment of the logic of this distinction is developed in Books VII, VIII and IX of the Confessions but for the moment we shall merely note that fear or piety is everywhere man's proper relation to God in the Ancient World - i.e., where the Truth is only known in its universal form. When it is also known in its particular form through Christianity, then man's proper relation to the Truth becomes one of love.

55. The opposition in Conf., V,v,8 is between vanitas - profiteri and pietas - confiteri: "Vanitas est enim mundana ista etiam noia profiteri, pietas autem tibi confiteri." In Conf., VII,xx,26 this is explicated in terms of the opposition between praecumptio - confessio.

56. See Conf., V,iii,5 quoted above n.47 & 49.

57. Conf., V,viii,14 "Egisti ergo mecum, ut mihi persuad-
cruentum Romanum pergere et penitus ibi dormire quo ducem
Carthaginem, et haec unde mihi persuasum est, non pauc-
ernum confitteri tibi, quoniam et in his altissimi sui
recusare et praecessisse in nos misericordia tua
coegitanda et praedicanda est."

58. Conf., V.viii.14 "Verum autem tu, opera mea et morte
mea in terra vivantium, ad mutandum terram locum pro
salute animae meae et Carthaginis spiritus, quibus inci
venallerer, admovebas et Romae in cerebras, quibus adstra
proponebas mihi per homines, qui diligitur vitam mortuam,
hinc insana facientes, inde vana pellientes, et ad corrigen-
dos gressus meos utebaris occulte et illorum et mea perversi-
tate. nam et qui perturbabant eum meum, foeda
rubic sacet erant, et qui invitabant ad altum, terram
sacibant, ego autem, qui detestabar hic veram misericordia
ille falsam felicitatem appetebant."

59. Conf., V.viii.14 "Non ideo Romam sequi volui, quod
valores quasque mihi dignitas ab amicis, qui hoc
quadrans, promittebat - quamquam et leia duolans animum
une meum - ..." J. J. O'Meara in The Young Augustine, pp.
92-93 cites the career of several contemporaries of Augus-
tine as illustrations of the heights of worldly fame and
fortune to which a successful rhetor could then aspire.
60. *Conf.*, V,viii,14 "... sed illa erat omnem maxima et
meno sola, quod audiebam quietus ibi studere adolescens
et ordinario discipline reprehensio accepit, ut in eis
scholam, quo magister non utimur, passim et proteruo
inventum, nec eos admitti omnino, nisi ille permiscerit."
Augustine describes the behaviour of these students more
fully in the rest of this chapter and it is clear that they
shared the same spirit as the *eversiones* - the gang that he
has already spoken of in *Conf.*, III,iii,6. Again in *Conf.*, 
V,viii,14 he says "Envo quos merce sum studerem moce esse
noluit, cos cum doecrem regular perpell aliasces, et illo
placevar inre, uti talia non fieri omnes qui noverant
indicabant." and in *Conf.*, V,xii,22 he refers to their
activities as "... illas *eversiones* ...".

61. This is primarily expressed by the fact that Augustine
never tried to become one of the Manichaean 'Elect'. For
an explanation of the reason why this is so see *Comm.*, *Conf.*
III, n.107. In the fourth book of the *Confessions*, Augustine
gives ample testimony to his abiding concern with
worldly affairs and ambitions. Of particular interest in
relation to the question before us is his dedication of the
*De Pulchro et Apto*, made to the famous Roman rhetor Hierius
(*Conf.*, IV,xiv,21-23). Of this O'Meara accurately says,
"The gesture of the dedication to this successful orator, personally unknown to Augustine, is clear in intent: where Hierus had arrived, there Augustine very much wanted to be." (The Young Augustine, p. 96). See also Comm. Conf. IV, pp. 193 - 195 and passim for an explanation of the reason why, in practical activity, the position of the Manichees necessarily involves the believer in worldly affairs which, at the same time, he is also trying to escape.

62. Recalling from Conf., III,.iv.7 that the effect of the Hortensius was to make Augustine desire the Truth above all else and therefore to despise all his worldly aims and ambitions.

63. In Augustine's own history and in the logic of the Confessions, the oversores constitute the moment before he came to the idea of the Truth through reading the Hortensius. In our text, Conf., V,viii,14 (quoted above, n.60), he says quite directly that, as a student, he had refused to take part in this behaviour although as a teacher he had to suffer it from others.

64. J. J. O'Meara, The Young Augustine, pp. 104-195 notices such a compulsion and cites as evidence Augustine's treatment of Monica at the time of his sailing and the fact that he did not inform his close friend Romanianus of his departure nor did he make any other arrangements to fulfill
the obligations that he had accepted for the education of that man's children.

65. See Conf., V,viii,14 quoted above n.59 & 60.

66. Conf., V,viii,15 "sed quare hinc didiceris et 'tuus ipse, et velix, deus, non indicabis mihi nec marvi, ..."

67. Conf., V,viii,15 "... cum et me cupides tibi nos rapere ad finem tuæ ipsæ cupiditatem ...

68. Conf., V,viii,15 "sed setelli car victamens me tenentum, ut aut reverèst aut mecum pergeri, ..."

69. Conf., V,viii,15 "... quia et hoc dimisiisti mihi misericorditer servans me ab aquis maris plenum oceandis... ordines, utque ad aequor gradiae tuas, qua me adlatæ sien-arentur flumina materorum oculorum quibus pro me ostidie tibi vigabit terram eur mundi suo." Here is a further development of the recurrent image of this world (CN.scutum hoc), as a bitter, storm-tossed ocean (see Comm. Conf. I, n. 37): note also how these waters are here opposed to the waters of grace (baptism).

70. See on this point Comm. Conf. III, pp. 141 - 145.

71. Conf., V,viii,15 "Et tamen post accusatiorem falla-
... et mundificatis non conversa putundo ad depredandum
se pro me habi ad seclis, et ego homae."

72. Conf., V,viii,15 "... illis nobis et ciubalem argu-
sit et causatius argubatur in ea velissarnum Revo, cum
agerit quaerens quod cum seminu popreren."

73. See Gen.3:16 ff.

74. In the following chapter, Conf., V,ix,16, Augustine
speaks of the bond of original sin from which we all (i.e.,
all mankind), suffer — i.e., death: "... originalis
novelli vivulum, uno omnis in Adam oritur." For a
discussion of this point see, Comm. Conf. I, pp.15 — 16.

75. Of the consequences of the fall that result from the
particular nature of man (as distinguished from those that
belong to woman when she is considered in her particular
natural capacity), Augustine has already spoken of the
necessity that the sons of Adam must, in labour and sorrow,
create and maintain the government of man: see Conf., I,
xi,14 (on this point see Comm. Conf. I, pp.21 — 26.)

76. Conf., V,viii,15 "... et illius carnalis desiderium iusto
dolorum flaccello vapularent. amabat enim secum praeexistent
team more mutram, scd multis multo amplius ..." By these
'natural' or 'fleshly' (carnalis) desires Augustine under-
stands the desires of woman when considered in her fallen
nature, since it is only through her relation to the Truth that this desire to keep her children to herself can appear. In her first state, as with all animal life, it is rather 'natural' for the offspring to leave the parents — although of course, in another sense they never leave as they have nowhere to 'go' but to the nature they never left.

77. See Conf., V, viii, 15, quoted above, n. 72.

78. See Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, art. 'desiderium'.

79. See Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, art. 'carnalis'.

80. Conf., V, ix, 16 "Non enim satie eloquor, quid erga me habebat animi et quanto maiore colligitatione me parturiebat spiritu, quam carne poporovat." and Conf., V, iv, 17 "Hicusenum tu lacrimas, quibus non a le auro et argentum petebat nec aliquod nubile aut volubile bonum, sed salutem animae filii sui ...". See also Conf., I, xi, 17; III, xi, 19; IX, viii, 17.

81. Conf., V, viii, 15 "Flavit ventus et impersit vela nostra et litus subtraxit aspectibus nostris, in quo mane illa insaniebat dolore et querellis et gemitu impersit aures tuas contemnentis ista, cum et me cupiditatibus meis raperes ad finiendas ipsas cupiditates et illius carnale desiderium iusto dolorum flagello vapulareti.

82. The clear evidence which Augustine gives on this point is that in the oratory of St. Cyprian, Monica prayed not
ior Augustine's salvation but that he might not go away from her. Conf., V,viii,15 "Ei quid ad te potebat, Deus meus,
tantis lacrimis, nisi ut navigare me non acriores?"

83. That is, by her care and prayers for him. See on this point Comm. Conf. III, pp.141 - 145.

84. See Conf., V,vii¢,15, quoted above, n.80. and Conf., V, viii,15 "Sed tu alto consolunt et exaudiens sardinem decidere
et non curasti quod tunc potebat, ut me favores quod semper
potebat."

85. See Conf., V,ix,16.

86. Conf., V,ix,16 "Acque enim desiderabam in illo tavo
periculo baptismum tuum ..."

87. Conf., V,ix,16 "... et melior eram puer, quo illum de
materna pictate flagitavi, cistum iam recordatus atque confessus

88. That is, from the time of reading the Hortensius: see
Conf., III,iv,7-8.

89. Conf., V,ix,16 "Sed in dodecus meum creveram et consilia
medicinae tuae domo irridebam, qui non me sivisti talem bis
mori."

90. See Comm. Conf. III, p.136 for an explanation of this
point. Here, Augustine states the problem in the following way in relation to the question of the human nature of Christ:

Conf., V,i,x,16 "Non enim quiesquam eorum mihi donaverat in Christo, nec solvere alio in cruce sua initiatiae, quae terna contraverat pecaminis meis. Quoniam enim eae solvere in cruce phantasticis, quod de illis credideram? Quam ergo falsa mihi videbatur more carnis eius, tum vera crat animae meae, et quam vera crat more carnis eius, tum falsa vita animae meae, quae id non credebat." See also Conf., V,v,19-20 where Augustine develops more explicitly the contradictions which he then saw in the Catholic Christology as well as the Christology that his dualist position demanded – which altogether denied the reality of the human nature of Christ.

91. This position which Augustine adopted can be contrasted with the one taken by his young friend in similar circumstances: see Conf., IV,i,x,7-10.

92. Conf., V,v,18 "Adhuc enim mihi videbatur non esse nos, qui peccamus, sed noceo quam aliam in nobis peccare naturam et delictabat suaviam meam extra culpam esse et, cum aliquid mali fecisset, non confiterti me fecisse, ut saunares animam meam, quoniam peccabat tibi, sed excusare me amabam et accusare nescio quid aliud, quem mecum esset et ego non esset."
93. **Conf.**, V,x,18 "... et execrabilis iniquitas, te, acus omnipotens, te in me ad perfidiam meam, quam me a te ad salutem malle superari."

94. **Conf.**, V.ix,16 "Et ingravescenibus febribus iam ibam et peribam. quae enim irem, si hinc tune abirem, nisi in ignem atque tormenta digna factis meis in veritate ordinis tui?"

95. **Conf.**, V,x,18 "Et longebar etiam tune Romae falsis illis atque fallacibus quos videbat: non enim tantum auditoribus eorum, quorum a numero erat etiam is, in cibus domo aegrotavit et consulaveram, sed eos etiam, quos electos vocant." Also, **Conf.**, V,x,19 "Nec dissimulavi eundem hospitem meum reprimere a nima fiducia, quam sensi cum habere de rebus fabulosis, quibus manichaei libri pleni sunt. amicitia tamen eorum familiaris utebar quam oeterorum, hominum, qui in illa haeret non fuissent. nec eam defendebar pristina animositate, sed tamen familiaritas eorum - pluros enim ooc Roma occultat - pigrius me faciebat aliquid quaerere ..."

96. **Conf.**, V,x,18 "... sed tamen iam desperans in ea falsa doctrina me posse proficere, eaque ipsa, quibus, si nihil melius reperirem, contentus esse decreveram, iam remissius negligentiusque retinebam." See also **Conf.**, V,vii,13.

97. For a brief account of the literature of the New Academy,
its history and doctrine and a review of the possible sources of Augustine's knowledge of these positions, see A. Solignac's 'Introduction', pp. 94-100, in BA 13. A more extended, recent treatment of the Sceptics may be found in A. A. Long, Hellenistic Philosophy, Duckworth, London, 1974, pp. 75-106.

98. Conf., V,x,19 "Etenim suborta est etiam mihi cogitatio, prulentiores illos ceteris suisse philosophos, quos Academicos appellant ...". The other references to the Academics are found in Conf., V,xiv,25; VI,1,1 and VI,xi,18.

99. Conf., V,xiv,25 "Itaque Academiorum more, sicut existimantur, dubitans de omnibus atque inter omnia fluctuans manichaeos quidem reliquendos esse decrevi, non arbitrans eo ipso tempore dubitationis meae in illa secta mihi permanendum esse, cui iam nonnullos philosophos praeponebam ..."

100. Conf., V,x,19 "Ita enim et mihi liquido sensisse vidobantur, ut vulgo habentur, etiam illorum intentionem nondum intelligenti." See also Conf., V,xiv,25 quoted above, n.99.

It is not necessary for our understanding of the Confessions that we examine the view which Augustine came to hold on the real intention (intentio), of the Academics' teaching. He discloses this in the Contra
Academicos, especially in the third and final book where he argues that this teaching that all things ought to be doubted and that man cannot grasp the Truth is actually consistent with a 'secret' Platonism which this position is nevertheless designed to protect from the eyes of the uninitiated (see Contra Academicos, III, xx, 43). A full discussion of the justice of Augustine's view of the Academics is quite beyond the scope of our effort here but a very good statement of its general sense and meaning may be found in R. J. O'Connell's Early Theory, pp. 232 - 246.

Although we cannot pursue the matter any further here, we offer the following observations in defense of Augustine's apparently far-fetched thesis about the real intention of the sceptic's teaching. As we will show, what Augustine took from Scepticism was the knowledge of his own ignorance and this is altogether in accord with the 'Socratic' element in the Platonic Dialogues (see also Augustine's marvelous comments on Socrates' real intention in De Civitate Dei, VIII, 3), which aims precisely at the destruction of all assumed knowledge as the necessary propaedeutic to the discovery of the Truth. Whether the Academics actually taught a Platonism to those who had had their ignorance exposed by this Sceptical moment, Augustine does not know (see Contra Academicos, III, xx, 43), but it is with just this connection in mind (Scepticism = Socrates) that the Sceptical teaching of the
Academics could have as its real intention the very Socratic/Platonic character of both concealing the Truth from those who, because of their presuppositions, cannot profit either themselves or the universe by hearing the Truth and also, by destroying these same presuppositions, bringing their adherents to the position from which they can actually see and hear the Truth (Augustine makes this same point in relation to the faith which the Catholic church demands of her adherents [destruction of supposed knowledge leading to true knowledge], in De Utilitate Credendi, X,23 & 24). Augustine did not share or suspect this intention at the time he became a Sceptic and the difference is seen in the fact that he chooses to remain in the Sceptical moment whereas the whole effort of the Platonic Dialogues (though perhaps not of the Academics), is just to move beyond it. Finally we should note that this notion that the Academics were really Platonists was shared by others in Antiquity; so, Sextus Empiricus in the Outlines of Pyrrhonism, I,xxx,iii, 232-234, reports the very same thing of Arcesilaus and likewise Cicero in Academica, (see esp. I,iv,13 and I,xii, 43-46), argues for the view that the Scepticism of the 'New' Academy does not contradict the teachings of the 'old' (Platonic) Academy.

101. Conf., V,x,19 "Etenim suborta est etiam mihi cogitatio, prudentiores illos aeterne fuisse philosophos, quos Academicos appellant, quod de omnibus dubitandum esse censu-
102. Conf., V,xiv,24 "...-ca mihi quippe iam desperans
ad to viam patere homini inanis cura romanorevit - ...
"

103. Conf., V,x,19, quoted above, n.95.

104. That is, in the fall of 384 A.D. See A. Solignac's
'Chronology' in PA 13, p. 204.

105. P. Courcelle in Recherches, pp. 78-85 argues that
Augustine probably received this nomination from Symmachus
not merely because of his rhetorical ability but also be-
cause he (Augustine), was not a Christian and thus was
seen by Symmachus as a useful instrument to promote his
pro-pagan policies against the Christians at Milan.

106. Conf., V,xiv,25 "Tum vero fortior intendi animum,
si quo modo possem scribiis aliquibus documentis manichaeos
convincere falsiatiac."

107. See Conf., V,vii,13, quoted above p.8, n.1; Conf.,
V,x,18, quoted above p. 18, n.6; and Conf., V,x,19, quoted
above p. 18,n.5.

108. See Conf., V,xii,22; Augustine mentions these Roman
students in connection with the neo(?) -overcero who had
prompted him to leave Carthage but he is very careful to
distinguish the one from the others. The ground of this
distinction is that whereas the *enemies* do not recognize
any good outside of their own subjectivity, (see above
Comm. Conf. III, pp.122-123) these others do love some ob-
jective good, if only money. On this account he says that
he did not hate them with a perfect hatred (non perfecto
odiō), for this love of an objective good could be turned
from money to the love of learning and from this to the
love of God. However, at the time, he tells us, he was
more unwilling to bear with them for the harm they did to
him than he was desirous that they should be turned to the
Truth: "Sed tunc magis vos pati volocham males propter me,
quom fieri propter te hanc volocham."

109. Conf. V, xiii, 23 "Ad cum autem dueobar abs te nesciens,
ut per cùm ad te sciens duecerer. suscepit me palamile ille
\[IVRq.1: \textit{homo dol et peregrinationem meam satis episcopalius dilexit.}\]
\[\textit{et cum amore occep primo quidem non tamquam doctorem veri,}\]
\[\textit{quod in ecclesia tua propeus de sperabam, sed tamquam hominem}\]
\[\textit{bonum in me.}"

There is a further dimension to the warm greeting which
Ambrose accorded Augustine if we consider Courcelle's
likely suggestion (see above, n.105), that Augustine came
to Milan as a pawn of the anti-Catholic, anti-Ambrose
party; see Recherches, pp.85-86.
As Courcelle also notes (Recherches, p. 86, n. 2), "Augustin," (Conf., IX, vi, 14), "appelle son baptême: 'renouvel' et ne manque jamais, dans les œuvres où il cite Ambroise, de le désigner comme son père." Thus we see that as Augustine regards Monica as the 'mother' of his spiritual rebirth (see the texts mentioned above n. 80), so does he regard Ambrose as its 'father'. This is no mere rhetorical flourish as we can gather from the exposition of their respective roles in his spiritual rebirth which Augustine develops in the course of the Confessions. However, a full treatment of this matter goes beyond our present purpose and would require an exact exposition of the differences which Augustine understands to exist between men and women in their natural peculiarities. So far we have only had occasion to refer briefly to this difference: see above pp. 286 - 288.

110. See above Comm. Conf. III, p. 139.


112. On the origin of this interest in elogia, see above Comm. Conf. I, p. 29.

113. Conf., V, xiii, 23 "Ad eum autem duodecim abs te nesciens, ut per eum ad te coëns duocerer."

114. Conf., V, xiv, 24 "Cum enim non satangerem discors quae
iderint, sed tantum quodammodum diciebat audire — ea minit
qui tempore hanc in tantis cura remanserat — ...

115. Conf., V, xiv, 24 "... veniebant in animam meam simul cum verbis, quae diligebam, pec etiam, quas neglegebam. Neque enim ea divinam poteram. et iam cor aperirem ad ovipoenium, quam discretio moれt, pariter intrabat et quam vero discretio, gradatim quidem.

116. Conf., V, xiv, 24 "Nam primo etiam ipsa desiderai posse mihi iam occipere videor et fidem catholicam, pro qua nihil posse dixi adversus oppugnantes manichaeos puraveram, iam non impudenter ascribem ostimibam, maxime audito uno atque illo quo accepisse acnigmate soluto de scriptis velrisbus, ubi, cum ad litteram occiperem, occidero. Spirituelles itaque plerique illorum librorum locis expositis iam reprehendebam desperationem meam illum dumtaxat, qua ecscideram legem et prophetas destanlibus atque irribidentibus resisti omnino non posse." See also Conf., VI, iv, 6.

117. Conf., V, xiv, 24 "Neque tamen iam idem mihi catholicam viam tenebamesse sentiebam, quia et ipsa poterat habere doctos adsortores suis, qui copiose et non absurde objecna resollenter, nee idem iam dammandum illud, quod tenebam,
quia defensionis partes acquiramur:"

118. Conf., V,xiv,24 "itq omnia catholica non minde ulla
vulgaribus, ne non sua orium viam in oppugnet."


120 Conf., V,xiv,25 "item vero fortasse incondi animus, si
que modo possit ratio aliqua super documentum rectumque
solvit esseutiur."

121. Conf., V,xiv,25 "cum si posser apertius audienti non
sagitarum, etiam magis quam illa omnia antemini et
adiecitente ex animo meo: sed non possem."

122. See Conf., V,v,8-9, quoted above, n.21

123. Conf., V,xiv,25 "Verum igitur de ipso mundi huic
corpore omnique natura, quam sensus carnis attingeret,
multo probable rougherque consiste philosophos magis
magisque considerans atque comparans indicabam. Itaque
Academiaeorum more, si sit existimatur, dubitans de omni-
bus atque inter omnia fluuiuans manichaeos quidem volin-
quendos esse dorso, non arbitrains se ipso tempore dubi-
ationis meae in illa secta permanendum esse, aut iam
nonnullus philosophos praeponebam: ..."

We can readily see that although Augustine has
decided to break with the Manichees altogether, he is not
moved to this by the discovery of a certain argument which convicts them of falsehood but only by his continuing determination not to recognize any other Truth than that which he can grasp immediately and directly (i.e., through the senses), and by his judgment that the Manichee's account of the universe is less probable than that of the 'secular scientists' or the natural philosophers.

124. Conf., V,xiv,25 "... quibus iam non philosophic, aut sine salutari morum Christi essent, curationem linguistic animae mox committere ornino possebam." According to our interpretation, the "nonnullos philosophos" (of Conf., V, xiv,25, see above, n.123), refers to the 'secular scientists' while the "quibus iam non philosophic" that follows directly, refers to the Academics.


126. On this point see the excellent statement of the matter in J. J. O'Meara, The Young Augustine, pp. 61-91.

It is just because Manichaeism was regarded by Augustine as a kind of Christianity that he can speak of it as a heresy ("illa haerest ...") : see Conf., V,x,19, quoted above, n.95. The same view of the Manichees is again put forward in De Utilitate Credendi, ix,21 and as
we find in the same work (in ii,19), heretics are defined by their pretension to be Catholics.

127. Conf., v,xiv, 25 "Si autem ego semper esse cætchumem nec in catholica ecclesia mihi a parentibus commundata, donec aliquid esset clarius, quo omnem dileguerem." Compare the same statement in De Utilitate Credendi,viii,20

"Namque namque tamen esse cætchumem in ecclesia, non parentibus aens, donec nos inventorem quod vollem, aut mihi persueraderem non esse quacrum." This passage, and especially the "tamen esse cætchumem", the natural implication of which is that "Augustine considered himself to be still a cætchumen" (J. Gibb & W. Montgomery ed. The Confessions of Augustine, Cambridge University Press, 2ed., 1927, p.135 - emphasis ours), raises the question of Augustine's 'return' to Catholicism which has occasioned a considerable controversy in modern scholarship - the effort being to determine at what point Augustine found the Catholic faith preferable to the other positions which he had adopted (a review of this discussion to 1955 can be found in G. Mathon's, "Quand faut-il placer le retour d'Augustin à la foi catholique?" in Revue des Études Augustiniennes, 1:107-127 [1955]).

In our view this whole question is misconstrued for
it admits of only two answers. i) Properly speaking, neither Augustine nor anyone else becomes a Christian until he is baptized. Augustine himself insists on this in the Confessions and indeed this is precisely the point of the story of Victorinus which he recounts in Conf., VIII,ii,3-5. In this light there is, strictly speaking, no such thing as an 'intellectual conversion' to Christianity such as these modern scholars seek to discover in answer to the 'question', see for example the (emphasized) statement of M. Pellegrino, Les Confessions, p. 161, "Ce passage, dont les idées sont reprises peu après, confirme très nettement que la conversion de son intelligence au catholicisme avait eu lieu avant même sa rencontre avec le néoplatonisme ...". The whole point of Augustine's position (which can only be developed in its proper place in a discussion of books eight and nine of the Confessions), is just that there is no conversion to Christianity unless there is a conversion of the will. ii) If, on the other hand, the sense of the question is, "At what point did Augustine become unwilling to trust his soul to any doctrine from which the name of Christ was wanting?", the only answer that can be given is - never. For as he tells us (Conf., III,iv,8), this he had drunk in with his mother's milk and never relinquished. The sense and meaning of this statement we have already suggested in Comm. Conf. III, pp. 127 - 130.
CHAPTER SIX

COMMENTARY ON THE SIXTH BOOK OF AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS.

IV. The fault of maturity. [lamento].

In this sixth book Augustine begins his discussion of the fault of maturity which constitutes the fourth and final form in which a man may seek to arrogate the universe to his particular desires. We say that this is the final form because, as Augustine will show, it includes the direct and unmistakable vision of the Truth - beyond which, as one might say, there is nothing further that any man could possibly seek to arrogate to himself. Viewed in this light, the treatment of the fault of this age includes everything from the beginning of the sixth book in which he shows the position at which he had arrived after his break with the Manichees (after moving beyond the effort to find the Truth at the level of images), through the vision of the Truth described in Book VII, to the demonstration of the fault which this vision necessarily entails (Book VIII), and which is only finally overcome by the conversion described at the end of the eighth book.

Within this discussion a division may be observed between the form which the fault of this age takes before and after the vision of the Truth. The essential fault
in both of these instances is of course identical with the essential fault which Augustine has already shown in the other ages (actus), or periods of a man's life ('primordia' and infancy, childhood and adolescence), and it consists in the proud and arrogant effort on the part of the individual to turn the universe to the service of his particular ends. However, the particular form which this fault takes will differ in the period of his spiritual maturity - that is, in the period when it is now possible for him to know the Truth - according to whether or not he has actually come to the vision of the Truth. To anticipate the course of Augustine's argument we may say that before he has seen the Truth this fault takes the form of a man's refusal to seek the Truth which he can now grasp, while after he has seen it, the same fault takes the form of a man's refusal to seek anything else - particularly, a means of holding on to (teneo) the Truth which he knows.

These three books may therefore be roughly divided in the following way: Book VI - the fault of maturity before the vision of the Truth; Book VII - the vision of the Truth; Book VIII - the fault of maturity after the vision of the Truth. Because the seventh book falls in the middle it may either be taken as the conclusion of what has gone before or
as the beginning of what follows and indeed it belongs in part to the preceding books inasmuch as its earlier chapters are still leading up to the vision of the Truth but also in part to the subsequent books since the final chapters already show the descent from the vision of the Truth. 2 We shall therefore observe the following more precise distinctions: A) The fault of maturity before coming to the vision of the Truth — Conf., VI, i, 1 — VII, ix, 15; B) The vision of the Truth which Augustine describes in Conf., VII, x, 16 — VII, xvi, 22; C) The fault of maturity after the vision of the Truth — Conf., VII, xvi, 23 — VIII, xii, 30. With this general plan in mind let us now attend to the first division in which Augustine treats of the final error through which a man must pass on his way to the Truth. For although Augustine will show that the fault of this age extends beyond the vision of the Truth, the first form of that fault corresponds to the last stage of error on the way to the vision — as he enumerates them in the text we have been following from Conf., VII, xiv, 20. 3

A). The fault of maturity before coming to the vision of the Truth. In the text, this period includes everything from Conf., VI, i, 1 — VII, ix, 15 and covers the period of Augustine's life from the time he had finally broken with the
Manichees (at the end of 384 AD), to his discovery of the *libri Platoniciorum* and the vision of the Truth which he describes in Book VII (this occurred sometime in the summer of 386 AD). In the opening line of the sixth book which he quotes from the Psalms, "*Spes mea a iuventute mea*", Augustine indicates that he is now for the first time speaking of his maturity (*iuventus*), as distinguished from adolescence (*adulescentia*), and this same thing he repeats in the first line of the seventh book where he says, "Already my wicked and impious adolescence (*adulescentia*) was dead and I was going on into youthful maturity (*iuventus*) ..." (VII,i,1). In respect to a man's bodily nature, *iuventus* covers the period of his youthful maturity from the early thirties to his forty-fifth year and so Augustine uses it here. But as with the other ages of man's life, *iuventus* has also for Augustine a 'spiritual' sense according to which it marks a definite moment in his relation to the objective Truth and what this new relation is, Augustine shows us in this section of the text (*Conf.*, VI,i,1 - VII, ix,15), in which he discusses more fully the nature of the Sceptical position to which he had arrived, amplifying on the two very brief indications which he had made on the Academics in the fifth book.
Now here as everywhere, Augustine is concerned to show the universal significance which may be discovered in his own particular history and thus he interprets his move from the Manichees to the Scepticism which he then adopted as the particular form in which he moved from seeking the Truth at the 'level' of images and phantasy to the recognition of the superior certainty of sensation and opinion. To see what this means we must first recall where he has been.

So far Augustine has shown us that ever since he had come to the 'idea' of Wisdom through reading Cicero's Hortensius and because he was determined to grasp this Truth immediately and directly so that he might use it for his own personal aggrandizement, he was bound to fall in with any doctrine that promised to show him the Truth, immediately and directly — and in his case such a teaching presented itself in the position of the Manichees. Blinded by this arrogant desire Augustine was therefore willing to suppose that he knew that the Manichees knew the Truth and as he has explained in the argument of the fourth book, he held on to this view during the long years of his Manichaean attachment. However, in the fifth book he has now also shown us the steps by which he came to know that he did not know whether or not the Manichees did possess the Truth. As we
have seen, this discovery of his own ignorance turns chiefly on the recognition that as the Manichee's account of things could not be seen to conform to the evidence of the senses he could no longer suppose that he knew the Truth in professing their doctrines, since the most certain knowledge which he knew he then possessed was the probable knowledge (peritia) that the senses provide.

But, as he was still totally unwilling to recognize any other truth than a truth which can be grasped immediately and directly, so was he forced by his desire to know the Truth, to abandon the Manichee's doctrines altogether: because, as he now knew, he could only accept their teachings about the Truth by accepting them on Mani's authority. So far Augustine has told us that he did not yet know that these teachings are themselves simply imaginary and fantastic, nevertheless it is clear that in his rejection of the Manichees for these reasons he was moved by his desire for the Truth to the recognition that the minimal condition for any scientific knowledge of the Truth (as opposed to mere fancy, conjecture or supposition), is that it must at least conform to the evidence of the senses. And so, by insisting on this condition, he is thereby freed in practice from every doctrine about the Truth which is in fact imaginary and fantastic even though he does not yet know (of any
particular doctrine) whether or not this is the case — for no such fabulous teaching can actually conform to this condition. And finally we note that because Augustine was forced to the position of the sceptics by his desire for the Truth this is therefore a position to which everyman must come on his way to the Truth who first supposed that he was on the way to the Truth by following any fantastic doctrines such as the Manichees taught.

In the introductory chapter to the sixth book Augustine describes this new relation to the Truth. He says: "... I had not yet reached the Truth but I had now been torn away from falsity ..." (VI,i,1). Augustine has already shown us the sense of this position in his discussion of the knowledge of the 'secular scientists' in the fifth book and we may simply repeat what we said there: "... in spite of the fact that their theories [the theories of the 'secular scientists'] concerning the movement of the heavenly bodies are at best a likely account because they depend on experience, at the same time and for the very same reason, in comparison to the Manichee's teachings about these matters, Augustine also maintains that the theories of the natural philosophers are true and those of the Manichees false. The reason for this is that the former do at least conform to what the senses reveal, while the latter which claim to offer a true explanation of the sensible but are not even bound by the
evidence of the senses are therefore simply the products of a 'fantastic' imagination. Of course at the time Augustine could not make this judgment about the Manichees because he did not yet know whether or not their theories could be shown to conform to the evidence of the senses. However, in principle, the explanations of natural phenomena such as the 'secular scientists' provide occupy an intermediate position between purely subjective, fantastic accounts like those of the Manichees on the one hand and, on the other hand, the objective, universal Truth itself, to which as we have explained, the senses cannot directly attain because they are bound to the particular. It is then in relation to the former fantastic conjectures which are necessarily false insofar as they do not even conform to the evidence of the senses, that the theories of the natural philosophers are called 'true'. While, at the same time, in relation to the Truth itself, the latter are merely a probable or likely account — a matter of opinion, which, even though it might be true, is not grasped in the form of a certain, indubitable knowledge. ... However, Augustine also recognizes ... that the knowledge of nature such as the 'secular scientists' possess (peritia), could lead to a knowledge of the Truth (cognoscence down), if, rather than merely resting with ex-
perience and opinion, an inquiry is made into the conditions which are necessary for such explanations to achieve that degree of accuracy and certainty of which they are manifestly capable.\textsuperscript{12} We can now determine the sense which Augustine attaches to the spiritual maturity \textit{(sventutuae} of the natural man\textsuperscript{13} for this stage of a man's life is reached in the moment that he comes to the position from which it is actually possible for him to discover the Truth. In other words, in respect to his rational nature, a man moves from adolescence to maturity in the moment that he no longer mistakes what are in fact images and phantasies for the objective, universal Truth and comes instead to the recognition that the Truth must at least conform to the evidence of the senses - from which position, as he will soon show us, it is indeed possible for thought to come to the vision and knowledge of the Truth.\textsuperscript{14}

But if on the one hand it is possible to come to the vision of the Truth from the knowledge of nature \textit{(peritia)}, Augustine was immediately prevented from doing so by the same old fault that he has already shown to be the natural condition of all men in every age of their lives: that is, by man's perverse will to use the universal (as he conceives of it), for his own particular aggrandizément. For even though he had now abandoned the fabulous opinions of the
Manichees he did so out of his determination to know the Truth immediately and directly and it is just because he clung to this determination to know the Truth immediately and directly in order to use it for his own private ends that he remained bound to look for the Truth 'outside' of himself in the sensitive nature of the universe. But as we have seen, insofar as the Truth must be grasped through the senses, then for a certainty the only knowledge that a man can have is a greater or lesser degree of probability. And so, moved by this (perverse) desire for a knowledge of the Truth (i.e., the objective, universal Truth), Augustine was unable to rest content with the merely limited knowledge of nature (princa), which is all that the natural philosophers immediately profess and possess. Instead, he was forced to what he then understood to be the Sceptical position according to which he held (puto) that man is unable to find the way to Life and the Truth for this is indeed man's relation to the Truth if, as Augustine was then determined, the Truth must be grasped immediately and directly which is to say that it must be grasped through the senses.

Now as in the fourth book Augustine showed the practical difficulties which he suffered as a result of his fall into
Manichaeism, so in the sixth book does he show us the kind of life he was bound to lead as a consequence of the Sceptical position to which he had then arrived. We have already seen the fundamental contradiction of this position as it appears in relation to man's practical activity, for it is precisely by his recognition of the Truth and his desire for it that he has been brought to the conclusion that man cannot know the Truth and that his desire is vain and hopeless. Thus, while on the one hand he cannot rest with the limited knowledge of nature or the enjoyment of these limited goods because he has always before him the idea of the absolute Truth which governs the universe and which is preferable to all created goods, on the other hand, neither can he in any way get beyond this limited knowledge of nature and the limited happiness it can provide because he is also determined to grasp the absolute Truth immediately and directly which means that it can only be thought of as sensible and is therefore subject to the limitations of time and space.

Having arrived at this contradiction, Augustine tells us that he "was come to the bottom of the deep" ("... veneram in profundum maris ..." [VI,i,1]), for, in relation to this quest for the Truth, the move from Manichaeism
to this sceptical position has indeed brought him to a more explicit and consequently more intolerable contradiction since he has come from the relatively complacent position of not knowing the Truth but thinking he does know it to this new situation in which he knows that he does not know the Truth and thinks that it cannot be known. 22 Furthermore, because this contradiction is inherent in the position, anyone who holds such a position (i.e., who recognizes the Truth and yet holds that man cannot know it), and so refuses to seek for it is bound to suffer from this contradiction as did Augustine. And, for the same reason Augustine can also regard his sufferings at the time as an evidence of the working of divine providence (i.e., the universal, objective Truth), by which he was made sensible of the error and inadequacies of this view and forced in the end to the true and unmistakable vision of the Truth. 23

This contradiction shows itself in two ways in man's practical activities and Augustine deals with both in the sixth book: the one in relation to his unwillingness to believe in the doctrines of Catholic Christianity (chapters i - v); the other in a discussion of his pursuit of worldly power, love and glory and his inability to find in them the happiness he sought (chapters vi - xv). We shall look at both of these in turn.
We recall from the end of the fifth book that in abandoning the Manichees, Augustine had determined to remain a catechumen in the Catholic church where his parents had placed him as a boy and also, what he repeats here, that it had now become possible for him to believe in the doctrines of the Catholic church. For the reasons we have already seen, he had been enabled to discover in the sermons of Ambrose that the Catholic church does not understand the Scriptures in the literal and immediate sense according to which a statement such as "God made man in his own image" (Gen. 1:27 & 9:6), must be understood to teach the absurd notion that God (i.e., the universal Truth), is limited by the shape of a human body. Rather, he had discovered that the Scriptures both could be and were understood in another sense which was altogether acceptable since it did not in any way involve such childish contradictions and in the light of which the contempt and ridicule that he had heaped on the Catholics for nine long years now showed itself as an ignorant delusion.

But as Augustine had now come to a position from which it was possible to believe in the Catholic Scriptures, the question arises as to why he did not become a Christian, the more so since his scepticism had shown him that, insofar as much of the knowledge on which he based his daily actions
depended wholly on the senses and experience, it could only be known in the form of belief. And indeed it is just on this ground that he then preferred (praecorno) the Catholic doctrines to any other that promised to lead man to the Truth because they acknowledged the necessity of belief and did not pretend to be about to demonstrate things which, as he now knew, were incapable of demonstration in the absolute scientific sense which the Manichees promised.

However, even while his scepticism had brought him to a position which recognized the necessity of belief and the consequent need of determining and following the best (i.e., the most likely), authority in all practical matters and even though he was willing to acknowledge the great and universal authority of the Scriptures as a most compelling evidence that they were indeed the means by which God intended man to seek him, nevertheless he refused to believe. The reason for this we do not have far to seek since it is identical to the reason that moved him first to the Manichees and then to Scepticism and this is his perverse determination to know the Truth so that he might use it for his own private ends. Thus, even though he now saw that the Catholic doctrines were both plausible and probable, he did not know whether or not they were true with the same absolute and unmistakable certainty that he knew that seven and three
aro ten, and so he preferred to remain with his complete separation from the Truth – the despairing knowledge that he neither knew the Truth nor the way to the Truth – rather than coming to it through the dependent relation of belief or possessing it in any other manner than this one which both pleased his vanity and served this self-seeking end.

Now by this very insistence on knowing the Truth immediately and directly, Augustine was led to a complete paralysis in all his practical activities as he shows us in the sequel. For while he withheld his assent out of the vain notion that in this he is acting with wisdom (prudens via), and doing the Truth as it may be done by man, it is quite impossible for any man to do the Truth if it is both unknown and if the man is altogether unwilling to base his actions on a belief in some established authority.

Against this proud conceit and as a kind of refutation of all the activities which he describes in the sixth book, Augustine places the example of his mother in the first two chapters. For even though Monica did not know the Truth, her faith made her manifestly capable of doing the Truth in all sorts of practical ways which Augustine himself was bound to recognize and acknowledge at the time. Thus, however it might be explained, Monica was the one who was
actually able to calm the sailors and passengers during a storm at sea on her voyage to Rome,\textsuperscript{39} she was neither surprised nor misled by the news that he had abandoned the Manichees;\textsuperscript{40} and she was willing to submit to the authority of Ambrose in certain questions of church practice in order that the Truth might be done, rather than ignoring this by insisting on the well-established but essentially doubtful correctness of her North African customs.\textsuperscript{41} Power, knowledge and love: Monica clearly possessed all three even though she had no knowledge of the Truth, while Augustine who insisted on knowing the Truth so that he might possess all three was totally unable to grasp any of them.

In the remainder of the sixth book (chapters vi-xv), Augustine shows us the other side of the contradiction of the Sceptical position. For, if on the one hand he is prevented from coming to the Truth (through faith), by his desire to know it immediately and directly, on the other hand as he is actually left with nothing but his worldly ambitions, these are precisely what prevent him from pursuing the Truth or doing the good even as he then perceived it. Here as before Augustine treats his pursuit of worldly ambitions as a perverted imitation of the power, glory and love of God (i.e., the Trinity), describing the form these
ambitions are bound to take at this stage of his life: "I eagerly longed for honours, wealth and marriage but you only derided these ambitions."\(^{43}\) (VI,vi,9). Augustine treats each of these in turn.

1) The pursuit of worldly honour - Conf., VI,vi,9 - VI,viii,13). In the famous incident with the drunken beggar, he suffered as a result of the contradictory pursuit of worldly honour to which his Scepticism had bound him.\(^{44}\) Because of his determination to know the Truth he was not able to choose the drunken happiness of the beggar as he had long since known that such fleeting pleasures were altogether contemptible in the light of the Truth which he desired. And yet, just because he knew that he did not know the Truth and since he now thought that it was not possible for man to know the Truth, his learning could have no other end than an explicit pursuit of temporal felicity in the worldly honour or glory that would accrue to the reputation for wisdom.\(^{45}\) But the beggar had already achieved in drink and for a few pennies the relatively secure possession of the same worldly happiness that all Augustine's learning and trouble was intended to provide\(^{46}\) and which it constantly denied to him since the honour and glory he sought through it depended on the hopelessly uncertain task of pleasing
the arbitrary and inconstant whims of human opinion. Because the beggar had already achieved the very thing which Augustine was seeking, there was absolutely no reason why he should not prefer the beggar's dishonourable but happy life yet this he could not do because he was determined to know the Truth. And thus he had brought himself to this painfully paralysed position in which he could neither justify nor abandon his miserable, mendacious and uncertain search for worldly glory. Now if on the one hand Augustine could find no reason in his pursuit of worldly honour, the stories of Alypius which he includes in chapters vii and viii show us how he came to realize that this same sceptical position could no more be justified on practical grounds as the means by which a man could acquire honour - either true or worldly - by doing the Truth. In the seventh chapter Augustine shows us the reason why he uses the example of Alypius, for the incident of the circensian games at Carthage illustrates Augustine's opinion that he had a great natural capacity for virtue ("... magnam virtutis indolem ...") In other words, unlike himself, Augustine regarded Alypius as a man who had a most unusually determined will and capacity to do the good as he saw it. We can grasp the sense of this business by noting the following point with Augustine. In the same.
chapter he tells us that when Alypius was persuaded to become a Manichee he (Alypius) did this mainly out of a consideration for the apparent continence and virtue of the Manichees, 54 which contrasts sharply with the rationalism that attracted Augustine to the sect. 55 From this we may therefore conclude that whereas Augustine's great natural talents 56 led him to pursue Wisdom primarily by means of his theoretical activities which aimed at knowing the Truth, Alypius was led to the same pursuit in the form of practical activity aimed at doing the Good.

However as Augustine was to discover from the incident which he relates in chapter eight, this same Scepticism also bound man to a miserable and fruitless pursuit of worldly honour in terms of the effort to do the Good. For on the one hand because of his determination to do the Good, Alypius was unable to refuse the chance to win honour from his fellow men by demonstrating the virtue which he thought he derived from his Scepticism. 57 That is, virtue understood as the refusal to assent to anything or to become involved in anything (expressed in the doctrine of ἐποχή), which is the practical consequence of this scepticism and aims at happiness conceived in terms of quietude or tranquility (ἀταραξία), 58 which would indeed be the highest good for man where the Truth itself is held to be unattainable. But
on the other hand, because Alypius sought to do the good simply to serve his own personal glory and because he did not recognize any other goods than worldly goods, neither could he maintain his indifference to the world and its goods when they roared at him which indifference was however already lost in the moment that he desired to manifest his virtue. And so the strong-willed Alypius inevitably succumbed to the contradiction of this position and fell to a miserable dishonour as a victim of his own pride and presumption. And thus, parallel to Augustine's inability to justify or abandon his pursuit of worldly honour in terms of the effort to know the Truth, the same Sceptical position also made it impossible for Alypius either to realize or abandon his pursuit of worldly honour in terms of the effort to do the Good and from this he no doubt suffered as much as did Augustine and like Augustine was led in time by these sufferings to the Truth.

ii) The pursuit of worldly power (wealth, position) - (Conf., VI.ix, 14 - VI.xi, 20). In this next section Augustine shows us the contradiction of Scepticism as it manifests itself in relation to the pursuit of worldly power. He begins in chapter ix by recounting another incident from Alypius' life in Carthage which vividly illustrates the contradiction between justice and power as it must appear to
the Sceptical position and as a result of which the former is made wholly dependent on the latter even while it is held to be superior to it. For in the episode, while Alypius and the crowd both recognize and are finally determined by a Truth beyond the circumstances (Alypius in that he knows all along that he is, in Truth, innocent; the crowd in that it does come to know that he is innocent in Truth), nevertheless both depend wholly on the circumstances to reveal this Truth (here, that Alypius happened to see the thief leave, that he happened to meet the architect, that the slave boy of the thief happened to be in a position to say what had actually taken place), and the circumstances can just as easily hide the Truth as they can reveal it (i.e., the circumstantial evidence by which the crowd was convinced that Alypius was the guilty man in the first place). Thus, as this incident marvelously illustrates, where the Truth is recognized and yet where it is also presumed that the Truth itself cannot be known, as in this Scepticism, then justice and the search for the Truth must become totally dependent on circumstance, accident and probability or opinion. In short, man becomes totally dependent on worldly power to be free of worldly power.

In the remainder of this discussion Augustine shows us the particular form in which this contradiction manifests itself at this time in his own life and in the lives of his
friends. On the one hand, in chapter x, he establishes the fact that Alypius, Nebridius, and he himself all scorned the pursuit of worldly riches and power in the interest of truth and justice but on the other hand, as he shows in chapter xi, precisely in order to be free of the world (to pursue the Truth), they were all bound by the Sceptical position to the pursuit of worldly power with all its care and troubles. And with the world they could neither be satisfied, since they knew that it was not the Truth, but neither could they relinquish it, because they did not have any certain knowledge of the Truth for which alone they were willing to abandon the world. And so, once again, in adopting the Sceptical position in order to hold on to the possibility of an immediate and direct knowledge of the Truth which he might use for his own private ends, Augustine had chained himself in a vicious circle which became more painful the longer he remained in it and of which he says:

"While I spoke of these things and these winds kept changing and drove my heart first one way and then another, time passed but I delayed to be converted to the Lord; and from day to day I put off living in you but I did not put off dying in myself; loving the blessed life, fearing it in its own
seat and fleeing from it, 'I sought after it.'

(VI, xi, 20)

iii) The pursuit of worldly love — (Conf., VI, xii, 21 — VI, xv, 25). In this final section Augustine shows us the contradiction of scepticism as it showed itself in relation to his pursuit of worldly love. Moved by his desire for worldly power, position and wealth, Augustine finally determined to get married. That he determined to get married at just this point is evidently no accident since it is clear that he acceded to the marriage precisely as a means of enhancing his position in the world which is now important to him for the reasons we have just indicated. Indeed, the strength of his desire for worldly power we may judge from the pain he was 'willing' to suffer when it became necessary for him to relinquish the choice of his natural desire, his concubine for many years and the mother of his son Adeodatus, an obstacle to his planned marriage.

But if he was moved to marry by this desire for the recognition and respectability that belong to the married estate, he was also moved by the desire for the love of a woman which, due to his particular nature, he knew that he did not have the power to do without. Now although this desire and the corresponding inability is quite accidental in the sense that it is peculiar to Augustine's particular
nature, as we may see from the fact that Alypius did not share it at all, the point that Augustine is concerned to make is just that both he and Alypius were bound by their immediate worldly loves (he, for women; Alypius, for Augustine), to a course of action that directly contradicted the 'ideal' love which they both desired and preferred to these mutable attachments. And thus as we are told, for his part, Alypius was willing to marry for the sake of his immediate friendship with Augustine even though he dissuaded Augustine from marrying so that they could live together in a higher friendship than marriage permitted - devoted to the uninterrupted pursuit of Wisdom. And Augustine, who sought to maintain that marriage was compatible with the higher friendship of a society devoted to the pursuit of Wisdom, nevertheless destroyed the plans of just such a community precisely by his unwillingness to abandon his marriage. And lest it be supposed that he objected to this community out of a real love of marriage and a determination that it was actually compatible with the pursuit of Wisdom, Augustine tells us that what he really sought in marriage was nothing other than the immediate and altogether worldly friendship of a woman's embrace which he was unwilling to abandon for any other 'higher' love - whether the love of marriage
itself or the love of the lovers of Wisdom. This is shown by the fact that he took another mistress to satisfy these worldly desires as soon as the mother of Adeodatus had returned to North Africa and because he had to wait two years until his prospective bride came to a marriageable age. 77

Now these difficulties Augustine also suffered as a direct result of the contradictions of the sceptical position. For, on the one hand he desired the 'true' friendship of a society of the lovers of Wisdom which would be quite above the fleeting pleasures and cares of the world and was altogether broken-hearted when the plan to achieve this society fell into pieces. 78 But on the other hand, he was at the same time unable to abandon the painful pleasures of his worldly loves 79 because he knew that he did not know the Truth or the love that might be founded upon it and was unwilling to trust or believe in any Truth that he could not grasp immediately and directly by his own proper power which he could therefore freely use to serve his own self-seeking end. 80 And so once again by this refusal Augustine had trapped himself in a pursuit of worldly love which he could neither tolerate nor escape.
In the concluding chapter of the sixth book Augustine sums up all he has said on the subject of the practical consequences of his Scepticism in the following words:

"To you be praise, to you be glory, of fountain of mercies. I became more miserable and you came closer. Your right hand was ready precisely now to tear me away from the mire and cleanse me though I did not know it." 81 (VI, xvi, 26)

Although he does not yet know the objective, universal Truth by which the universe is actually governed, he is nevertheless made sensible of this Truth by these sufferings. For as he has now shown, they all result from his failure to seek the objective, universal Truth by adopting instead the Sceptical position as the Truth. And yet, since he could be no means suffer in this way unless this Scepticism did actually contradict the objective Truth of the universe, it is just these sufferings that spur him on to discover a more adequate notion of the Truth.

At the time however he tells us that all that prevented him from abandoning himself totally to these worldly pleasures was the fear of death and of the judgment to come. 82 For if on the one hand, as his Scepticism insisted, man could not know the Truth, then he ought simply to comport
himself with his eyes on the world and its pleasures and for this reason he says that he was ready to 'give the palm to Epicurus'. In other words, insofar as he had any positive and concrete conception of the Truth, it had to be a view which did not in any way extend beyond the sensible nature of the universe. For it is just the consequence of this side of his Scepticism that in the absence of any direct knowledge of the Truth, the only truth or good a man can possess is the limited truth and good which the senses and experience can discern and provide — and Epicurus is just the philosopher of antiquity who developed the consequences of such a position to their fullest extent.

However, as we have seen, the other side of Augustine's Scepticism was precisely his determination to know the Truth and since moreover he did not know that it was impossible for man to know it, neither could he accept the dogmatic side of the Epicurean philosophy insofar as it acutely affirmed that man had no relation to the eternal, objective Truth and had therefore no soul which had any life beyond its life in the body and likewise had no account to render of its actions or intentions in this life. As Augustine saw, this dogmatic position was held by Epicurus simply as a matter of opinion or belief ("... Epicurus credere noluit ..." [the life of the soul after death]), and against this he placed his own belief in the life of the soul after death which he
deemed more likely an opinion on the grounds of the greater
and more universal authority which men conceded to the teach-
ings of the Christian faith than to the doctrines of
Epicurus — judging one might say by the 'worldly success'
of the church that it was most probable that it did possess
the Truth. But if he supported his belief on those grounds,
he was determined to maintain it in the first place precisely
by his determination to know the Truth. For it is only if
his soul does actually 'extend' beyond the sensible that it
can either know the Truth or enjoy the blessed life that he
sought. And yet again, because he knows he does not know
the Truth and daily despairs of finding it, the same Truth
which promises him the blessed life if only he can grasp it,
more and more threatens him with the opposite consequences
if he fails to grasp it, and time has now become a crucial
factor. Augustine sums up this whole matter in a single,
terrible sentence, "Neither did anything call me back from
sinking myself deeper into the raging whirlpool of carnal
pleasures, but the fear of death and of your future judg-
ment..." (VI, xiv, 26).
NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1. For a statement of the ages (cubae) or periods of a man's life which Augustine uses in the Confessions, see above, Comm. Conf. I, n.1.

2. This descent from the Truth is first mentioned in Conf., VII, xvii, 23.

3. This text is translated at the beginning of our commentary: see above, Comm. Conf. I, pp. 1-2. It should be clear by now that although the argument of the first seven books of the Confessions aims to show that the four moments which Augustine distinguishes in this text are the stages through which a man must pass on his way to the vision (i.e., knowledge), of the Truth, Augustine also holds that it is possible to grasp the very same Truth, but in another manner, at any moment (i.e., without passing through these stages), through faith in Christ and Monica, above all others, is the example of this faithful apprehension of the Truth. The logic of this latter position is just the content of the argument of the latter part of Book VII and of Books VIII and IX where Augustine shows both the loss of this vision when he attempts to hold on to it by his own natural powers.
and its subsequent recovery - in a form that can be followed
- held through faith in Christ, (the vision at Ostia: Conf.,
IX,x,23-25).


5. Following A. Solignac's 'Chronology' in RA 13, pp.204-
   205.

Ps.70:5 6. Conf., VI,i,1 "Spes mea a iunctus moa, ubi mihi eras
et quo reccecoras?"

7. Conf., VII,i,1 "Iam mortua erat adulcoentia moa mala
et nefanda, et ibam in iunctus, ...".

8. For a statement of the ages (actas) or periods of a man's
life which Augustine uses in the Confessions, see above,


10. See Conf., V,xiv,24-25. See also Conf., VI,iv,5,
where Augustine, speaking of the Manichees' doctrines and
of their ridicule of the Catholic's position, says: "Quod
cum falsa essent, postea mihi claruit. vertum tamcn erat,
quod incerta essent et a me aliquando pro aeris habita
falsent, num catholicam tuam caccis coniunctionibus accusarem,
... non hanc vera docenon, non tamen ea docenton, quae graviter accucabam."

11. Conf., VI,i,1 "... veritatem me nondum adoptum, sed falsitati iam creputum: ..." Compare this with the definition of his position during the years of his Manichaean attachment in Conf., III,vi,12 "... recensens a veritate tue in casu mihi vidobam ...". As he says in Conf., VI,1,1 he was now coming to the bottom of the deep "Et ambulabam per tenesbras et lubricum et quaerabam te foris a me et non inveniobam deum cordis mei; et veneram in profundum mare et diffidabam et desperabam de inventione veri." This process (i.e., turning away from the Truth which he also seeks), began with his fall into Manichaicism (Conf., III,vi,11) "Quibus gradibus deductus in profunda inferi.", and ends in the knowledge of his separation from the Truth and of his natural 'citizenship' in the "regis dissimilitudinis" (Conf., VII,x,16) which he describes in the following terms: "... de silvestri caemine videre patriam paesis et iter ad cam non invenire et frustra conari per via circum obsidentibus et incipientibus fugitivis desertoribus cum princi pe suo loco et Dracoone ..." (Conf., VII,xxi,27).

13. See above, Comm. Conf. III, n.56 for a preliminary statement of the distinction which Augustine makes between the spiritual maturity of the natural man and the maturity of the spiritual man.

14. Readers of Plato's, Republic might recognize this as the moment in the image of the 'cave' (Republic, 514a - 518c), when the prisoners are forced to turn away from the images on the wall and turned around to the source of these images from which point they also begin the steep and difficult climb up the passage leading to the underivative light of the upper world.

We have already seen that Augustine speaks of his attachment to the Manichees as a kind of imprisonment with his back to the light (see Conf., IV,xvi,30 and above Comm. Conf. IV, n.100), and here in the sixth book he again uses a language strongly reminiscent of the Republic. For, as he says, (Conf., VI,iv,5), he is now converted (away from the imaginary doctrines of the Manichees) "... itaque confundebam et convertebam ..." (i.e., turned around from the images to their source), and wandering around in dark and slippery places, "Et ambulabam per tenbras et lubriam et quaerbam te foris a me ..." (Conf., VI,i,1), i.e., the movement through the dark and difficult passage to the mouth of Plato's 'cave".
The difference between the teaching of Augustine and Plato may be seen in the fact that for Plato one ascends to the Truth whereas Augustine, who recognizes the same moments in the process of coming to know the Truth and who also regards it in an immediate sense as an ascent nevertheless finally regards the whole business as a descent; (see above, n.11). Augustine explains the sense and logic of this difference in his discussion of the inadequacies of the Platonic position in the seventh and eighth books of the Confessions.

15. See Conf., VI, i, 1 quoted above, n.11. See also Conf., VI,iii,4 "... quomodo se haberet spiritalis substantia, ne quidem inveni'ro aique in asnimato suspicabae ...


17. Conf., VI, i, 2 "... qui dubitabam de illo omnibus et inventiri posse viam vias minime putabam." Once again, (see above, Comm. Conf. V, p. 298 ), Augustine's Scepticism is not a knowledge that all knowledge comes through the senses and is therefore uncertain. Augustine knows that he does not know whether or not this is the case, but as we have explained, he is bound to hold to the Sceptical position because of his determination (i.e., his will) to recognize no other Truth than that which can be grasped immediately and directly (i.e., through the senses), and only insofar as this is the case is
he certain that he can have no certain knowledge of the Truth. Such a view does not and cannot absolutely exclude the possibility of a certain knowledge of the Truth and indeed in one sense it arises out of the determination to come to just such a certain knowledge of the Truth. Because he does not know that all knowledge must come through the senses even though he wills not to recognize any other source, the possibility of some other manner of grasping the Truth is always present. Augustine expresses this position with perfect accuracy in the text we have quoted above when he says, "... I held that it was only in the slightest degree (minime) possible to find the Way of Life." For this reason we find the translation of Tréhorel and Bouissou in PA 13, p. 521, altogether inadequate: "... et je croyais absolument impossible de trouver la voie de la vie." (emphasis ours): this is not what Augustine says.

18. As against this interpretation there are some who have argued that Augustine could not be a sceptic. See for example J. J. O'Meara, The Young Augustine, p. 110 "Augustine was quite disturbed by the arguments of the Academicians, when he came to consider them. Nevertheless he was never a convinced Academic: his own temperament did not take easily to scepticism; and it was the nature of this scepticism to
be sceptical of itself as well as everything else" see also, in the same vein, p.114. See also the effort of J. Mourant in Recherches Augustiniennes, Vol. 4, 1966, pp. 67-96, "Augustine and the Academics". In this article the author considers the question of Augustine's scepticism and ploughs through the evidence of the Confessions, De Ordine, De Beata Vita, Contra Academicos, the Letter to Hermogenianus and the Retractiones. He "...endeavour(s) to maintain (that) ... Augustine was simply incapable of holding for any protracted period of time the kind of scepticism taught by the Academics." (p. 74).

19. Conf., VI, v, 7 "...quoniam nulla pugnacitas calumniarum quaestionum per tam multa quae legeram inter eo confligentium philosophorum extorquere mihi potuit, ut aliquando non crierem te esse quidquid esses, quod ego nescirem, aut administrationem rerum humanarum ad te pertinere."

20. Augustine develops the particular conception of the Truth which he held during the period of his scepticism in Conf., VII, i, 1 - VII, vii, 11.

21. On this text, see above, n.11.

22. Conf., VI, iv, 5 quoted above, n.10. See also Conf., VI, ii, 2 quoted above, n.17.
23. Conf., VI,v,8 "Cogitabam haec et aderas mihi, suspiram et audiebas me, fluctuabam et gubernabas me, ibam per viam saeculi tuam nec deserebas."

See also Conf., VI,xi,18 "Figam pedes in eo gradu, in quo puer a parentibus positus eram, donec inveniatur perspicua veritas."


26. Conf., VI,iii,4 "Et eum quidem in populo verbum veritatis recte tractantium omni des dominico audiebam, et magis magisque mihi confirmabantur omnes versatarum calumniarum nodos, quos illi deceptores nostri adversus divinos libros innectebant, posse dissolvi." P. Courcelle in Recherches, Chapter III, 'Aux Sermons d'Ambroise: La découverte du Néo-Platonisme Chrétien', has been to some trouble to suggest which of the sermons of Ambrose, Augustine heard and what he took from them. J. J. O'Meara disputes Courcelle's conclusions in The Young Augustine, Chapter VIII.

27. Conf., VI,iii,4 "Ubi vero etiam conperi ad imaginem tuam hominem a te factum ab spiritibus filiis tuis, quos de matre catholica per gratiam regenerasti, non sic intellegi,
...itur, ..." See also Conf., VI, iv, 5 "...esse confundi
dine et imperitia in gaudio, iisque rei, in alia
e vis, quae non fuit res divinissimi in se
e et, non aperer infamilias nunc, nunc ut se
in illis ac caris, quae se mox non in spiritu
et carnis carnum et mental, tamen unius terminum
peripheram harum revera sunt contra detrimenta." See also Conf., V, x, 19-20, on Augustine's earlier difficulties concerning this question.

28. Conf., VI, iv, 6 "Gaudiam etiam, quaedam seipseri scripti
et prophetarum iam nunc causa nunc legi de
temponium, qui non videbantur ibsanda, cum arvum tanquam
in sentimentes sanctos suis; verum alium non ita sentientes
et carnum regulam diligentissime commendaret, saeco in
popularibus sermonibus suis dicerem Ambrosium laevus
audielam littera occidit. Spiritus autem vivifica, cum ea,
quae ad litteram perversitatem docere videbantur, remoti
mystice esclavens spiritualiter aperiret, non dicius quod me
offenderet, quamvis ea dicere, sua utrum vera essent adhuc
ignoram." See also Conf., VI, iv, 5 quoted above n. 27.

29. Conf., VI, iii, 4 "... tamen gaudens erubui non me tot
annos versus catholicam fidem, sed contra carnalium
cogitationum figmenta latrasse. eo quippe temerarius
et impio servii, sieli ea quae debeban, quod venia, Hecere,
assurato, Hecem, ..." See also Conf., VI,iv,6 quoted above,
n.28.

30. Conf., VI,v,7. "Eundem autem idem, sine nisi
misperita et misere plicatum primum et secundum con
scitur, quasi non, tam innumerabilia quae est,
qui ille seque non sancientur adfuisse, quae tunc
multi in historiis gentium, tam multis in locis autque autibus,
rur nihil viderat, tam recta amica, quam recta medicina.
rum multa horribiles aliae atque aliae, quae nisi ordin-
emerat, omnis in hoc vita nihil ageremus, necemem ram
inconstans in eis sibi retinerem, de quibus pars liberum
esse esse, quod atque non possem; nisi ei tempus credi-
issem, ..."

Augustine expands on the impossibility of
knowing who one's parents are and the consequent necessity of
belief in human affairs, in De Uilitate Credendi, xii,26.

As opposed to the Manichee's claims to provide a total
rational explanation of all things, Augustine's Scepticism
leads precisely to the recognition of the necessity of belief
in human affairs.

31. On the proper sense of 'scientia', see the passage from
Contra Academicos, I,vii,19 quoted above, in Comm. Conf. IV,
n.46.
32. Conf., VI, v, 7. "Ex hoc tamen quoque iam praecipue ignominiam saeculorum modernum illi minimeque fallacetur conticuo labore, ut breuieret quod non demonstratur — sicc esse quia, sed qui fere non esse, sicc non nullius esse — quid illis temeraria praelectione scientiae eruditionem invidi et postea tam multa falsa et absurdissima, quid demonstrari non putarent, credenda imperari,..."

33. Conf., VI, v, 8. "Ideoque cum essesmus infirmi ab inventis aut auctores ratione veritatem et ob hoc nobis quae esse auctoritate sanctarum litterarum, iam credere cooperarum nullo modo te suisse tributurum tam excellentem illi scripturae per omnes iam terras auctoritatem, nisi et per ipsam tibi credi et per ipsam te quaeri voluisses..."

34. Conf., VI, iv, 6. "Tenebam enim cor meum ab omni adversione,..." and "... ne falsa crederet, curari rebus abstant, resistens manibus tuiss,..."

35. Conf., VI, iv, 6. "Tenebam enim cor meum ab omnibus adversione, timens praecipitium et suspendio magis necabatur. volebam enim eorum quae non viderem ita me certum fieri, ut certus essem, quod septem et tria decem sint. neque enim tam insanum eram, ut ne hoc quidem putarem posse comprehendi,
saeclorum, ita uterum cupiam sine corporalia, quae coram sensibus meis non adeaeent, sine spiritualia, de quibus ergitio nisi corporali et necessarium. This passage makes it perfectly clear that Augustine's Scepticism did not absolutely deny the possibility of any certain knowledge.


37. Conf. VI, iv, 6 "Et sanari, credendo poteram, ut surgatior in fumus mentis meae et in alio modo in veritatem tuam semper manerem et in nullo deferrentem; sed, si cuncta epenire accepi, ut nulum medium expertus etiam non timeat se remittere, ita erat valetudo eanima mea, quae utique nisci velendum sanari non poteram et, ne falsa crederet, eanam recusabat, resistens manibus tuis, qui medicamenta fidei confererint et espeisti super mortos orbis terrarum et tantam illis auctoritatatem tribuisti." In the sequel Augustine will show that even though he does come to the direct vision of the Truth by his own natural powers, he then finds himself absolutely separated from the Truth which he knows and (as he says here and will show us later), this separation and the consequent sickness of his soul can only be overcome by believing in Christ.

38. See Conf. VI, iv, 6 quoted above n. 34. This reflects the
sceptical doctrine of ἢκοχδ - 'suspension of judgement' or 'withholding assent'. On this doctrine see below, n. 58.

39. Conf. VI, i, 1 "In venerat ad me mater picta fortis, terra marique me sequens et in periculis omnibus certa sedeva. num et per marina discrimina ipseos navas consolabatur, a quibus rudes abyssi variatrices, cum perturbantur, consulari silent, pellius eis perventionem cum salutem, quia loc e tu in rebus pollicitus eras." Courcelle, noting the seasons of normal trans-Mediterranean voyages, dates Monica's arrival in Rome in the first weeks of June 385 A.D. (Recherches, p. 87). Solignac disagrees (for no clear reason) and places it earlier in the spring of the same year (BA 13, p. 141, n. 1). Solignac does not seem to take into account the 'proof' Courcelle presents on p. 89, n. 2, against an earlier date. This 'proof' is based on the assumption that Augustine made only one visit to Ambrose (p. 91, n. 1), on Monica's behalf about the question of the 'refrigerium' and Monica's African custom of fasting on Saturday - mentioned by Augustine in the Letter to Casulanus and the Letter to Januarius (reproduced in Recherches, p. 68) - in which case the date of the visit would, according to Courcelle, have to be about June of 385 A.D. In support of this position, he says:

"... Pâques tombait, cette année-là, le 13 avril; si
Monique était arrivée au début d'avril, ce problème ne serait pas posé à elle aussitôt; car le Samedi-Saint, le jeûne était général dans toutes les Églises." There seems to be no reason why the problem of fasting could not have arisen on any Saturday of the year and it is hard to follow Courcelle's thought through the thicket of the facts he has collected.

40. See Conf., VI,i,1.

41. See Conf., VI,ii,2 The custom in question was known as the 'repigium' or the 'parentalia': on this custom see Solignac's 'Notes Complémentaires', §20, in BA 13, p. 676.

42. As we can now recognize, Augustine has treated the practical consequences of the fault of each age of his life in terms of a perverted imitation of the Trinity. We are about to show this of the fault of maturity before the vision of the Truth; we have already seen this in the fourth book of the fault of adolescence (see above, Comm. Conf. IV, pp. 201-221). In the first three chapters of the third book, speaking of the fault of childhood he treats in chapter i of the pursuit of worldly love; in chapter ii of the pursuit of worldly power (seeking the illusion of power in the spectacula theatrina); and in chapter iii the pursuit of worldly glory (through his studies [see also Conf., III,iv,7]): see above, Comm. Conf. III, pp. 115-123. In Conf., III,viii,16 Augustine calls these
the three heads of iniquity: "Haec sunt tribus iniquitatis,
sae pulssant principandi et spectandi et sentieri.
libitum...."

43. **Conf., VI.i.vi.9** "Iniquam honoribus, lucris, coniugio,
et invidias."

44. **Conf., VI.i.vi.9** "Iniquam honoribus, lucris, coniugio,
et invidias. Patienor in cibus cupiditatibus amarissimis,
difficulitates ve propicio tanto misis, quanto minus
sinebras tibi dulcescere quasi non eras u. vide cor meum,
dero, qui volisti, ut hoc recordarer et confiterer
ubi, nunc tibi inhaeret anima mea, quam de visco tam
tenasi mortis cruciasti. quam misera erat! et semeam vulneris
in pungebas, ut rectificis omnibus convertetur ad te,
qui es super omnia et sine quo nulla essent omnia,
convertatur et sanaretur. quam ergo miser eram et adeo-
modo cruciasti, ut sentirem miseriam meam...."

45. Augustine is here discussing his pursuit of worldly
glory as is clear from **Conf., VI.i.vi.10** "Recedit ergo,
ab anima mea qui dixit ei: 'interesset, unde quis gaudeat."
 gaudebat mendicus ille vinulentia, tu gaudere cupiebas
 gloria. qua gloria, domine? quae non est in te."

46. **Conf., VI.i.vi.9** "Quod enim iam ille pauculis et emen-
dicatis summulis adoptus erat, ad hoc ego tam aerumnosis
anfragibus et circuitibus ambiebam, ad laetitiam siliet
temporalis felicitatis."

47. **Conf., VI, vi, 9** "Neque enim co me praeponeo illi deditum, quod idolis erat, quoniam non inae fideles, sed plebeatis unde quaeremus hominibus, non ut eos decorem, sed tantum ut placem. propterea et tu haculo disciplinæ tuae confiniebas casa mea." Even when fortune did smile on him, Augustine says that it weared him to grasp it because of its uncertainty. **Conf., VI, vi, 10** "... et si quid adversisset prosperum, Maecenas adprehendere, quia pacem primum tenebatur avolabat."

48. **Conf., VI, vi, 9** "... nihil vellemus aliuis nisi ad securum laetitiam pervinirc, quo nos mundius ille tam praeecessisset nunquam illus fortasse venturos. quod enim ille pauculis et emendicatis nummulis adoptus erat, ad hoc ego tam aerumnosis infractibus et circuitibus ambietbam, ad laetitiam silicet temporalis felicitatis. non enim verum gaudium habebat: sed et ego illis ambiti-
nibus multo falsius quacrebam. et certe ille laetabatur, ego anxius eram, securus ille, ego trepidus. et si quis-
quam percontaretur me, utrum mallem exultare an metuere, responderem: "exultare"; rursus si interrogaret, utrum:
me talem mallem, qualis ille, an qualis ego tunc essem, me ipsum curis timoribusque confectum eligerem, sed per-
versitiste; numquid veritate?"
49. 'Mendacious', because he sought for honour by knowingly telling lies to those who knew he was lying and applauded him for it. See Conf., VI, vi, 9 "... die illo, quae, cum paraverem recitare imperatori laudes, quibus plura mentirer, et mentienti, favercerur ab scientibus ..." and Conf., VI, vi, 10 "... ego mentiendo quaerebam tyfum ...". Monica had a remarkably accurate judgment of the sceptics as epileptics which Augustine reports in De Beata Vita, 16 "Jam die nobis, inquit, et rede qui sint isti Academici et quid sibi relint? Cui breviter dum exposuissem aperte- que, ita ut nemo illorum ignarus absederet: Istri homines, inquit, caducarii sunt (quo nomine vulgo apud nos vocantur, quos comitialis morbus subvertit), et simul surrexit ut abiret: ...".

50. It is clear from the text of the Confessions that, at this period, Augustine, Alypius and Nebridius were all Sceptics. See Conf., VI, viii, 11 "Congemescabamus, in his qui simul amice vivebamus, et maxime ac familiarissime aum Alypio et Nebridio ita conioquebar." and also Conf., VI, x, 17 "Et erant ora trium egentium et inopiam suam sibimet invicem anhelantium et ad te expectantium, ut dares eis escam in tempore opportuno. et in omne quam- itudine, quae nostros saeculares actus de misericordia tua sequebatur, intuentibus nobis finem, cur ea pateremur.
sceuchani tenebrae, et averterebant gementes et dicebamus: "quandiu haec:" et hoc cerebro dicebamus et dicentes non reliquemus ea, quia non elucubrar certum aliquid, quod illis relietis adprehenderemus."

51. Conf., VI,vii,11 "... et diligebat multum, quod et bonus et locusviderer, et ego illum propter magnum virtutis indolem, quae in non magna aetate satis eminbat, ..."

52. As we find for example at the end of this book (Conf., VI,xv,25), where Augustine tells us that he was too weak even to follow the example of his concubine when she returned to Africa vowing never to know any other man.

53. Conf., VI,vii,12 "Etenim vero ille post illa verba proripuit se ex fovea tam alta, quae ubi deubatur et cum mira voluptate caecabatur, et excussit animum fortitatem, et resiliuerunt omnes circumstans sordes ab eo ampliusque illuc non accessit." See also Conf., VIII,xii,30.

54. Conf., VI,vii,12 "Et audire me rursus incipiens illa mecum superstitione involutus est amans in manichaeis ostentationem continentiae, quam veram et germanam putabat."

56. See for example Augustine's testimony to his great natural ability in such matters in Conf., IV, xvi, 30.

57. Alypius might have refused the challenge of his friends but the speech which Augustine reports makes it clear that he was moved by the proud desire both to manifest and to be recognized for his virtue: Conf., VI, vii, 13 "... si corpus meum in locum illum trahitis et ibi constitutis ... quid et animum et oculos meos in illa spectaculis potestis intendere? adero itaque absens ac sic et eos et illa superabo."

58. For a statement of this doctrine of the sceptics (ατάραξια as the end, ἐποχὴ as the means), see Sextus Empiricus, Outlines of Pyrrhonism, I, xii, 25-30 (ΤΙ ΤΟ ΤΕ- ΆΣ ΤῊΣ ΕΚΕΝΤΙΚΗΣ), and I, xiii, 31-35 (ΕΠΙ ΤῊΝ ΟΔΟΣ- ΧΕΡΩΝ ΤῊΣ ΕΠΟΧΗΣ). Cicero, who was largely responsible for the creation of the Latin philosophical vocabulary out of the Greek, translates ἐποχὴ in this way "... ἐποχὴ, id est adscensionis retenio ..." (Academica, II, xviii, 59), and we note that this is just the word which Augustine uses to describe his effort at this time: Conf., VI, iv, 6 "Tenebam cor meum ab omni adscriptione ..." (emphasis ours).

59. Conf., VI, vii, 13 "Nam quodam pugnæ casu, cum clamor
60. Conf., VI, viii, 13. "... qui per eius aures intravit et rescepit eius lumina, ut esset, quod fervereat et "dixerit rex adhuc potius quam fortis animus et eo "inimico, quod de se presumerat, quod debutit de te."

This same inability to hold on to the Truth apart from a faith in Christ is mentioned again by Augustine in Conf., VI, xi, 20. As we have already indicated (see above, n.3), Augustine develops the logic of this position in Books VII and VIII.

61. We do not know that Alypius ever came to the vision of the Truth as did Augustine but his conversion to the Truth (i.e., Christianity), was accomplished at the same time as Augustine’s. Conf., VIII, xi, 30.

62. See Conf., VI, x, 16 The burden of this chapter is to show that Alypius was uninterested in worldly power or wealth.

63. Nebridius likewise is shown to have left his worldly
wealth and connections out of a desire to find the Truth; see *Conf.*, VI,x,17. In this same section Augustine includes himself with the others in this respect.

64. This contradiction may be seen in two ways. In one respect it can be seen in the fact that Alypius' virtue which was supposed to take him out of the world and away from worldly cares nevertheless bound him to the cares of worldly office in order that he might manifest his virtue: see *Conf.*, VI,x,16. In another respect the contradiction can be seen in the necessity of acquiring a certain level of worldly wealth and power (food, books, rest), in order to be free to pursue Wisdom: see *Conf.*, VI,xi,18. "Antem eridiania horis discipuli occupantes; etiam quid facimus? cur non in agimus? sed quando salutamus amicos maiores, quorum suffragitis opus habemus? quando praeparamus quod emant scholasticis? quando reparamus nos ipsos relaxando animo at intentione curarum?"

65. So Augustine says of their resolution at this time: *Conf.*, VI,xi,19 "Fereant omnia et dimittamus hanc vanam et inania: conseramus nos ad solam inquisitionem veritatis."

66. *Conf.*, VI,xi,19 "Quid cunctamur igitur reliqua spe sacculi conferret nos totos ad quaerendum deum et vitam..."
Lucius, sed aequus: incundi sunt etiam icta, habent non parum quidem: sinus, non facile ab eis praeclam cest ensitio, rula turpe est alva purcum modere ..."

67. Conf., VI, x, 17 quoted above, n. 50.

68. This vicious circle is the sense of the following image, which Augustin uses in the sixth book. Conf., VI, vi, 9 "Et incendia et locutus sum cum amico, qui mercum crant, multos illeros inscribaturum nostrum, quia omnibus salibus concussus nostris, qualibet tuno laborabam, sub stimulus molitiarii techun fecisti satans meae narram et trahendo exaggeram ..." and Conf., VI, vi, 21 "... et deligatus morbo eam: mortifera continentie tyrannam catenam meam solvi, timens et quasi concusso vulner repellens verba bene suadentis tamquam manum solventis ..."

69. Conf., VI, x, 20 "Cum haec dicebam et alternabant hi venti et impellabant huc atque illuc cor meum, transibant tempora, et tardebam converti ad dominum et differebam de die in diem vivere in te et non differebam cotidie in memet ipse mori: amans beatam vitam timebam illam in veste sua et ab ea fugiens quaerebam eam." On this last phrase "... et ab ea fugiens quaerebam eam ..." see above n. 11.
70. This explains why Augustine first mentions the question of marriage in Conf., VI, x1,19-20 in that part of the text which, according to our divisions, is essentially dealing with his pursuit of worldly power. It may perhaps need to be said that in every case when Augustine discusses the pursuit of power, honour and love, these are in no sense mutually exclusive but that rather (on the analogy of the Trinity), each implies the other two. Thus, in this particular instance, in the same chapter, Augustine speaks of the worldly power which he sought as an 'honour': Conf., VI, x1,19 "... et tamen quantum est, ut inpetretur aliquis honor ...".

71. See Conf., VI, xv, 25. Modern sentimentality might easily condemn Augustine for this 'callous' dismissal of his mistress of many years. Against this, we refer the reader to a properly historical view of the matter such as may be found in J. J. O'Meara, The Young Augustine, pp. 128-129; or in Solignac's 'Notes complémentaires', 1822, in BA 13, pp. 677-679.

72. Conf., VI, xi, 20 "Putabam enim me miserum fore nimis, si feminae privarer amplexibus, et medicinam misericordiae tuae ad eandem infirmitatem sanandam non cogitabam, quia
73. Conf., VI,xii,21  "Prohibebat me sanctus Alypius ut inanis inanis nullo modo nos posse occulto sibi simul in amore sapientiae vivere, siut iam diu desertarvamus, si id fecissom." and passim.

74. Conf., VI,xi,19  "Multae magni vivi et imitatione dignissimi sapientiae studio aemigibus duae fizerunt." See also, Conf., VI,xii,21  "Ego autem resistebar illi exemplis corum, qui consueveri coluisse sapientiam et promeruisset deum et habitasse fideliter ad dilectissimis animis. a quorum ego quidem granditate animi longe aberam . . ." Courcelle thinks that Augustine was thinking of Mallius Theodorus as the example of a man who could both be married and pursue the Truth. See Recherches, pp. 179-180 and also Appendix II, pp.281-286.

75. See Conf., VI,xiv,24. On the origin of this community we quote the Solignac's note from BA 13, p.567,n.1, which sums up the present state of the question. "Sur ce projet
de "phalanstère philosophique", voir P. Courcelle, Recherches ... pp. 178-181; l'auteur pense que l'origine de cette idée est à chercher dans le monastère manichéen fondé à Rome par l'auditeur Constantius (De Mor. Man., xx, 74; C. Faust., V,v), et dans le projet de la Platonopolis néo-platonicienne qu'Augustin avait pu connaître par la Vita Plotini de Porphyre, insérée selon tout vraisemblance dans la traduction des Ennéades lu par Augustin. Il est également possible qu'Augustin ait eu connaissance des communautés pythagoriciennes mentionnées par Jamblique (De pyth. vit., 30); Varron, par qui Augustin a connu beaucoup de renseignements sur Pythagore, serait alors l'intermédiaire.

Alfaric in L'Évolution, p. 364 notes an "analogy" between the Manichaean community of Constantius and the one that Augustine mentions in this text.

Because Augustine had already altogether abandoned the Manichees in practice (see above, p. 344), we reject the suggestion that this community had anything to do with the Manichees. And, rather than the other suggestions that it derived from neo-Platonic or Pythagorean sources it seems to us far more likely that Augustine and his friends had in mind the establishment of an Epicurean "Garden".

For, as he tells us at the end of this book (Conf., VI,xvi,
26), in practical matters, he would have given the palm (of victory), to Epicurus: "Et disputabam cum amiciis meis Aquilé et Sevriicio de finibus bonorum et malorum Epicurei a se numquam fuisse palmarum in animo meo, ..."

See above p. 365 for an explanation of the connection between Augustine's scepticism and the Epicurean philosophy to which we add the following remarks concerning this 'community'.

Epicurus, like the sceptics saw ἀταράξια (see above, n.58), as the proper goal of the wise man's life: (Diogenes Laertius, Lives and Opinions of the Eminent Philosophers, x, 128 [hereafter, DL.] "τούτων τοι οἱ ἀπλοὶς θεωρῶν εἴπαν αὑτοῖς λαχ τε, ὁ ἔκαθαγεν εἰδεν ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ ὁματος ὕγιειν καὶ τὴν τῆς φύσεως ἀταράξιαν, ἐπει τούτο τοῦ μακαρίως τὴν ἐστι τέλος." [note that wisdom is understood as prudence φρονησις], by Epicurus — DL., x, 132 — as by Augustine's scepticism, and for the same reasons — see above Comm. Conf. V, p. 298). To this end he scorned any involvement in worldly affairs beyond the limited involvement necessary to secure his bodily needs (see DL., x, 143 [KYPIAIA AOEAI #xiv]), which is just what Augustine's scepticism also recognized (see Conf., VI, xiv, 24 "Et multi amici agitaveramus animo et conloquentes aè detestantes..."
To this end, Epicurus set up his 'Garden' as a tranquil resting-place (parallel to the "sædes quiescæ" of the Gods, mentioned in Lucretius, De Rerum Natura, iii, 18-24), where the wise man might find 

\[\text{ἀναπαύει ηὲ ἀφανίζω τὸν ἐμοῦ τὸν κόσμο}
\]

in the companionship of a few likeminded friends (see A. A. Long, Hellenistic Philosophy, p. 45; "The Gods, like true Epicureans dwell in 'sædes quiescæ' ('tranquil resting-places') enjoying a life free of all trouble." See also pp. 15-17 and pp. 71-72 on the life of the Epicurean 'Garden' community.), and it is just this that Augustine and his friends sought in the proposed community: "Et placuerat nobis, ut bini anni tar-

\[\text{quam magistratus omnia necessaria curarent ceteris quiescis.}
\]

(Conf., VI, xiv, 24). Diogenes Laertius (Di., x, 119), notes also that Epicurus taught that the wise man will not marry or raise a family and it is on just this question that Augustine's community floundered (see Conf., VI, xiv, 24).

If Augustine and his friends did indeed intend to set up such an Epicurean "sædes quiescæ" this would explain and justify the otherwise peculiar use of sædis in the passage from Conf., VI, xi, 20 "... amans beatam vitam timebam illum in sede sua et ab ea fugiens quaerebam eam." (translated
above, p. 360). Even Tréhorel and Bouissou in their unusually literal translation feel obliged to use a paraphrase to make sense of this word: see BA 13, p. 561, "... je redoutais de la trouver où elle reside ..." (emphasis ours).

76. Conf., VI, xii, 22 "Nec ipse enim nos in dives in officio regendi ministeri et suscepit obsequium liberorum, docetabs quasi tenuiet. magnam autem ex parte arque nonemier consuetudo enim incultibilis consuetudinis me captum exvultabat, illum autem admiratio capiendum invehabat."

77. See Conf., VI, xv, 25.

78. Conf., VI, xv, 24 "Inde ad suspicis et gemitis et grseus ad sequendas latas et tritas vias saeculi, quoniam multae agitationes erant in corde nostro, consilium autem tuum manet in aeternum."


80. See Conf., VI, xi, 20 quoted above n. 72. It is clear that Augustine's Scepticism prevents him from seeking the help he needs in any doctrine, such as Catholicism, that demands his trust (see Conf., VI, v, 7 quoted above, n. 32).
That there is no cure for this condition apart from a faith in Christ is the special argument of Books VIII and IX.

81. Conf., VI, xvi, 26 "Nec me reverebatur a profundiore voluptatum carmilla, quique nisi non reus mortis et futuri iudicii tui, qui per varias quidem opiniones, namquam tamen rescissit de potere meo."

83. See Conf., VI, xvi, 26 quoted above n.75. Epicurus, despite the popular reputation he had gained as a libertine even in antiquity had a much more 'ascetic' view of these pleasures than did Augustine (see DL., x, 1-12).

84. For an account of the life and doctrines of Epicurus, see DL., x. For a good modern treatment of the man and his school see A. A. Long, Hellenistic Philosophy, pp.14-74.

85. Conf., VI, xvi, 26 "Et disputabam cum amicis meis Alypio et Nebridio de finibus honorum et malorum Epicurum accepturum fuisse palam in animo meo, nisti ego credidiscem post mortem restare animae vitam et tractus moritorum.
quod Epicurus oredere noluit." On these doctrines of Epicurus and the possible sources from which he drew them see BA 13, p. 572, n. 1.

86. Conf., VI, xi, 19 "Quid, si mora ipsa omnem eum sum sensu amputabis et finiet? ergo si hoc quaerendum: sed abeit, ut ita sit. non vacat, non est inane, quod tam ominosus salmen auctoritatis christianae flet tota orbe diffunditur. numquam tanta et talia pro nobis divinitus ageretur, si morte corporis etiam vita animae consum- eretur."

87. Conf., VI, xi, 19 "Quid cunctamur igitur veliamae spec saeculi conforre nesc totos ad quaerendum deum et vitam beatam?"

88. Augustine shows us how he viewed the immortal enjoyment of earthly pleasures in Conf., VI, xvi, 26; "Et quaererebam, si essumus immortales et in perpetua corporis voluptate sine ullo amissionis terrore viveremus, cur non essumus beati aut quid alium quaereremus, ..."

89. Conf., VI, xi, 19 "Vita misera est, mora incerta est; subito obrepit: quomodo hinc exibimus? et ubi nobis discenda sunt quae hic negligencemus? ac non potius huius neglegentiae supplicia luenda?"

90. This point Augustine stresses in Conf., VI, xi, 19 and Conf., VII, i, 1.
91. Conf., VI, xvi, 26 "Nec me revocabat a profundiore voluptatarum carnalium gurgite nisi rectus mortis et futuri iudicii zui, ..."
CHAPTER SEVEN

COMMENTARY ON THE SEVENTH BOOK OF AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS

(Vii,1,1 – VII,xvi,22)

IV. The fault of maturity: A). The fault of maturity before coming to the vision of the Truth. Continued from Book VI.

In the sixth book Augustine has shown us the practical difficulties to which he was bound as a result of his Scepticism and by means of which he became sensible of its inadequacies. In the first nine chapters of the seventh book Augustine now shows us the precise nature of the view of the Truth that he held as a consequence of his Scepticism and also the arguments by which he came to a rational knowledge of its error. And, since the arguments by which he moved beyond this view are just the ones that moved him to the direct and unmistakable vision and knowledge of the Truth, it is for this reason that he says in the last chapter of the sixth book that, "precisely now" (iam iamque),¹ God's hand was ready to snatch him out of the pit. For this erroneous conception of the Truth constitutes the final error on the way to the Truth according to the stages which Augustine lists –
from the standpoint of the vision of the Truth—in the
text in Conf., VI,xiv,20 which we have been following from
the beginning of our thesis. There he says:

"And coming back from there (The Manichaean
'opinion of the two substances'), it (Augustine's
soul), made for itself a god spread throughout
the infinite spaces of all places and him it had
supposed to be you, and him it had set up in its
heart and again it had become the temple of its
own idol, abominable to you." (VII,xiv,20)

We must now try to grasp the precise sense of this error
and also explain what connection it has with the Sceptical
position that Augustine had adopted.

It will readily be seen that Augustine's Scepticism
does not in itself propose or teach any particular view
concerning the nature of the Truth and yet, because it
does not exclude the possibility of a knowledge of the
Truth and is indeed moved precisely by the desire for such
a knowledge, any man who has arrived at this position
will be bound to develop and maintain a definite notion of
the nature of the Truth which he will hold in the form of
belief—and what this notion is, Augustine shows us in
the opening chapters of the seventh book.
Now if on the one hand Augustine was led by the Sceptical position to the recognition that while the Truth must at least conform to the evidence of the senses, the senses and experience cannot provide any certain knowledge of the Truth, on the other hand the same position both recognized and possessed at least one source of an absolutely certain knowledge in the analytic propositions of mathematics. As we recall from the fifth book, it was as much because of the Manichee's inability to provide a mathematically sound account of the movement of the heavenly bodies as by the fact that their account did not conform to the evidence of the senses, that Augustine first became disenchanted with their teachings and subsequently abandoned the sect. And furthermore, as he has told us in the sixth book, the consequence of his Sceptical position with respect to the theoretical apprehension of the Truth was that he desired to know the Truth with the same absolute certainty that he knew that seven plus three makes ten and so refused to assent to any doctrine about the nature of the Truth that could not be grasped with the same degree of certainty.

Thus, if on the one hand Augustine had been moved (in practice), beyond the fabulous opinions of the Manichees by the recognition that the Truth must at least conform to the evidence of the senses, on the other hand he had also recognized that insofar as a man could have any certain
knowledge of the Truth (such as he desired), then for a certainty, the Truth must have the same formal character as these mathematical propositions. That is, it had to be both incorruptible, inviolable and unchangeable like the mathematical truths of which he was absolutely certain.  

"And I, a man, and such a man, was trying to conceive you, the supreme and only and true God, and I believed you to be incorruptible and inviolable and incommutable with all my innermost being, because, not knowing whence or how, nevertheless I clearly saw and was certain that that which was able to be corrupted was worse than that which was not able to be corrupted, and what could not be violated I preferred without hesitation to that which could be violated, and what suffered no mutation I knew to be better than that which was able to change."¹⁰ (VII.1.1)  

Armed with the knowledge of this truth to which he could have arrived at any time during the years in which he maintained the Sceptical position - but which we presume came to him towards the end rather than the beginning of this period¹¹ - Augustine was now able to come to the certain knowledge of the falsity of the Mani-
chee's doctrines such as he had been seeking from the moment he abandoned his association with the sect. For, having come to the recognition that if a man can have any certain knowledge of the Truth (as the Manichees claimed), then the Truth must be incorruptible, inviolable and incommutable, (which the Manichees denied), he was at last able to see the absolute force of the question which Nebridius used to pose to the Manichees in Carthage when he asked them what the 'race of darkness' would have done to God had God refused to do battle with them. Augustine tells us that at the time he and his friends were much struck (consumit sumus) by this dilemma. But only after he has come to recognize that the Truth must be incorruptible, inviolable and unchangeable, if it is to be known by man can he see in this question a certain proof of the falsity of the whole fabric of the Manichee's fantastic doctrines which all derive from the imagined opposition of the two principles: God and the 'race of darkness' - and it is precisely for this reason that Augustine raises Nebridius' question at just this point in the argument of the Confessions. For, as he now sees it poses a dilemma which utterly destroys any and every dualistic position like that which the Manichees taught. For either they must affirm that the 'race of darkness' cannot harm God, in which case their whole
teaching is shown as a false and execrable nonsense, or else they must affirm that the 'race of darkness' can actually harm God, which again reduces their teaching to nonsense for if God is corruptible then, as Augustine had come to know, it would be impossible for man to come to any certain knowledge of the Truth such as the Manichees claimed to possess. 14

As the recognition of the divine incorruptibility literally renders the Manichaean doctrines unthinkable, so also does Augustine tell us that, at the same time, he gave up as equally false and fantastic what we might call the 'theory and practice' of astrology - and this for the same reason. For, as we have already seen, astrology is only credible to those who hold a dualistic notion of the nature of the universe and who are willing to suppose that the opposition between good and evil as it appears to man must also be reflected in the principles of the universe itself. 16 However, the recognition of the divine incorruptibility has shown Augustine the error of this view and so here too he is now able to appreciate the arguments of Vindicianus and Nebridius which he had heard a long time before and also to recognize, in the incident with Firminus (Conf., VII, vi, 8-10), a certain proof of the falsity of the pretensions of astrology - which again is the reason why he raises the question at just this point in the argument of the Confes-
sions.

Nevertheless, if on the one hand Augustine had now recognized that the Truth must of necessity be incorruptible, inviolable and immutable if it is to be known by man, on the other hand, as he was still determined to grasp the Truth immediately and directly in order that he might use it for his own private ends, so he was bound to think of it as a sensible entity, and was therefore driven once again to imagine God, (i.e., the Truth), this time as an incorruptible, inviolable and unchangeable corporeal substance which is perdured through the spaces of all places. In the fifth chapter Augustine describes this notion of God in the following way.

"And I set up in the regard of my spirit the universal creature, whatsoever in it we are able to discern (such as the earth and the sea and the air and the stars and the trees and immortal animals), and whatsoever in it we do not see (such as the firmament of heaven which is on the top and all the angels and the entirety of its spiritual inhabitants, but yet as if these were bodies, disposed in such and such places according to my imagination). And I made of your creature one great mass, dis-
tinquished by the kinds of bodies, either those that were bodies in truth, or those bodies that I took for spirits. And this mass I made huge, not as huge as it was, which I was not able to know, but as huge as it pleased me, yet in every respect altogether finite. However you, O Lord, I imagined encompassing and penetrating this mass in every part, but in every way infinite: as if there were a sea—anywhere and everywhere through an immense infinity only the sea—and that sea had in it a sponge no matter how big, though finite, and that sponge was full in all its parts with the immense sea. Thus I supposed your creature to be finite but filled by you who are infinite and I said, 'Here is God and here are the things which God created, and God is good and most powerfully and greatly more excellent than these; but however, being good, he created them good and this is how he surrounds and fills them all.' 20 (VII,v,7)

Augustine does not tell us the source of this particular view of the nature of the Truth 21 and neither does this matter since it is clear that some such notion must be held by anyone who has recognized the unchangeable nature of the
Truth and yet is determined that the Truth must be sensible so that he can grasp it directly and use it for his own private ends.\textsuperscript{22} It seems altogether likely however that Augustine drew this view from a Stoic source, for this notion of God as an infinite corporeal substance penetrating and ordering every part of the finite universe is identical to the Stoic view of the nature of God as the active (artistic), rational, eternal but corporeal \textit{pneuma} or creative fire\textsuperscript{23} which pervades or mixes with\textsuperscript{24} the passive corporeal substance of the universe (matter), giving it the determinations of the other elements - air, earth and water\textsuperscript{25} - out of which it makes all things and by which \textit{pneuma} the universe is also rationally and beneficently governed in all its parts. This Stoic conception of the divine thus meets the two essential requirements of the notion of the Truth that Augustine was bound to hold at this stage of his life for it is both corporeal\textsuperscript{26} and monistic.\textsuperscript{27}

However, while Augustine may have taken this theoretical conception of the nature of the Truth from a Stoic source - as that statement of the nature of the Truth which was most consistent with the requirements of his scepticism\textsuperscript{28} - he could by no means affirm it dogmatically in the Stoic manner or attempt to follow its consequences in his practical activities, for in part he held to his scepticism precisely
because he was unwilling to act on any doctrine concerning the nature of the Truth which could only be believed. 29

And this notion about the nature of the Truth can only be believed for, on the one hand, inasmuch as the pneuma or incorruptible god is held to be corporeal, it cannot be known with any more certainty than the probable knowledge that the senses and experience can provide and so it must be believed. And, on the other hand, insofar as the corporeal nature of the universe is held to be ultimately incorruptible (in its pneumatic form), this cannot be grasped by the senses, and again it must be believed for again the corporeal and sensible in itself can never provide anything more than a probable knowledge.

At this point in his argument Augustine tells us that he then directed all his attention to the effort to discover and understand the cause of evil and in these chapters (iii - vii), he describes the unsuccessful attempts which he made at the time to resolve this 'problem'. If we are to understand what he took from the libri Platoniciorum (Conf., VII.ix,13), and how he came at last to the vision of the Truth, we must be very clear as to why this 'problem' appears. We may begin by recalling that, for the dualist position of the Manichees, there was, strictly speaking, no 'problem' of evil. Since, on their account,
any evil that a man did was not held to be his own responsibility, as if he had willed it, but rather it was supposed to have been willed by the evil principle over which he had no control. Such a view gratifies the natural man's determination to insist on his own innocence over against the universe - but it can only do this at the cost of supposing that God is corruptible. And this Augustine was no longer willing to assume as he now knew that it was not possible to have any certain knowledge of the Truth unless the Truth was understood to be incorruptible. But if God is incorruptible and is not opposed by any evil principle, then the only source of the manifest evil and corruption in the world must lie in man himself. From this there arises of necessity the recognition of the freedom of the will (on which the Stoics particularly insisted), and as Augustine tells us he then tried to understand the origin of evil in terms of this notion.

"And I exercised my effort to understand what I heard, that the free decision of the will was the cause of our evil doing and thy just punishment the cause of our sufferings, but I was not able to see this clearly. Thus, while trying to raise the aim of my mind out of the deep I again fell back, and trying often I fell back again and
again. For this lifted me up to your light, that I now knew that I had a will as surely as I knew that I was alive. Thus when I willed or nilled something, I was most certain that it was I and not another that willed and nilled, and here, as I now saw, was the cause of my sin. 

From this we can see that the man who has come so far as to recognize the necessity of the divine incorruptibility must also be brought by this recognition to recognize his own free will — from which position he can now and must also acknowledge and confess his sins if he wishes to go the Truth. And so, as Augustine says, he was freed from the error of the (Manichee's) dualist position where a man does not recognize or confess his own sin but prefers to suppose that God suffers evil rather than that man does it.

Nevertheless, as Augustine tells us, he then found that he was unable to discover any answer to the question which he could not avoid asking concerning the origin of evil. The text we have translated above continues in the following way.

"However, what I did against my consent, that I seemed to suffer rather than to do, and that
I judged not to be my fault (culpam) but my punishment, which punishment I immediately acknowledged that I did not unjustly suffer since I thought you to be just. But again I said: 'Who made me? Was it not my god who is not only good but the Good itself? From what source then does it come to me that I can will evil and ill good? So that there might be a just reason that I suffer punishment? Who placed this in me and grafted on to me the branch of bitterness since I was wholly made by my most sweet god.' 35 (VII,iii,5)

If we are to understand Augustine's efforts to resolve this question and his inability to do so in terms of the notion of the Truth which he held at the time we must be very precise about the origin of this problem itself. Now the important point to recognize here is that for the Stoics who developed the practical consequences of this notion of the Truth there is, strictly speaking, no problem of evil. Insófar as a man is simply willing to believe in such an incorruptible god, this problem does not and cannot present itself (except inasmuch as it is raised by a polemical attack on this belief). For in terms of this belief a man must affirm that evil and corruption simply do not exist.
And while he is bound to acknowledge his sufferings as a just punishment for his sinful acts – since this 'evil' can come from no other source: neither god nor any other principle – he acknowledges his sin in such a way that he altogether ignores his own evil nature. For what he confesses is not a sinful nature but sinful acts – moments in which he contravenes the divine order of nature and which, of the class of things "done against his consent" (see above, Conf., VII, 111,5, the text quoted on p.10), he cannot know and is satisfied to discover in the breech. And thus, by the simple expedient of resolving not to complain against the universe on account of his sufferings, he tries to establish his own innocence over against the universe even while he makes for himself a charter to pursue his worldly ambitions as he pleases, without having to bother to come to a knowledge of the Truth. Thus the Stoics taught that the sage or wise man may freely plunge himself into his worldly pursuits, confident that nothing that he does can in any way harm the universe as a whole or disturb its divine government, if only he is willing to acknowledge any failure in his worldly ambitions as an evidence that he has contravened the divine order and to accept the suffering which is consequent on this failure as a just punishment which he must 'stoically' endure. In short, by this will to suffer what cannot be avoided, the man who believes in such a notion of the Truth tries to abolish his own evil nature by abolishing evil
altogether for it is just his will not to regard the manifest suffering and corruption in the world as an evil but only as a just punishment. And thus, through his will to suffer he tries to maintain his own sovereign independence over against the universe by absolving himself of any responsibility for coming to know the Truth. However, as Augustine will show, it is precisely this failure to seek the Truth that itself constitutes the evil of man's nature as it manifests itself in this stage of his life.

Insofar as a man is willing to believe in such an incorruptible but corporeal god there is therefore no problem of evil. But Augustine was prevented from adopting this Stoical position by his Scepticism. And thus, because of his continuing determination to know the Truth and his refusal to rest in any moment which depended upon belief, the manifest evil and corruption in the world then constituted a problem which arises from this very notion of the nature of god—and it is a problem which Augustine could neither tolerate, ignore nor understand.

He could not tolerate the manifest evil and corruption in the world because, as he had by now come to know, the incorruptible was infinitely preferable to the corruptible and it was this that he desired to possess in the form of a certain knowledge of the Truth. But because he was deter-
mined to get 'beyond' the perishable, neither could he allow, (in the Stoic manner), that evil and corruption simply do not exist. For in this case he would have to deny the existence of the very thing which he sought to escape.

Where then is evil and whence and how did it steal into the world? What is its root and what the seed of it? Or is it altogether not? Why then do we fear and beware of that which is not? If we fear on no account this fear itself is evil - this fear by which the heart is tormented and distressed for no cause; and so much the greater is the evil as that which we fear is not and yet we fear it. Therefore either there is evil which we fear or this is evil, that we fear. 38 (VII,v,7)

Finally, because he was determined to know the Truth, Augustine was bound to look for a rational explanation for the source or cause of evil and for the same reason he was haunted by the fear of death and could not rest until he had found such a rational account. 39 But there can be no rational explanation of the cause of evil and corruption in terms of such a notion of the nature of the Truth. For where God is held to be both incorruptible and corporeal
in precisely the same respects, then either one must affirm with the Stoics that there is no evil and that both God and his creation are both, absolutely good, which is to deny the evident corruption of the corporeal and the sensible; or else one must acknowledge the existence of evil and corruption in the sensible which is then to deny the omnipotence and incorruptibility of God. Augustine could not accept the former and would not allow the latter, for in either case he would have to abandon his hopes of coming to a certain knowledge of the Truth.

Now this desire for the knowledge of God which prevented Augustine from adopting a sceptical position and on account of which he found himself caught on the horns of this painful dilemma, must not be attributed to any superior piety on his part. For the Stoics belief in such an incorruptible but corporeal god and his own refusal to believe in this god are merely the two sides of the same coin and both alike exhibit the fault of this age (inventus), which consists in the refusal to seek the objective, universal Truth. By their willingness to believe in such an incorruptible but corporeal god, the Stoics seek to establish their own innocence in the universe and thus 'free' themselves to pursue their immediate worldly interests, while Augustine's refusal to believe arises from his determination to scorn his worldly
interests until he knows the Truth which he nevertheless desires only so that he can put it to the service of his own private ends. But because of this determination he could only recognize a truth which can be grasped immediately and directly and so was bound to imagine God as corporeal and sensible and it is just this that prevents him from coming to the certain knowledge of the Truth which he desires.  

Knowing that he did not know the Truth, Augustine refused for these reasons to act on any doctrine which demanded belief, and yet, as he tells us again, for reasons which we have already examined, amongst the various doctrines about the nature of the Truth which depended on belief he daily preferred the Catholic faith to any other (i.e., the Stoic) as the most probable account both of the nature of the Truth as of the way to it - the more so since he now saw that it too affirmed that God was incorruptible, inviolable and immutable.

Augustine's situation is now totally intolerable and altogether unstable. For, by his determination to know the incorruptible Truth Augustine was prevented from resting in any position which depended on belief. And yet, so long as he refused to relinquish his proud and arrogant aim of grasping the Truth immediately and directly so that he might put it to the service of his private ends he was
bound to conceive of God as a corporeal substance and this notion is just what prevents him from coming to the certain knowledge of the Truth which he desires. There is only one possible resolution of this dilemma which is consistent with his desire for a knowledge of the incorruptible Truth and this, that he give up the notion of a corporeal god. And thus Augustine tells us that he was moved by the Truth itself to abandon this final error and so did he at last come to the direct and unmistakable vision of the Truth which he describes in Conf., VII,x,16 - VII,xvi,22.

In a final chapter (Conf., VII,ix,13-15), before he describes this vision of the Truth, Augustine makes his famous reference to the "books of the Platonists" - the libri Platonisorum - by which as he says he was "admonished" and thus assisted to come at last to the vision of the Truth (admonco = "to bring up to one's mind" ... by influencing more directly the reason and judgment; while in adhonor the admonition is addressed immediately to the will").

Modern scholarship has produced an immense literature on this subject all of which aims at discovering precisely which "books of the Platonists" Augustine read, in order to determine precisely what he took from them. The diligent
work of these scholars has produced a profusion of texts, printed in parallel, to show possible correspondences between this passage in the Confessions and this or that Platonist source. But whatever the particular source or sources which any of these scholars promote, almost all are agreed that by the libri Platoniciorum, Augustine intends certain Neo-Platonic treatises, either of Plotinus himself or of one or another of his disciples, imitators or translators.

The work of these scholars during the past century has no doubt produced a number of interesting results but not a single instance in all these parallels and reminiscences indisputably proves that Augustine had in mind any Neo-Platonic sources when he speaks of the libri Platoniciorum. Indeed, on the face of the matter there is considerable evidence for the disreputable view that he is actually referring to some Platonic texts. For amongst other things (although it is widely ignored), he does say in this passage that the books of which he is speaking were written in Athens.

We shall leave the discussion of this evidence to a footnote for our main contention with regard to this matter is that the search for these 'sources' is both superfluous and misleading. It is superfluous since it is clear that in order to understand Augustine's argument in the Confessions he himself did not think it necessary for the reader to know the precise content of these works: he describes this content
solely in terms of analogous teachings from the Scriptures. And it is misleading because it is just this method of working from 'clues' in Augustine, to the discovery of his 'sources', and thence back to Augustine with a presumably 'enlightened' view of what Augustine taught or held that has led to a number of seriously strained and misleading interpretations as Augustine's works are themselves distorted to accord with the presumed 'source' which is supposed to explain them.

As Augustine could have come to the direct and unmistakable vision of the Truth from an understanding of any number of ancient texts (either Platonic or Neo-Platonic or indeed as he himself makes clear, from an understanding of either the Old or New Testaments), we shall not try to determine which texts he read. Rather, confining ourselves to the argument of the Confessions, we shall bring this whole long process of coming to know the Truth to its proper term and try ourselves to see the same Truth which Augustine saw. To this end we must follow behind Augustine as closely as possible.

We begin by noticing that he prefaces his entire remarks about the libri Platonicorum, their teaching and the true vision of the Truth to which they led him, by the assertion that what he learnt from them did not in any way
cure his pride. But rather, belonging themselves to the economy of pride, they served in the end to show him the distinction between pride and humility, between presumption and confession, between the unbegotten Word and the way of the Word made flesh. Now the full sense of this distinction is only made clear in the sequel, but what we must not fail to notice is that he places the entire discussion of the vision of the Truth in the context of this distinction — in other words it belongs to the economy of pride. It is with this in mind that we must try to interpret the difficult text from the last sentence of chapter vii to the first sentence of chapter ix where Augustine says:

vii "And these things (the difficulties he suffered in his effort to know the Truth which resulted from his attempt to hold the notion of an incorruptible but corporeal god), grew out of my wound (vulnerem) because you have humiliated the proud like a wounded man and by my tumor (tumor) I was separated from you and by the great swelling of the face (nimis inflata facies) my eyes were closed.

viii You indeed, O Lord, you remain in eternity and not in eternity will you be angry with us, be-
cause you had mercy on dust and ashes\textsuperscript{62} and in your sight it was pleasing to reform (\textit{reformare}) my deformities (\textit{deformatia mea}). And by internal torments you drove me on so that I might not be able to bear it until you were certain to me (\textit{certus esse}) through an interior sight. And my tumor (\textit{tumor}) remained (\textit{residebat}) under the secret hand of your medicine, but that troubled and darkened sight of my mind was healed \textit{from day to day} by the burning salve of salubrious griefs.

And so, first, wishing to show to me how you resist the proud but give grace to the humble, and with what great mercy you have shown to men the way of humility, that your Word was made flesh and dwell amongst men, you procured for me through a certain man, inflated with monstrous pride,\textsuperscript{63} certain books of the Platonists, translated from the Greek tongue into Latin \textit{...}\textsuperscript{64} (\textit{VII,vi,11 - VII,ix,13}).

This translation is quite unorthodox, chiefly as a result of our assumption that the form \textit{residebat} comes from the verb \textit{resideo} ("to remain behind"), rather than from the verb \textit{resido} ("to subside") which is how it is commonly translated. The form we find here could be derived from either
verb but we support our interpretation because it seems to accord best with the whole argument in which it appears and of which it forms a part. We come to this view from the following considerations.

At the end of chapter vi, Augustine distinguishes between (1) the tumor growing out of his wound (sulnis - i.e., original sin), by which he was separated from God and (ii) the swelling of his face (resulting from his arrogant 'puffed up' efforts to insist on a corporeal, sensible god), which had heretofore occluded his vision of the Truth. Now the teachings of the libri Platonicorum do cure this latter and so to speak 'local' swelling inasmuch as they do lead him to the direct and unmistakable (certain) vision or knowledge of God.65 But the more deep seated and original tumor remains ("Et residebat tumor meus"), by which Augustine is separated from God even when he has come to the certain knowledge of God. And, as Augustine will show,66 this disease can in no way be cured by the teaching of the libri Platonicorum since they do not know or proclaim the Word made flesh.67 Nevertheless Augustine holds that by the secret workings of divine providence ("ex occultis manu medicinae tuae"), he was in the end led to seek and grasp the cure for this deep seated wound just because he did not look for it until he had actually seen the Truth and thereby come to know the
inadequacies of this vision by suffering the consequences of the pride which it does not cure but rather aggravates. Thus it is through the inadequacies of the "books of the Platonists" and not by their teachings that the deformities which arise from his fundamental wound are finally and wholly reformed and cured even while his immediate (local) deformity (i.e., his inability to see or come to a certain knowledge of God), is cured by their teachings.

Now it only remains to explain what Augustine took from these books and also what he did not take from them. What Augustine took from the teaching of these books can be stated quite simply. So far we have seen that Augustine had already come to the recognition that if a man could have a certain knowledge of the Truth, then the Truth must needs be incorruptible, inviolable and immutable. But now, starting from this certainty and assisted by the teaching of the books of the Platonists, he turns away from the effort to apply this hypothesis to the explanation of the sensible and corporeal universe (to what is 'below' and 'outside of' the mind that recognizes the axioms of any science or knowledge), and instead turns to the investigation of the conditions that are necessary if this hypothesis itself is to be true. Thus, starting from the certainty that if the Truth is to be known it must therefore be incorruptible and moving 'inwards' and 'upwards' in terms of its own logic.
(i.e., the logic of this hypothesis), he comes to the recognition that if the Truth is to be incorruptible, inviolable and immutable then it must also be incorporeal (otherwise, the 'problem' of evil - either the Truth is corruptible or the corruptible does not exist), and in the instant that this is recognized the hypothetical character of the whole argument immediately dissolves into an absolute and unmistakable knowledge or vision of the existence of the objective, universal Truth. For, insofar as the Truth must be incorporeal, then the principle or reason of the world cannot be immanent in it (in the manner of the Stoic notion of God). And therefore, insofar as the corporeal exists, the existence of its incorporeal and incorruptible principle is necessarily established for finite thought. Thus we may say with Augustine who both asks and answers:

"... Is Truth then nothing at all since it is not diffused through finite or infinite spaces of places?" And you called out from far off: Verily indeed, I AM THAT IS. And I heard, as one hears in the heart, and there was absolutely no ground from whence I might doubt; indeed I might more easily doubt myself to live than that the Truth was not, which is seen having been understood through those things which have been made." (VII,ix,16).
Finally, we must at least note what Augustine tells us that he did not take from the *Libri Platonicorum*. Using the words of Saint Paul in the Epistle to the Romans (1:23), he says that he found in the books of the Platonists that the glory of the incorruptible God was changed into idols (*idola*) and various likenesses (*simulae*) into the imitation of images (*similitudinem imaginis*) of corruptible man and birds and quadrupeds and serpents which they (the 'Platonists'), made of the glory of the incorruptible God and worshipped in his stead. On these things Augustine tells us he did not feed nor did he turn his mind towards them. Now the full explanation of these sayings belongs to the sequel and for the moment all we can do is to briefly suggest their sense and to indicate the reason why Augustine did not give his mind to them.

What Augustine is referring to is the necessity for human thought, consequent on this vision of the Truth if it is to remain absolute and will not pass over to the dependent relation of belief, which results in a man taking this unhypothetical knowledge of the Truth as a starting-point and from it attempting to establish the necessity of the world. As Augustine will show in the sequel, this is the final form in which the natural man can attempt to arrogate the universe to himself (the fault of
maturity after the vision of the Truth). For although he is no longer determined that the objective, universal Truth must accord with the desires of his particular nature, nevertheless, unless he will give up his claim to know the Truth (as it is actual in the world) he is still bound by the logic of his immediate nature to imagine himself as the (only) mediator of this Truth to the world.

What prevents Augustine from this effort and determines him not to give his mind to this moment of the 'Platonic' teachings (the descent from the Truth), is no want of pride on his part - as he demonstrates in the following books. However he is prevented by the altogether accidental circumstance (as seen from a purely finite point of view), that he had heard of another mediator in whom and through whom it was said to be unnecessary for a man to 'leave' the enjoyment of God as he possesses it in vision in order that the world in which he actually lives (which is now known as a region dissimilitudinis might be justified. For in this mediator it is claimed that God justifies the world to himself so that man can actually live with God as in his proper home and, having once heard this promise, it was this that Augustine desired. The various moments of Augustine's relation to this mediator (Jesus Christ) after he had come to the vision of the Truth constitute the content of the remainder of the Confessions.
NOTES TO CHAPTER SEVEN

1. This text is translated above, see Comm. Conf., VI, p. 364. According to our interpretation this "iam iamque" has a definite logical meaning and should be translated in its literal sense of "at this very moment; just now", rather than by a vague paraphrase as for example the "déjà, déjà" of Tréhorel and Bouissou in BA 13, p. 571.


3. Conf., VII, xvi, 20 "Et inde rediens fecerat sibi deum per infinita spatia locorum omnium et eum putaverat esse te et eum collucaverat in corde suo et facta erat rursus templum idoli sui abominandum tibi."

4. So for example Cicero characterizes the views of the Academics on the nature of the gods in De Natura Deorum, II, i, 2.

5. See above, Comm. Conf. VI, n. 17.

6. Conf., V, iii, 6 "Ibi autem credere iubebar, et ad illas rationes numeris et oculis meis exploratas non occurrebat et longe diversum erat". See also the other references cited in Comm. Conf. V, n. 23.
7. Conf., VI, iv, 6 "Tenebam enim cor meum ab omni adsensiones timens praecepta et suspendo magis noceram. Volebam enim corum quae non videream ita me certum fieri, ut corum esset, quod septem et tria decem sint. Nique enim tam incanus eram, ut ne hoc quiàdem putarem posse deprehendi, sed siut hoc, ita cetera supiebam sive corporalia, quae coram concitus meos non adessent, sive spiritualia, de quibus cogitarem nisi corporoliter noociebam." Perhaps Augustine's use of this particular example (7 + 3 = 10), is intended as an ironic comment on his complete ignorance of the psaltery of three and seven strings (the Ten Commandments), by the neglect of which, as he has said in Conf., III, viii, 16, man lives offensively against God.

8. See above, Comm. Conf. VI, pp. 344 - 345.

9. So, in Contra Academicos, II, iii, 9 Augustine recommends to his friends Romanianus and Iucilianus that they refuse to rest content with any doctrine about the nature of the Truth that does not have the same absolute certainty as these mathematical propositions. "Sed nunc ambobus dico, cavete ne quid voc nosse arbitremini, nisi quod ita didiceritis, saltem ut nostris, unum, duo, tria, quattuor simul collecta in summam fieri decem. sed item carere no
voc in philosophia veritatem aut non cognituros, aut nullo modo ita posse cognosce arbitremini. nam mihi vel potius illi credite qui ait, 'quaerite et invenietis', nec cognitionem desperandum esse, et manifestionem futuram, quam sunt illi numeri." Readers of Plato's Republic will recognize that at this point Augustine has come to see that the Truth can only be found in the intelligible world and that he is speaking here of the first or lower division of that world according to Plato's classification - i.e., the activity of understanding which takes the axioms of mathematics as a starting-point and argues from them to conclusions in the visible world: see Republic, 509c-511e.

10. Conf., VII,i,1 "Et conabatur cogitare te homo et talis homo, summum et solum et verum deum, et te incorruptibilem et inviolabilem et incommutabilem totis medullis credebam, quia nascedens, unde et quomodo, plane tamen videbam et virtus cram id, quod corrumpi potest, deterius esse quam id quod non potest, et quod violari non potest, incunctanter præponebam violabili, et quod nullam patitur mutationem, melius esse quam id quod mutari potest."

11. We presume that these considerations came to Augustine towards the end rather than the beginning of this (sceptical)
period because he mentions the fact that he came to the knowledge of the error of the Manichees teachings in that part of the Confessions (Conf., VII,ii,3 - VII,iii,5) which immediately precedes the vision of the Truth and because in the sixth book he says, of the time of which he is writing there, that he still was not yet certain of the falsity of the Manichee’s doctrines (see Conf., VI,iv,5).

12. Conf., V,xiv,25 "Tum vero fortiter intendi animum, si quo modo possim certis aliquibus documentis manichacos convincere falsitatis." Compare, Conf., VII,iii,4 "Itaque occursus cum quaerebam et certus non esse verum quod illi diecrent (the Manichees), quos toto animo fugiebam."

13. Conf., VII,ii,3 "Sat erat mihi, domine, adversus illos deceptos deceptores et loquaces mutos, quoniam non ex eis sonabat verbum tuum, sed erat ergo illud quod iam ab uoque Carthagine a Nebrido proponi solebat et omnes, qui audieramus, conossui sumus: quid erat tibi factura nescio quae gens tenebrarum, quam ex adversa mole solent opponere, si tu cum ea pugnare noluisse?"


16. And so, as Augustine says in the fourth book (Conf., IV, i.i.i,4), the cause of sin (i.e., corruptibility, violability and mutability), is placed on God rather than with the corruptible, violable and mutable creature. The Stoics who acknowledged the divine incorruptibility nevertheless believed in prophecy and divination (see for example Cicero, De Natura Deorum, II,i.i.i,7 – II,i.v,i.2), but this they are able to do only because they deny the existence of evil and corruption (see below, pp. 409-412). Augustine was both unwilling and unable to ignore the existence of evil because of his Scepticism (see below pp. 412), and consequently for him the recognition of the divine incorruptibility provided a certain proof of the falsity of the scientific claims of the astrologers. Furthermore, unlike astrology, and according to the Stoics own view of the matter, (see Cicero's statement in De Natura Deorum, II,i.v,i.2), neither prophecy nor divination laid any claim to a certain knowledge of the future which is just what Augustine had come to see as false in the pretensions of astrology.

17. This then is the accusation which Augustine brings against himself in the opening lines of the seventh book, Conf., VII,i,1. "Iam mortua erat adulescencia mea mala et necunfa, et ibam in iuventutem, quanto actae maior, tanio
... quantum quaeram potius omnia in his locis, nihil ad eum numquam revocavit, sed numquam nihil, nec inane quidem, namquid omni corpora variatur et terrae et hardo et inane et inane, sed numquam locum inane. Cumquant omnium nihil."

In part, this statement which rejects the notion of the 'void' (inane), is no doubt intended to show the reason why — having come to recognize the immutable nature of God — Augustine could not hold to the dualistic physical theories of the Epicurean philosophy which taught that there were two principles of all things in the universe (i.e., atoms and the void). For a statement of the Epicurean teachings on this matter, see Lucretius, De Rerum Natura, I, 417-420. "Sed nunc ut repetam nescignum perspectae dolios, omnia, ut est igitur per se, natura duabus constitit in rebus; nam corpora sunt et inane."

Corpus and inane are just the two terms that Augustine uses in the text we have quoted above.
18. Because this god which Augustine worshipped is the creation of his own imagination, he says in the text from Conf., VII, 11, 20 (quoted above, n. 3), that his soul made it (Sim.,) and it is on this account that he describes it in the same text as an idol (i.e., man made), which is therefore abominable to the true God who cannot be made by man but rather can only be discovered and recognized by him.

19. Conf., VII, 1, 2 "Ego quaque inveni meus cor in mihi- me. Ipse sed ipse conspexit, quidquid non per aliquantum spatium tendebatur nec diffusivere nec conglobari vel circulat vel tunc aliquid separat aut capere posset, nihil prorsus esse arbitrabatur. Per quales enim formas ipse solent occulti met, per tales imagines tali cor meum, nesciebam hanc condem intentionem, quae illas ipsae imaginem formabant, non corre lato aliquid: quae tamen ipsae non formarent, nisi coet magnum aliquid. Ita quam tu, vita vitae meae, grandem per infinita spatia undique cogitabam pene vare notum mundum et extra eam quaquam eorum per inmensa sine termino, ut habere te terram, habere cielum, habere omnia et illa finiventer in te, in aeternum etiam. Sicut autem luci solis non obscelest aeris corpus, aeris huius, qui supra terram ost, quominus per eum traheretur penetrans cum non dirrumpendo aut considerando, sed implendo eum totum, sic tibi
Just as Augustine could not rest content with the limited knowledge of nature (peritia) that the natural philosophers or secular scientists immediately profess and possess and which because of its uncertainty has nothing directly to do with the Truth that he sought, neither can he rest content with the certainty of a purely mathematical knowledge because it has nothing directly to do with the sensible nature of the universe in which he was determined that the Truth must be found. It is on account of this latter consideration that Augustine did not fall into the Pythagorean speculations according to which numbers are the essence and truth of things. A. Solignac in an article in Recherches Augustiniennes, Vol. I, 1958, "Doxographies et manuels dans la formation philosophique de saint Augustin", has studied the possible sources of Neo-Pythagorean thought in Augustine's work: see especially, section 3, "Sources pythagoriciennes," pp. 129-137.
solum esse quas corpora crant, sive quae ipsae pro spiritibus

finitis, et tam grando, non quantum crat, quod seiv
non poteram, sed quantum bibuit, undiquevocum sine

ve aulae, Domine, ex omni parte ambientem et penetratorem eum,
sed usquequaque infinitum, tamquam si mare esset ubique et

undique per immenso infinitum solum mare et habereit intra ea
spongiam quamlibet magnam, sed finitam vamen, plene esset
ubique spongia illa ex omni sua parte ex immenso vari;
sia creaturam quam finitam te infinito plenum putiam e

diebam: 'eece deus et eeece quae creavit deus, et bonus
deus atque his validissime longissimeque praestantior; se

iamen bonum bona creavit: et eeece quomodo ambic atque implet
ea.'"

21. It is evident that this is just the notion of the Truth
which constitutes the final error on the way to the Truth
according to Augustine's list from Conf., VII, xiv, 20. This
text is quoted above n. 3.

22. In the ancient world of Augustine's day as we shall argue
immediately below, the Stoic theology is the most significant
and widespread example of such a view of the nature of the Truth. Essentially the same view persists in the modern world particularly in the philosophy of Spinoza and in a much more diffuse but influential manner in the kind of Neo-Stoical outlook which can be found in the contemporary scientific and academic community. The reason and proof of this statement lies quite beyond the scope of this thesis but we draw attention to the deism and naturalism of both the ancient Stoics and the modern scientific community as the points of their essential similarity.


24. A. A. Long states the problem, to which this idea of 'pervasion' or 'mixture' is the answer, in the following way. "According to Chrysippus, pneuma interacts with matter by permeating it completely. But both the pneuma and matter are corporeal, and it is an elementary principle of physics that two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time. How then is it conceivable that pneuma can completely permeate matter? The Stoics were aware of the difficulty, and they sought to overcome it by distinguishing
between different modes of mixture." (Hellenistic Philosopy, p. 158. See also pp. 159-160 for Long's treatment of the Stoic notion of 'mixing'). In our view, Augustine's image of the sea (God), penetrating every part of creation (the sponge), in Conf., VII, v, 7 (quoted above n. 20), or of the Sun (God), filling the air (creation), without breaking or cutting it, (see Conf., VII, i, 2 quoted above n. 19) are both efforts to describe precisely this Stoic notion of bodies penetrating bodies. We have not been able to discover a direct source in the Stoic literature for the images which Augustine uses in the Confessions. A collection of texts relating to the Stoic notion of 'mixture' may be found in J. ab Arnim, Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, Teubner, Stuttgart, 1964, (hereafter S.V.F.), Vol. II, pp. 151-158.

25. The four elements in the Stoic account are earth, water, air and pneuma, which latter is alone indestructible (see Chrysippus' account, quoted in S.V.F., Vol. II, #413), and is also called fire or aether and which constitutes as it were the soul or vital force both in the universe as a whole as in all its parts. On these four elements see Cicero, De Natura Deorum, II, xxxiii, 84 "Et cum quattuor genera sint corporum, vicissitudine eorum mundi continuata natura est. nam ex terra aqua ex aqua oritur aer ex aer aether,"
doindc reitrtorcm vitioeim co aestheco aer, indc aqua, et aqua terra infima. Sic naturis hic ex quibus omnibus rerum suturum aerumque ultra vitruo communibus mundi partium continuo continentur." Further on, Cicero notes that the fire or aether is, in Latin, called "heaven" (caelum): see II,xxxvi,91. These four (caelum, aer, mare, terra) are just the four elements that Augustine distinguishes in two places in the first chapter: see Conf., VII,1,1 quoted above n.17, and Conf., VII,1,2 quoted above n.19.

26. See for example Cicero's account of Zeno's physics in Academica, I,xi,39.

27. See Diogenes Laertius' account in DL, VIII,147. See also the account of the single, immutable, controlling providence in Cicero's Academica, I,vi1,29.

28. The compatibility of the Stoic theology with a sceptical position was evidently felt by Cicero as well as by Augustine. At the end of De Natura Deorum (III,xi,95) Cicero says "Hacce cum essent dicta, ita discessimus ut Velleio Cottaec disputatio verior, mibi Balbi (who speaks for the Stoics), ad veritatis similitudinem videretur esse propensor." Solignac in RA 13, p. 479, n.1, notes a possible connection between Stoicism and the notion of God
which Augustine is describing. He notes that "On sait que Tertullien, en dépendance du stoïcisme, tenait à la fois la corporéité et la spiritualité de Dieu, le corps étant un esprit sui generis ...". The connection between this view of God and the Stoic notion has been noted by others as well: see for example G. Verbecke, "Augustin et le stoïcisme", in Recherches Augustiniennes, I, Paris, 1958, pp. 67-89, esp. pp. 78-80. Testard in Saint Augustin et Cicéron, I, p. 117 also notes the resemblance between the view of God which Augustine describes in these chapters and the views of the Stoic spokesman, Balbus, in Book II of Cicero's, De Natura Deorum. See also O'Connell, Saint Augustine's Early Theory of Man pp. 97-99 and his article in Augustinian Studies, Vol. I, Villanova, Pa., U.S.A., 1970, "De Libero Arbitrio I, Stoicism Revisited", where O'Connell gives us by far the best account of the logic of Augustine's adherence to the Stoic view as of the reason why he was forced to abandon it for (Neo)-Platonism.

29. Thus, for the reasons we have seen, while on the one hand Augustine's Scepticism led him to adopt the Epicurean philosophy as the most likely course by which he could be guided in his practical activities although he had to reject their explanation of the nature and activities of the Gods;
on the other hand, as we now propose the same Scepticism
made him adopt the Stoic conception as the most likely theory
about the nature of God although he could by no means follow
the practical consequences which the Stoics drew from this
view. Briefly put, the Epicurean theology teaches the
existence of Gods who have no relation to the affairs of this
world while the Stoic practical philosophy teaches the
necessity of a total involvement in the world. A full treat-
ment of these positions lies beyond the scope of our inquiry.
as they lie outside of the positions which Augustine develops
in the argument of the Confessions.

30. See Conf., V,x,18 for a very clear statement of this
Manichaean position: see also Conf., IV,xv,26 and Conf.,
V,x,20.


32. Solignac, following Courcelle, understands this phrase
to refer to the sermons of Ambrose (see BA 13, p. 148 and,
for Courcelle's argument, Recherches, pp. 99-100 and pp. 106-
120). It is of course possible and indeed certain that
Augustine did hear from Ambrose that the cause of evil is
to be found in the free decision of the will. Thus, Cour-
celle tries to show that Augustine could have heard certain
sermons of Ambrose from which he could have taken this notion which Ambrose in turn could have taken from the Neo-Platonic sources, but this dreadfully laboured argument is as superfluous as it is inconclusive. This is what Christianity teaches, but as we have seen, such a view is the inevitable consequence of the notion that God is incorruptible, inviolable and immutable and it is therefore common to every position which has come so far as to recognize the divine incorruptibility. But this is true of Christianity, Platonism and Stoicism. At this point in his argument we argue that Augustine has in mind the Stoics as those from whom he heard that the cause of evil lies in the free decision of man’s will since, of these three (Christianity, Plato and the Stoics), it is only the Stoics who teach the notion of an incorruptible and corporeal God such as Augustine is describing and in terms of which he was unable to discover the cause of evil. Indeed, as he will show us, it is precisely and only through Platonism that he was enabled first to find a rational explanation of the cause of evil and then through Christianity enabled to act in accord with this knowledge.

33. Conf., VII, iii, 5 "Et intendebam, ut cerncrem quod audiebam, liberum voluntatis arbitrium causam esse, ut male faceremus et rectum iudicium tuum ut pateremur, et eam liquidam cernere non valebam. itaque aciem mentis de
profundo edoere aonatus mergobar itorum et caepo aonatus
mergobar itorum atque itorum. sublevabat enim me in lucem
iam, quod iam ceobam me habere voluntaem quam me
vivere. itaque cum aliquid vellem aut nollem, non altum
quam me velle ac nolle certissimus eram et tibi esse causam
peccati mei iam tamque advertobam."

34. Conf., VII, iii, 5 "His cogitationibus depressor itorum
et suffocabat, sed non usque ad illum infirnum subducebar
errore, ubi nemo tibi confitetur, dum tu poitus mala pali
quam homo facere putatur."

35. Conf., VII, iii, 5 "Quod autem invitus facrem, pati
me potius quam facere videbam et id non culpam, sed poenam
esse indicabam, qua me non intuitu pleca te lustum cogitans
cito fatebar. sed rursum diebam: 'quis fecit me' nonne
deus meus, 'non tantum bonus, sed ipsum bonum? unde igitur
mihi male velle et bene nollem? ut esset, cum insec poenas
lucerem? quis in me hoc posuit et insegvi mihi plantarum
amartudinem, cum totus fierem a dulcisimo deo meo?"

36. For a very appreciative account of the Stoic ethics in
which all the contradictions of the Stoic position are
presented, see A. A. Long, Hellenistic Philosophy, pp. 179-
209.
37. Conf., VII, iv, 6  "Si enim vellebat inventum celera, ut
quam invenirem melius esse incorruptibile quam corrupibile, et
ideo te, quaelibet esse, esse incorruptibilem vosset habe.
noque enim ulla anima unquam poterit necesse cogitare
aliquid, quod sit te melius, qui summam et optimam bonum
esse, cum autem verissime atque certissime incorruptibile
corruptibile praeponatur, sic utiam ego praeponebam, poteram
iam cogitatione aliquid adstringere, quod esse et melius deo
meo, nisi tu esses incorruptibilis."

38. Conf., VII, v, 7  "Ubi ergo malum et unde et qua hora
inveptit? quae radis eius et quod semen eius? an omnino
non est? neque ergo timemus et quia Deus quod non est? aut
ei insaniter timemus, ertie vel timor ipse malum est, quod
incassum stimulatur et excitatur eor, et tanta gravius
malum, quanto non est, quod timeamus, et timemus. Ideo
aut est malum, quod timeamus, aut hoc malum est, quia
timemus."

39. Conf., VII, v, 7  "Talia volvebam pectoris misere,
ingravidae curiis mendacissimis de timore mortis et non
invenia veritate; stabiler tamen haecbat in corde meo
in catholica ecclesia fidei Christi tui, domini et salva-
toris nostri, in multis quidem adhuc informis et praeter
doctrinac normam fluitante, sed tamen non cun velinquebat
animus, immo in dies magis magisque inbibebat."
It is of course on just this point (death), that the practical consequences of the contradiction of the Stoical position are most sharply felt. As Augustine did not ever 'become' a Stoic he does not describe this business but we shall just note that of all the 'things that happen against a man's consent' death itself is the one thing that everyman knows he must 'stoically' endure and which gives the lie to the whole position. This contradiction may be stated in many ways, but to follow the argument we have already put forward, we may say that while the Stoic tries to maintain his own sovereign independence or identity over against the universe through his will to suffer, he must do this in the knowledge that the last thing he has to suffer is his death which is just the dissolution of this identity and independence. By his willingness to identify the incorruptible Truth with the corruptible world a man sanctifies his worldly activities and frees himself from the necessity of seeking the objective Truth but the consequences of this ignorance cannot be ignored for they reappear in the necessity that in the end the same man must acknowledge that corruption or death is the final and absolute Truth of the world. And thus, this doctrine which begins by promising to free man from the fear of death, ends up by teaching that death is the absolute and final truth of the
universe (i.e., the Stoic doctrine of the cyclical conflagration of the universe).

40. *Cont.*, VII, v, 7. "Unde estigit, quoniam bene facti habe omnia bona bona? malus quidem et summum bonum minora factit bona, sed tamquam et quarta bona sunt omnia, unde est malum? an unde facti est, materies atque mala evit, et formavit atque ordinavit cum, sed veliquit aliquid in illa, quod in bonum non conventaret? cur et hodie an inpotentens evit totum rerum et commutare, ut nihil maius remaneret, cum sit omnipotens? postremo, cur inde aliquid facere veluit ex non potius cadem omnipotentia facti, ut nulla esset omnia? aut vero existere poterat contra eius voluntatem? aut si actu tua est, eum tam diu per infinita vetus spatia temporum sic esse esse ad tantum post placuit aliquid ex ea facere? aut tam, ut aliquid subito veluit agere, hoc potius ageret omnipotens, ut illa non esset atque ipsae solus esset totum hominem et summum et infinitum bonus? aut si non esset bene, ut non aliquid boni sitiam fabriquearet et oenderet qui bonus erat, illa sublata et ad nihilum reducita materie, quae mala erat, bonam ipsa institueret, unde omnia creaverit? non enim esset omnipotens, si oenderet non posset aliquid boni, nisi ea quam non ipsa considevrat adiuvaretur materia."

41. Conf., VII,vii,11  "... quae illa terrentia parturientis corde mot, qui gemitus, deus meus et tibi semper tuae nesciente me. et cum in altitate fortius quaqueven, magis voces emerit ad misericordiam tuam, 'tuas convivitatis animae mali, tu celebras qui pattebant, et nullus hominum. quantum enim erat, quod inde digerebatur per linguam meam in aure familias eorum meorum! numquid totus tumulus animae meae, cui nec tempora nec ea mea suffletur, consumit eis?"

42. The contradiction of the position of course prevents any man from actually realizing this vain ambition. On the contradiction of this position as it relates to man's practical activities, see above, n.39.

43. Conf., VII,vii,11  "Totum tamen tamen in audibum tuum, quod usquecum qua gemitum corde mei, et ante te erat desiderium meum et lumen orationum meorum non erat meum. itius enim erat, ego autem fortis, nec in loco illud, ut ego intendebam in ea, quae loco continentur, et non tibi inventi eram locum ad requiescendum, nec presbient habep meista, ut dicerem: 'eat est et bene est', nec dimittebant vertere, ubi mihi satia esset bene. superius enim erat istis, te vero inferior, et tu gaudium verum mihi subdito libit et tu mihi subditeveras quae infra me erasti, et hoc erat rectum temperamentum et media regio salutis meae, ut monorom ad imaginem tuam et tibi serviens dominare.
corpori, sed non superbe contra te superem et superem

Job. 15: 26
generans domum in erituer prima quod poti, etsi ista
inequ a superficie sua semitae sunt et praebant, et nusquam erat
cauponem et peplum, etque docuam et cuncta via impium
imagines comitum iadeae oppoebantur praelintii, quas
docuerunt: "qua te, indigna et aspendes?" et hae de

Ps. 88: 11
vulnere meo errentant, quia humiliat tamquam vulnorum
corporum, et tumore meo separated abs te et nimirum inflata
facie oculabat oculos meos."

44. See above, Comm. Conf., VI, n. 86.

45. Conf., VII, i, 1 "non te cogitabam, dous, in figura
corporis humani, ex quo audire aliquid de splenditio coepi;
semper hoc fugi et gaudebam me hoc repperisse in fide
spiritualis mater nostrae, catholicae tuae; sed quid te
ailuod cogitarem non occurrebat." The sense of this
remark at this point in the argument is that if God is
limited by the shape of a human body his substance cannot
be infinite and incorruptible. See also Conf., VII, v, 8
quoted above, n. 39 and Conf., VII, vii, 11 "Iam itaque me,
dauid meus, illis vinculis solveras, et quae rebebam,
unde malum, et non erat exitus. sed me non sinebas illis
fluctibus cogitationis nusseri ab ea fide, qua credebam
et esse te et esse inconmutabilem substantiam tuam et esse
do hominis et idiculum tuum et in Christo, filio
meo domino nostro, utque scriptum sanctum, quae ecclesiae
tuae catholicae commendantur ducentillas, vian te possitum
salutis humanae ad eam viram, quae post hanc mortem futura
est, hie utque salutis ab incommensurabilis in
animo meo quare habeam aestuans, unde eit malum ...

46. This is the final error on the way to the vision of the
Truth in the sense that it constitutes the last and only
error that a man can hold who has come so far as to recognize
the divine incorruptibility. It is of course by no means
necessary that any man move beyond this error to the direct
and unmistakable vision of the Truth, but 'beyond' this
error there lies only the vision of the Truth.

47. Conf., VII,viii,12 quoted below, n.64.

48. Conf., VII,x,16, "Et inde admonitus rodire ad memet-
ypum intravi in intimae mea due te et potui, quoniam
Ps.29: 11
factus ex adiutor meus."

49. See Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, art. "admoneo".
See also Conf., VII,xx,26 where admono is again used in
the same sense.

50. See also Conf., VII,x,16; VII,xx,26 - VII,xxi,27; VIII,
1,2; VIII,1,3. These discussions generally include the two other brief accounts of the effect of the *libri Platoniciorum* which are found in *Contra Academicos*, IL,1,5 and *De Beata Vita*, I,4.

51. Before the *Enneads* of Plotinus came to be widely known through the translations begun in the mid-nineteenth century (notably, that of M. N. Bouillet, *Les Enneades de Plotin*, 3 vols., Paris, 1857-1861), Harnack supposed that the *libri Platoniciorum* referred to the works of Plato: see A. Harnack, "Die Hohepunkte in Augustins Konfessionem" reprinted in *Aus der Friedens und Kriegsarbeit Reden und Aufsätze*, Vol. III, Giessen, 1904, pp. 51-79. Harnack's assumption has now been replaced for a century by the supposition that Augustine actually means the books of the Neo-Platonists. This supposition has held such sway for the past century that it is now taken for a knowledge although it is not supported by anything other than circumstantial evidence (parallels and reminiscences in the Neo-Platonic literature). Thus, Courcelle, in damning Harnack with faint praise says, "Mais ce travail, malgré ses mérites, est dépassé aujourd'hui, puisqu'il rapporte à Platon ce que l'on sait maintenant être d'origine plotinienne." (Recherches, p. 159, n. 3). O'Connell, sticking closer to what the
evidence warrants, will only say; "No major Scholar today would hold that Confessions VII, 13-23 refers to readings in Plato." (Saint Augustine's Early Theory, p.6).

52. For a brief, clear and comprehensive account of the history of these efforts see R. J. O'Connell, Saint Augustine's Early Theory, pp. 6-10. In addition to this work, other treatments of the question may be found in Courcelle, Recherches, pp. 99-174; J. J. O'Meara, The Young Augustine, pp. 131-155; M. Pellegrino, Les Confessions, pp. 162-173 and O. du Roy, L'Intelligence de la Foi en la Trinité selon Saint Augustin, Études Augustiniennes, Paris, 1966, (hereafter L'Intelligence), pp. 61-88. Most of these works contain extensive bibliographies on the question as do A. Solignac's comments in the 'Introduction' pp. 100-112 and 'Notes Complémentaires', #23-26, pp. 679-693 in BA 13. Solignac discusses the Neo-Platonic 'circle' at Milan in a lengthy and useful study in his 'Notes Complémentaires', #1, BA 14, pp. 529-536.

53. Conf., VII, ix, 15 "Et dixisti Atheniensiibus per apostolum tuum, quod in te vivemus et movemur et sumus, sicut et quidam secundum eos dixerunt, et utique inde erant illi libri."
54. The evidence in favour of the view that Augustine is actually referring to certain works of Plato rather than of the Neo-Platonists when he speaks of the *libri Platoniciorum* may be summed up in the following way:

i) There is the clear and unequivocal statement that the books of which he is speaking were written in Athens: see *Conf.*, VII, 10, 15 quoted above n. 53.

ii) In the passage in *De Beata Vita*, (I, 4) where he speaks of this incident, Augustine says, "Locis autem *Platonis paucissimis libris..." (emphasis ours). Modern scholarship has been to some trouble to try to show that this *Platonis* is really a copyist's error for *Plotini* (notably in the effort of P. Henry, *Plotin et L'Occident*, Louvain, 1934, pp. 82-89). So much does the effort of modern scholarship depend on this reading (*Plotini*), that, for example, Courcelle in his *Recherches* takes it for granted as do many others and O. du Roy, in *L'Intelligence* says "P. Henry ... a établi la leçon "Plotini" comme absolument sûre." (p. 69, n. 1). This is not the case and the position of O'Connell in Saint Augustine's *Early Theory*, is much better considered: "The manuscript tradition presents strong arguments for a copyist's error at this point; it seems so probable that the original reading was *Plotini* that one may safely take it as practically certain." (p. 6).
In our view the supposition that Plocini is the correct reading remains nothing more than a supposition which it is not necessary to entertain in order to make sense out of Augustine's reference to the *libri Platoniciorum* and thus we see no reason to alter the reading Platonic.

iii) In *Conf.*, VII,ix,3 Augustine says "ubi autem *conmemoravi legisse me quosdam libros Platoniciorum, quas Victorinus quandam, rhetor urbis Romae, quam christianum defunctum esse audieram, in latinam linguam transtulisset ...". In relation to this text it is generally supposed that these *libri Platoniciorum* are the very same books to which Augustine refers in *Conf.*, VII,ix,13 but there is no necessity for such an assumption. And moreover, it is also supposed that the "books of the Platonists" which Victorinus translated refer to the translation of certain Neo-Platonic works. However P. Hadot in his careful study of the question in *Marius Victorinus*, pp. 201-210 is unable to determine, either from Augustine or from any other source, the content of the (lost) *libri Platoniciorum* of Victorinus. Once again we find no necessity which compels us to assert that these books were definitely the translation of Neo-Platonic (rather than Platonic) treatises.

iv) In the *De Civitate Dei* in a passage which is somewhat too long to reproduce here (VII,ix-xii), Augustine speaks
of the knowledge of God which Plato possessed, in exactly the same terms as he describes the vision of the Truth which he derived from the libri Platoniciorum in the Confessions. Here we find precisely the same parallels which Augustine draws between the Scriptures and the "books of the Platonists" in the Confessions and in this text from De Civitate Dei he refers explicitly to the Timaeus in which (at least in part), he says he found these teachings and which he could have read in the Latin translation of Calcidius (this work has been edited recently by J. H. Waszink, Platonis Timaeus a Calcido translatus commentarioque instructus, Corpus Platoniciorum Medii Aevi, Plato Latinus, Leyden, 1962).

Of course this passage from the De Civitate Dei does not prove that when Augustine says he read the libri Platoniciorum he intends that he read certain Platonic texts, however the similarity of this text with the passage from the Confessions does at least establish that he could certainly have derived the vision of the Truth from the reading of certain Platonic works and, as he makes clear in De Civitate Dei, VIII, xii, Augustine regards Plato as the epitome of all those who have come to this knowledge of the Truth.

v) Finally, in support of the view that the libri Platoniciorum might well refer to Platonic texts, we refer to the whole structure of Augustine's argument in the early books of the
Confessions, as we have developed it, which corresponds exactly with the moments that precede the vision of the Truth (the Good) as Plato develops them in the images of the Sun, the Lane and the Cave in the Republic. See above Comm. Conf. III, n.106; IV, n.100; V, n.39 & 41; VI, n.14; VII, n.9 and below n.69; n.72; n.74.

55. For a discussion of the reason why Augustine explains the content of the Libri Platoniciorum with texts from Scripture, we refer the reader to our note on the analogous case of the "eiusdem Ciceronis" of Conf., III, iv, 7: see above Comm. Conf., III, n.45.

56. All of these misinterpretations turn in some form or other on a confusion of Augustine's presumed Neo-Platonism and his avowed Christianity. For a brief history of the century-old controversy that has raged over this matter see J. J. O'Meara's account in the introduction to Augustine, Against the Academics, Ancient Christian Writers Series, Vol. 12, Westminster, Md., U.S.A., 1950, pp. 19 ff. and also his remarks in The Young Augustine, pp. 131-155.

57. Although the major Scriptural texts which Augustine uses to explain the content of the Libri Platoniciorum are from the Prologue to the Gospel of John, (and thus from
the New Testament), it is clear that those parts of the Johannine text which he says accord with the teachings of the books of the Platonists are just those which John himself draws from the Old Testament (Genesis and Psalms in particular). This is because this vision of the Truth is that knowledge of God which a man can achieve by the exercise of his own proper (rational) powers and as such it is common to all mankind and thus common to both the Greeks (Platonists) and Israel and indeed constitutes the knowledge of God that Israel possessed and which is taught in the Old Testament: (in the De Civitate Dei, VIII.ix, Augustine says that all mankind can have this knowledge and cites the wise men amongst the Libyans of the Atlas, Egyptians, Indians, Persians, Chaldeans, Scythians, Gauls and Spaniards as examples of peoples who he has heard are reputed to have come to this knowledge). Nevertheless Augustine uses the Johannine text from the New Testament for a purpose for John also proclaims what the libri Platoniciorum do not in any way contain and what cannot be discovered by the exercise of man's natural powers namely, that "The Word was made flesh and came to dwell among us." (Jn.1:14).

58. Conf., VII.ix,13 "Et primo volens ostendere mihi, 
Pr. 3:34 quam resistias superbis, humilibus autem deum gratiam . . ."
(LXX)
1 Ptr 5:15, Jac. 4:6.
59. This whole topic is taken up again after the description of the vision of the Truth in Conf., VII, xx, 26 where it is discussed in terms of the difference between presumption and confession. "In quo me propter ea, prinsqam scripturas tuas considerarem, credo velmi se inuenti, ut imprimetur memoriae meae, quomodo ex eis affectus sisem et, cum posca in libro tuoe manue factus essem ei omnibus digito tuoe conforterunt vulnera mea, deccernorem atque distinguishing, quid intercessit inter prausumptionem et confessionem, inter videntes, quo cundum sit, nec videntes, qua, et viam deccernam ad beatitudinem patrimon non tantiem aernondam sed ei habitationem."

60. Conf., VII, ix, 13 "... et quanta miserere cura demonstnata est hominibus via humilitatis, quod pernum cum cord fartum est et habitavit inter homines, ..." The distinction between the unbegotten Word (which the books of the Platonists teach), and the way to the Truth (the unbegotten Word), which is only made possible through the Word made flesh (which the books of the Platonists do not teach), is just the burden of this chapter.

61. In Pa 13, p. 606, this caulos meos is not given as a Scriptural reference. It could come from either Ps. 118:37 or Is. 33:15.
62. Recall the opening lines of Augustine's confession of his life in *Conf.* I, vi, 7: "Sed tamen sine me loqui apud misericordiam tuam, me terroram et cinerem, sine tamen loqui, quantum esse misericordia tua est, non homo, inservens meus, cui loqueor."

63. Courcelle supposes that this man was Flavius Mallius Theodorus; see *Recherches* pp. 153-156 and also pp. 281-284 where he tries to resolve certain difficulties in this attribution which is not now widely accepted.

64. *Conf.* VII, vi, 11 - VII, ix, 13: "Et haec de vulnere meo creverant, quia humilissimam vulneratum superfatum, et tumorem meo separabam abs te et nimirum inflata sibi est:

Recl. et laudebat obsitus meos. (viii) Tu vero, domine, in autem manae et non in autem triumphis nobis, quantum misericordus es terram et cinerem, et placuit in conspectu tuo reformare deformia mea. et stimulus

Ps. 16: internus agitabas me, ut inpatiens esses, donec mihi per interiorem aspectum certus esses. et vestrae tumores meus ex occultis mea medicinae tuae aequites cum subasta et contenebata mentis meae acer colluvio salutem

Ps. 60: 9 dolorum de die in diem vanabatur. (ix) Et primo notens

Pr. 3: 34 estendere mihi, quam pejus superbia, humilissimae autem

Ps. 15: deus, gratiam et quanta misericordia tuae demonstrata est.
hn.1:14 hominibus via humilitatis, quod nebulos trans cava rectum est et habitat inter homines. procurasti mihi per quodam hominem inmanissimo typo tuendum quosdam Platonicorum libros ex graeca lingua in latinam versas, ...

65. See Conf., VII,x,16 - VII,xvi,22. See also Conf., VII xvii,26 "sed tuae lectae Platoniciorum illius libris posterius adeo admonitus quacunque inceperam revelationem invisibilis, tuam per ea quaeris, sicut intellecta conspext ...

66. This is the burden of Conf., VII,xvii,23 - VII,xii,29 which treats of the movement from the vision of the Truth to Augustine's conversion, which is the beginning of his reformation and rebirth (as a 'spiritual' rather than a 'natural' man).

67. In this chapter (Conf., VII,x,13-15), Augustine merely states what he found and what he did not find in the "books of the Platonists". And what he did not find is any proclamation of the Word made flesh.

68. This position is stated by Augustine with great precision in Conf., VII,xx,26 In quos (the "books of the Platonists") me propterpe, quasquam scripturas inas considerarem, credo voluisse inuenire, ut ipsi meue...
memoriar meae, quomodo ex die affectus esset et, cum
postea in libris libri manifestatus esset et eorum
igitur libri contrahentur quin vena me, discedentes
aqve aequaliter, quid intersecet inter presumptionem
et confessionem inter videntem, qui eum habet, nec
videntem, qua, etiam ducentem ad beatissimum patarem
non timentem conciliandi sed et habitandam. nam si primo
soutis tule littoris informatum esset et in eum
saliuitas obit olim incolumem mihi et post in illa volumina
incolumem, fortasse aut aequaliterem me a solidamento
pictatis, aut et in affecta, quae calumnon libriteram,
persilissem, puferem etiam in illis libris cum posse
consult, si non se tollor quasae dictissem." Note here,
in comparison with the text from Conf., VII,vii,1 - VII,
viii,12 (quoted above, n.64), that the healing hand by
which Augustine's wound (vulnus) is actually cured is
compared with the Scriptures as opposed to the "books of
paganists."

The logic of this saying of Augustine about the
providential timing of his discovery of the Libri
Platonicius - (i.e., that he read them before he had been
"tamed" by Scripture) - has the following sense. Either
of the two consequences which he lists here could indeed
have resulted if he had not first come to the vision of the Truth but had instead determined to accept the doctrines of the Catholic church without having come to the certain knowledge of God - which he might perhaps have done under the tremendous pressures of the contradictions in the 'Stoic' notion of God. For apart from the certain knowledge of God and the consequent knowledge of the distinction between Platonism and Christianity (which of course Augustine has yet to show), just such a confusion of the two positions would indeed be possible.

69. Readers of Plato's Republic will recognize this moment as the activity which belongs to the first and lower division of the intelligible world (in the image of the 'line'), where the mind starts from assumptions or hypotheses (the axioms of science), and from which it proceeds, not 'up' to a first principle, but 'down' to a conclusion in the sensible world: see Republic, 510b-511a.

70. Conf., VII.x.16 "Einde admonitus sedipe ad memoriam intravit in intima mea donec te el potui, quoniam facius ex adduto mens, intravi et vidi qualitatem auris animae meae supremae eadem oculum animae meae, suprema mentem meam hucem incommutabiliem, non habe vulgarem et conspiciam omne, omnino quod ex eodem genere grandisse erat, tamquam
et ista multa mulloque etiam ab aposcendentia multumque occuparet magnitudine. non hoc illa eat, sed utam, utam valde ab istis omnia, nec illa est supra mentem vocem, atque eorum super aquam nec ipsis caelestis super terram, sed superior, quia ipse fecit me, et ego inferior, quia facit me ab ea."

71. The necessity of the divine incorporeality is just what Augustine learnt from the 'books of the Platonists'. In Conf., VII, ix, 13-14 he expresses this in the Scriptural form, where it appears as the teaching that the principle of the world is the divine, unbegotten Word. See also Conf., VII, xx, 26 "sed tune lectis Platonicorum litteris libris postea quum inde alimittus quaeque incorporeum veritatem invisibilium"

Rom. I: 20 "quae nostra scilicet intellecta conspecti et repulsus sensi, quid per tenebras animae quae contemplant non sincerus, vetus esse te et infinitum esse nec tamen per locos finitos infinitum diffundit et vere te esse, qui semper idem ipse esse, ex nulla parte mulloque metu alter aut aliter, octo et vero et te esse amata, hoc solo firmisimo documento, quia sunt, vetus qui dixit in istis evam, nimis tamen infirmus ad fremendum te."

72. Conf., VII, x, 16 "numquid nihil est veritas, quoniam neque per finita neque per infinita locorum spatia diffusa est? et clamasti de longinquo: immo vero ego sum qui sum."

Ex. 1: 14
et audiet, sicet auditur in corde, et non est praevius, unde dubitaret facilliusque dubitaret vivere me quem non esse  
veritatem, quae per va, quae falsa sunt, intelligi est complexion. In short, the existence of the incorruptible,  
inviolable, immutable and incorporeal God as the absolute  
principle of the corruptible and corporeal universe is est-  
ablished of necessity for finite thought through the exist-  
tence of the corruptible, corporeal universe. And once seen,  
the existence of this first principle (God) can only be  
called into question by doubting the existence of the  
creatures through which it is revealed. But this is im-  
possible as Augustine says here, since this would require  
that the questioner should, in one and the same activity,  
doubt that he questions or exists.  

Those acquainted with the argument of Plato's Republic  
will easily recognize this moment as the final stage  
(dialectic), in the ascent to the Truth (the Good), as  
Plato describes it at 511b, where the mind, starting from  
the axioms of the sciences and operating totally in the  
realm of thought rises through these hypotheses to the  
discovery of the unhypothetical first principle of all.  

73. Conf., VII, ix, 15 "Et ideo legiadem ibi etiam inmutatam  
gloriam incorruptionis profana in idola et varia simulacra, in
et tumulus imaginis conjectibilis hominis et coluerrum et quadrupedum et serpentium, videlicet Aegyptum eorum, quo
Esau profidit primogenita sui, quoniam sapiat quadrupodia
pro te honoravit populus primogenitus, conuerse corde in
Aegyptum et curvans imaginem tuam, animam tuam, ante
Ps. 105: imaginem vitii manducantis faciam. invento nos ibi et
Ps. 118: non manducavi. placuit enim ibi, dominar, auferre opprobrium
Rom. 9: diminutionis ob Incor, ut major serviret minori, et vocasti
genites in hereditatem tuam. et ego ad te veneram ex gentibus
et intendo in auro, quod ab Aegypto voluerit ut auferret
populus tuus, quoniam tuum orem, ubicumque orem. et dixisti
Athenienses per apostolum tuam, quod in te vivimus et
movemur et sumus, sicut et quidam secundum vos siderunt, et
utique inde orant illi libri. et non intendo in idola Aegy-
torum, quibus de auro tuo ministeriabant, qui transmutavernum
vertiorem dei in mendacium et coluerunt et servierunt
creaturam potius quam creaverunt.

74. To speak in terms of a Platonic image, this is the
necessity which forces the one who has so far been only a
philosopher (one who seeks Wisdom), to move away from the
Truth which he has seen and turn back into the corporeal
world as king: see, Plato, Republic, 499b & 500d.
75. Here we should recall the role of the preacher (prædicate) on which Augustine insists and which he raises in his introduction to the work in the first chapter of the Confessions: see Conf., I, i, 1.

76. The discovery that the world is not an adequate resting-place or a proper home for the soul of man is consequent on the vision of the Truth. Augustine speaks of the world after he had seen the Truth as a regio dissimilitudinis. See Conf., VII, x, 16 "O aeterna veritas et vera caritas et caras acternitas! tu scis me, tibi suepiro dicere mea. et sum tu primus cognovisti, tu assumisti me, ut viderem esse, quod viderem, et nondum me esse, qui viderem, et reverberasti infamitatem aspexit mei radium in me vehementer, et contremui amore et horrore: et inveni, longe me esse a te in regio dissimilitudinis, tamquam audirem vocem iuan de excelso: 'cibus sum grandium: ernesse et manducabis me, nec tu me in te mutabis sicut cibus carnis tuae, sed tu mutaberes in me.'" For a discussion of the regio dissimilitudinis see Solignac's 'Notes Complémentaires', #26, in BA 13, pp. 689-693.

77. This is the sense of the distinction which Augustine draws between those who merely see the goal which is their
proper home but do not know how to get to it (which, as he will show us in the sequel, man is unable to achieve by the exercise of his own 'natural' powers), and those who are actually on the way through faith in the Incarnate Word: see Conf., VII,xx,26, quoted above n.59 and also Conf., VII,xxi,27 "Si aliud est de silvestri saecumine videre patriam pacto et iter ad eam non invento et fruere eam fieri per invia circum obsidentibus et insidientibus fugitivis decorisibus cum princeps suo leone et dracono, et aliud tenere viam illam ducentem eura saeculosis imperatoris munitam, ubi non laicos inantur qui eaculom militiam decorerent; vitant enim cam sicul supplicium. haco mihi inviscebrabantur miris modis, cum minimum apostolorum tuorum legerem, et consideraveram opera tua et espaveram."