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The Idea of Justice in Augustine's Criticism of Manicheism

by

David Edward Grier Smith

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

at

**Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
August, 1991**



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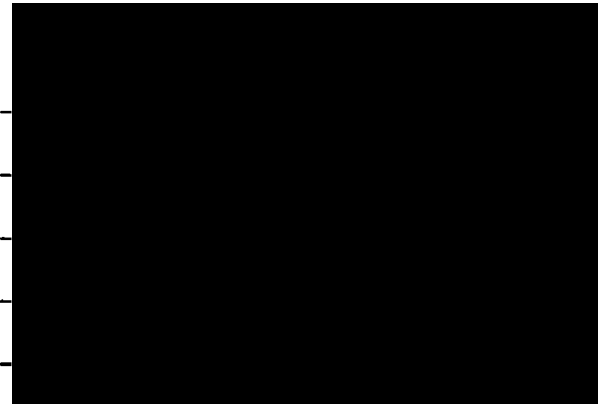
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Abstract

Having been a Manichee himself for nine years, Augustine of Hippo wrote extensively against the Manichees after his conversion to catholic Christianity. Part of his anti-Manichean writings were a defence of the morality of the Old Testament narratives against the Manichean criticisms of them. In particular, Augustine addressed Manichean criticisms about the polygamy of the Old Testament patriarchs and the divinely sanctioned killing in the Old Testament. This thesis seeks to show that in two of Augustine's works, the *Confessions* and the *Contra Faustum*, Augustine sets forth a comprehensive idea of justice, according to which he defends the Old Testament narratives. This conception of justice has three main divisions, which Augustine characterizes as three "wholes": justice according to the whole of nature, justice according to the whole of custom, and justice according to the Eternal Law of God's rule. Furthermore, in both of these works, Augustine maintains that according to a true idea of justice, the Manichean position itself is unjust. Augustine's account of Manicheism has a positive aspect, in that he shows through his treatment of Manicheism, the active and passive elements that belong to contemplation. Nevertheless, Augustine portrays Manicheism as being the product of an unjust form of contemplation, in which these active and passive elements are not properly related.

Abbreviations

BA -- Bibliothéque Augustinienne

CC -- Corpus Christianorum

CSEL -- Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum

PL -- Patrologia Latina

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Introduction

One of the reasons Augustine became a Manichee in his nineteenth year was the criticism that the Manichees made against the Bible, particularly against the Old Testament. Augustine gives us part of the Manichean criticism of the Old Testament in his *Confessions*. The Manichees asked:

...whether they were to be considered just who had
many wives at the same time, and killed people, and
sacrificed animals.¹ *Confessiones* III, vii.

That is, the Manichees said that the Old Testament could not be regarded as Scripture because it gave approval to such immoral things as the polygamy of the patriarchs, the bloody conquest of Canaan, and the animal sacrifices of the temple worship.

After Augustine had entered the Church, he wrote many works against Manicheism and one of the issues he addressed was this issue of the morality of the Old Testament. As part of his defence of the actions recorded in the Old Testament Augustine developed a comprehensive idea of justice or morality. This idea of justice is one in which the justice that is there in nature and the justice that belongs to human custom and society are held together as parts of a whole, the justice of God's creating and ordering will.² Augustine develops this view in two places: at *Confessions* III, vi-x and, at greater length, at *Contra Faustum* XXII, xxvii-xcviii.

Both discussions are in the context of the issue of the morality of the Old Testament, and more generally of Augustine's criticism of Manicheism.

The idea of justice that Augustine develops is comprehensive of elements which are often thought to be opposed. This is so in the treatment of the relativity of human custom. Augustine knows that the social relations which make up the family are relative and different for different cultures. On this basis he argues in the *Contra Faustum* that polygamy was not wrong for the people of the Old Testament.³ However this does not mean that human custom, with all its relativity does not have the force of authority for human beings. It is authoritative because it is the providentially ordained social whole to which men ought to conform. Thus polygamy in his own day would be wrong. Nor does the relativity of human custom mean that there are not things which are right or wrong according to nature. The "sins of the Sodomites" for instance, Augustine says in the *Confessions* are wrong regardless of whether human custom permits or forbids them.⁴

This idea of justice is also comprehensive, or claims to be comprehensive, in the sense that it is more complete than the idea of justice implicit in the Manichean criticism of the Old Testament. Thus it serves the polemical purpose of showing the limited nature of the Manichean conceptions and discrediting their arguments. Furthermore, in both of our main texts, part of Augustine's argument will be to show that, far from the Manichean criticisms of the Old Testament being correct, Manichean belief itself is unjust.

Character and Doctrines of Manicheism

It may be helpful to begin with a short discussion of the general character and the doctrines of Manicheism. Mani, the founder of the religion, was born in Babylonia in 216 A.D. He was raised in a heretical Jewish-Christian sect of a gnostic orientation. Several personal revelations led him to found a new dualistic religion of salvation which was to embrace all that was true in previous religions. He made disciples, went on missionary

journeys, and wrote a number of books of scriptures. He also produced paintings to accompany the Scriptures. Mani enjoyed the favour of the Persian court under King Shapur 1st, but under his successor Bahram 1st he was imprisoned and died in captivity in 277 A.D.

Mani's disciples carried on his missionary purpose and the religion spread rapidly from Babylonia to China in one direction and to the Atlantic Ocean in the other. It is thought that there were Manichees in Carthage, where Augustine encountered it, within twenty years of Mani's death.⁶ Henri-Charles Puech characterizes Manicheism as being i) a universal religion, ii) a missionary religion, and iii) a religion of the book.⁷ That Manicheism should be a religion centred around scriptures was ensured by the writings of Mani and of his disciples.

Scholars have disputed what the essential character of Mani's religion was. Some have emphasized the element of Iranian dualism, seeing Manicheism as the heir of Zoroastrianism. Others have seen it as a heretical offspring of Christianity. Still others have emphasized the gnostic character of Manicheism, and linked it most closely to other forms of gnosticism.⁸ The uncovering of new sources, in particular the Cologne Mani Codex,⁹ has seemingly produced a consensus among scholars that Manicheism is essentially a form of Christian gnosticism. It is primarily the religion of a gnosis, an enlightening and saving spiritual knowledge. The essence of the Manichean gnosis is two-fold. The enlightened individual sees and understands that the universe is made up of two opposed principles of light and darkness, good and evil. He understands that he is in essence a portion of the light, the divine nature, which has been imprisoned in the darkness of matter. The second aspect of the gnosis is that the Manichean teachings reveal the history behind this imprisonment of part of the light in the darkness. There are three ages:

the first, in which the two opposed principles were separate, but came into conflict and became mixed, the second, the present age in which the principles are mixed and our divine nature is imprisoned in the world, and the third, in which the divine substance will have been freed from the darkness and the light will remain forever untroubled by the darkness.

These two truths about the two principles and the three ages are common to all Manicheism. There has been some controversy though about how much of the detail of the Manichean doctrine was constant in all of the regions that it spread to and how much the religion accommodated itself to the religious context in which it found itself. Some scholars have thought that North African Manicheism was more heavily influenced by Christianity than that of other regions.¹⁰ However, the consensus is now that Manicheism everywhere had a high degree of uniformity.¹¹

This would mean that the picture of Manicheism that we find in Augustine is essentially an accurate reflection of Manicheism wherever it was found. The tendency of Manichean scholarship has been to avoid relying on the possibly biased accounts of polemical writers like Augustine. Instead, scholars have worked from original Manichean documents as these have been found, especially at Fayoum in Egypt and at Tourfan in Chinese Turkestan. On the whole, the result of the study of these new documents has been to vindicate Augustine's portrayal. The Manicheism that Augustine wrote against was the Manicheism that was found everywhere.¹² While it is generally agreed that Augustine's knowledge of the details of Manichean doctrine was accurate, some scholars do not think Augustine really understood the spirit of Manicheism, as we shall see.¹³

The detail of the Manichean teachings is concerned with the beings involved in the drama of the three spiritual ages, the events of the unfolding of the drama, and the

"geography", so to speak, of the Kingdom of Light, the Kingdom of Darkness, and the world that resulted from their intermingling. The story of the First or Primordial Man serves to illustrate the pattern of the Manichean myth.¹⁴ God, the ruler of the Kingdom of Light, sensed that the Kingdom of Darkness was about to attack the Kingdom of Light; so he sent forth an emanation of himself, the First Man. The First Man is not to be confused with Adam, the first human being, but is a spiritual being who predated the creation of the world. The First Man crossed the boundary that had separated the darkness and the light armed with five elements: of water, fire, wind, air, and light.¹⁵ The First Man was defeated and the five elements were imprisoned in the five "caves of darkness"¹⁶, the regions of the Kingdom of Darkness, made up of five opposing dark elements.

However, the First Man was rescued from his prison in the Kingdom of Darkness by another emanation, the "Living Spirit", who used the elements of light to create our material world, as part of the effort to rescue the elements from the darkness. In bringing order to the Kingdom of Darkness, the "Living Spirit" weakened it. The defeat of the First Man, and the imprisonment of the five elements of light become the means by which the darkness is defeated. Thus the creation of the world is caused by the principle of evil in that it is a result of the imprisonment of the elements of light in matter, but it is caused by the principle of good in that the order of the world is part of the process of the salvation of the light from out of the darkness.

This pattern of emanation from the divine, and a defeat that is turned around and becomes a means of salvation, is the basic pattern of the Manichean mythology.¹⁷ The suffering of the imprisoned divine nature becomes redemptive. These two aspects of the exalted and the suffering divine nature are present in the Manichean view of Jesus. Augustine points to three different figures who are "Jesus" in some sense in the Manichean

teachings: Jesus Splendour, who exists in the sun and moon, helping the captured elements to escape, Jesus Patibilis or the Suffering Jesus, who is mixed with the elements of darkness and suffers in his contact with them, and Jesus of Nazareth. The crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth is a symbol of the greater crucifixion of the divine nature in matter which is suffered redemptively by Jesus Patibilis.¹⁸ The individual soul also follows this pattern of emanation, defeat, and salvation. It comes from the Kingdom of Light with the First Man as part of the five elements; it is imprisoned and lost in darkness and matter; and it is then rescued to return to the place of its origin.

Individual salvation, according to the Manichees, consists of recognizing the underlying spiritual reality of the universe, the two principles, of light and darkness and their conflict, and also one's own divine origin. Once one has understood one's own true nature as part of the Kingdom of Light, imprisoned in matter, then salvation is a matter of turning away from the world and keeping from being polluted by it. The soul has the capability of attaining to the heavenly kingdom because it derives its nature from the heavenly kingdom. The examples of the various spiritual beings and Mani and his saints serve to show that salvation is indeed possible and the Manichean teachings bring recollection to the soul of its divine origin.¹⁹

Keeping the soul free from the corrupting influence of matter and the world is essentially a matter of avoiding desire, which is what keeps the soul attached to the world.²⁰ "The world" here means the matter or darkness which impedes the divine particles of light from returning to the heavenly kingdom, it does not simply mean the whole sensible universe. It is a misconception to think that the Manichees are "world hating" in the most straight-forward and literal sense. The statement of the Manichean Bishop Faustus, recorded at *Contra Faustum* XX, 2, that the Manichees attached the same

sacredness to the whole world as the Catholics did to the sacramental bread and wine shows a truer picture. The Manichees attributed sanctity to plants, animals, even inanimate things like water, because of the presence within them of the particles of light.

The detail of the Manichean ethical system is expressed in the three great commandments of Manichean morality: the seal of the mouth, the seal of the hand, and the seal of the bosom.²¹ These are a set of prohibitions arranged under the three emblems of the head, the hand, and the bosom, representing eating (and speech), action, and procreation. Their aim is to keep the illuminated Manichee from becoming polluted by, and attached to, the material realm, and to keep him from further entangling other particles of light in matter. Thus according to the seal of the mouth the eating of meat was prohibited because killing animals would harm the particles of light in them. Vegetables on the other hand could be eaten, but only by the Manichean Elect, who, in the process of consumption, actually acted to free the particles of light from the world and enabled them to return to the kingdom of light. The eating of vegetables by anyone other than a member of the Manichean Elect was a very serious crime (the Manichean Hearers or Auditors had a special exemption as we shall see) and therefore the Manichees would refuse to give food to beggars, a point that Augustine takes up in his polemic.²²

The seal of the hand was directed against killing anything, animal or vegetable, since in killing anything you would be harming the particles of light in it. Wrongful aggression could be committed even against inanimate matter, such as water, because it had some of the light in it.²³ The seal of the bosom was directed against sexual intercourse and especially against the procreation of children. Procreation was especially culpable because it was the way in which the particles of light that were the divine essence of human beings were tied to the body and matter.

These moral teachings obviously caused great difficulties in the living of ordinary life. The difficulties were alleviated by the existence of two orders of Manichean believers - the Elect and the Auditors. The Elect obeyed the three seals rigorously; they didn't marry or eat animal food, or engage in any profession involving the killing of plants or animals. The Auditors were allowed to marry, although they were encouraged to avoid having children. They could eat meat and make their living in a wide variety of professions. However, because this meant that they broke the three seals, and were not fully engaged in purifying themselves, their souls were not thought to rejoin the kingdom of light when they died. Instead they were to be reincarnated in their next life, either as Elect, if they had lived virtuously, or as vegetables and fruit, with the possibility of being released into the Kingdom of Light, or as animals, with little chance of salvation, if they had lived sinful lives. The Auditors aided the Elect by bringing them fruit to keep them alive and so that they could liberate the particles of light by eating it. In return, the Elect prayed for them. Augustine was an Auditor throughout his time as a Manichee.

Why Augustine was attracted to Manicheism

It can seem very surprising that Augustine became a Manichee in the first place, and then that he remained one for nine years.²⁴ To most people today the Manichean myths seem unfounded and irrational, and yet Augustine, for all his intellectual gifts, was drawn to the Manichean religion. Some scholars have gone to the length of denying that Augustine ever really was a committed Manichee.²⁵ In view of the lack of sympathy most modern people would have for the Manichean religion it is not surprising that scholars have difficulty with Augustine's Manicheism, and yet many of the reasons Augustine gives us for his becoming a Manichee continue to have their appeal. It may provide a context in

which to view the argument about justice in Augustine's critique of Manicheism if we give a short account of the reasons that led Augustine to embrace the Manichean religion.

There are two sides apparent in Augustine's conversion to Manicheism: one, a strong critical tendency which raised difficult questions and called authority into question, the other, a desire for a philosophical and religious whole, awakened by reading Cicero's *Hortensius* and by Augustine's Christian upbringing (*Confessions* III, iv).²⁶ Augustine the critical thinker raised questions about the origin of evil, about whether thought ought to be conducted according to authority or by reason alone, and a score of questions about the reliability, consistency, and interpretation of the Scriptures. He found that the Manichean criticisms of Catholic Christianity were in sympathy with his own questions.²⁷ Augustine the searcher for a philosophical and religious whole found in Manicheism, or thought he had found, a complete science of spiritual and cosmological realities, as well as a religious institution or church with a moral teaching, and a community life based on these principles. Let us first consider the "critical" issues behind Augustine's conversion to Manicheism.

L. J. R. Ort says that Manicheism, like all forms of gnosticism, is a response to the problem of suffering and evil.²⁸ This was true as well for Augustine's personal Manichean belief. He tells us that one of the questions the Manichees posed, which attracted him to them, was *unde malum* - "where does evil come from" (*Confessions* III, vii, 12).²⁹ Suffering and evil seem to call into question the beneficent ordering of things. Mani addressed this problem by saying that there was no single beneficent order; rather there were two opposed principles of good and evil, and the evil principle was responsible directly for the existence of evil and suffering. This answer seemed good to many, Augustine among them, and was one of the teachings of Manicheism which attracted him.

Another attractive aspect was their claim that they would teach their truths by plain reason alone. In the *De Utilitate Credendi* he addresses a friend, Honoratus, who had become a Manichee with him, and whom he was now trying to recall to Catholic Christianity:

For you know, Honoratus, that we fell in among such men for no other cause than that they said that they were going to introduce those willing to hear them to God, and to free them from every error, by pure and simple reason, without 'terrible' authority.³⁰ *De Utilitate Credendi* I, 2.

Here we see that Augustine's critical spirit, unwilling in itself to be subject to authority, found teachers who promised that that was unnecessary.

A third area where Augustine's critical spirit served to align him with the Manichees was his attitude toward the Scriptures. Notoriously, Augustine had difficulty with the stylistic inferiority of the Latin Scriptures (*Confessions* III, v, 9).³¹ Furthermore the desire to have truth presented to him straightway, by reason alone, was not met by the Scriptures. Looking back, Augustine says of his reading of the Scriptures just before he became a Manichee:

And behold I saw a thing not open to the proud, nor concealed from children, but humble in entering and lofty in advancing, and veiled in mysteries; and I was not such that I was able to enter or to bend my neck to follow their way... For my tumor refused their method and my intellect was not able to penetrate their inner meaning.³² *Confessiones* III, v,9.

That is, Augustine considers the Scriptures to have their own way or method of revealing truth; a way that is not accessible to the "proud". The Scriptures do not present a rational argument, but narratives and doctrines of which the meaning is at first uncertain. In order to understand them they must first be believed and the laws that they set forth obeyed:

This is what it means when it is written: "You have desired wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord will give it to you..."³³ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 53.

Augustine's "*tumor*" (see above *Confessions* III, v, 9 - the image refers to the "puffed up" character of pride) would not accept the method of the Scriptures; that is to say he would not subordinate his critical stance to the way the Scriptures themselves had to be approached in order to grasp their intended content. His defence of the legitimacy of that approach is found in the *De Utilitate Credendi*.

As well as the problem he had approaching the Scriptures, Augustine also had more specific difficulties with them. Many of these difficulties are still with us. For instance, Augustine had had difficulties before he became a Manichee with the apparent contradiction between the geneologies of Christ in the gospels of Matthew and Luke.³⁴ The Manichees resolved this and other apparent contradictions by declaring that certain parts of the Scriptures were either interpolated or for some other reason were not authentic.³⁵

The Manichees rejected the Old Testament altogether. This was a part of the Manichean teaching that went right back to Mani and his disciple Adimantus.³⁶ They thought that the God of the Old Testament was different from that of the New Testament. They also thought that the religious and moral teachings of the Old Testament were opposed to the teachings of the New Testament, a charge Augustine answers in the *Contra Adimantum*, in the *Contra Faustum*, and elsewhere.³⁷

Augustine refers to these various criticisms and the role they played in bringing him to Manicheism in *Confessions* III, vii, 12:

For I did not know that other, which truly is, and I was subtly moved to assent to foolish deceivers when they asked me where evil came from, and whether God had a corporeal form and had hair and nails, and whether they were to be considered just men who had many wives at the same time, and killed people and sacrificed animals.³⁸

Confessiones III, vii, 12.

Augustine says the Manichees posed to him three questions. The first question, the question of the problem of evil, we have already noted. The second question was a reference to the Manichean charge that the Old Testament god is anthropomorphic and particularly that the passage in Genesis, chapter one, about man being made in the image of God was meant in the crude literal sense that God looked like man. Augustine first responds to this charge with the answer that the image of God in man is his reason, in *De Genesi Contra Manichaeos* (I, xvii), his first treatment of the book of Genesis, written against the Manichean interpretation. The charge that the Catholics had an anthropomorphic and primitive concept of God was just the kind of charge that would appeal to Augustine's critical tendency, convinced as he was that the Scriptures were inferior in both style and method.

The third question, "whether they were to be considered just men who had many wives at the same time, and killed people, and sacrificed animals?", refers to the Manichean criticism of the morality of the Old Testament - its moral teaching and the morality of its leading figures, such as Abraham and Moses. The Manichees objected to such Old Testament episodes as Abraham having a child by Sarah's handmaid Hagar; to Lot's daughters making Lot drunk and sleeping with him; to Rachel offering Leah a night with Jacob in exchange for some mandrake root; and to numerous other incidents. A catalogue is found in *Contra Faustum* XXII, 4. They also found the Old Testament ceremonial law and cultic practices irrational and barbaric. It is clear how these charges served to reinforce the view of Scripture that Augustine had already developed on his own. Augustine's tendency was to reject accepted authorities and the Manichean charges against the Old Testament would have been congenial to him.

The Manichees did not give Augustine such a critical tendency. It was part of the desire that came to him when he read Cicero's *Hortensius* for a truth that was not simply determined by the contingency of particular cultures or institutions:

...but this alone was enough to delight me in that exhortation, that I should love... not this or that sect but whatever wisdom was in itself...³⁹

Confessiones III, iv, 8.

On the one side this desire prompted Augustine to separate what was merely contingent from his thinking. The Manichean teachings gave stimulus and support to this tendency, and this led Augustine to think that their positive teachings were true as well. Augustine describes this development in *De Duabus Animabus*:

...certain noxious victories came to me almost always when arguing with unskilled Christians, who were nevertheless trying eagerly, as they were able, to defend their faith. By this repeated success the ardour of adolescence was kindled, and from the force of its impulse it tended foolishly toward the great evil of obstinacy. Because it was after listening to the Manichees that I had begun this sort of arguing, whatever I was able to do by my own ability, such as it was, or by my other reading, I most generously attributed to them alone. Thus from their words ardour for disputation daily increased, and from success in disputation, love for the Manichees. This was the reason that, by a strange sickness, I thought that whatever they said was true, not because I knew it was, but because I wanted it to be.⁴⁰

De Duabus Animabus IX, 11.

It is thus clear from his own testimony that Augustine's critical cast of mind was an important reason for his attraction to Manicheism once he had encountered the critical dimension of its teaching.

What was the positive source of Augustine's attraction to Manicheism? What we just quoted from the *De Duabus Animabus* indicates that it was not its positive teaching. There is further evidence of this; for instance in *Confessions* III, vi where Augustine says of the Manichean mythology:

I chewed on it, because I supposed it was You [God], but not eagerly, because You did not taste in my mouth as You are...⁴¹
Confessiones III, vi, 10.

Augustine recalls that he did not find the Manichean myths satisfying even shortly after his conversion to Manicheism. He says again in Book VIII:

And I wandered through ways perverse with sacriligious superstition, not indeed sure that was true, but as preferring it to others which I did not piously investigate, but opposed with hostility.⁴²
Confessiones VIII, vii, 17.

The "ways perverse with sacriligious superstition" are Manicheism, and Augustine is saying again that it was something other than simple conviction about the truth of the Manichean teachings that made him a Manichee.⁴³ Again he mentions the critical opposition to other positions, and in particular the Catholic position, as one reason, but was there not a more positive reason - something Augustine had found or thought he had found in Manicheism?

We have already suggested that the positive thing that Augustine was looking for in Manicheism was a philosophical and religious whole. When Augustine read the *Hortensius* and fell in love with "not this or that sect but whatever wisdom was in itself", he was led partly in a critical direction as we have seen, but it also led him to desire a philosophical whole that would bring everything together in a unified intellectual vision. He also was looking for a position that was a religious whole. By this we mean that Augustine was looking for an intellectual vision of things which brought all of his life into it; the affections, human relationships, the practical dimension of the relationship with God. The desire for an affective and institutional religious life was implicit in Augustine's desire for an intellectual vision that was a "whole". This is part of what Augustine means in *Confessions* III, iv, 8 when he says that what he missed in the *Hortensius* was the name of Christ:

... I was stirred up by that discourse and inflamed and on fire, and this alone stood against such ardour, that the name of Christ was not in it. For this name of my saviour, your Son, my tender heart had piously drunk in with the very milk of my mother, and deeply retained, and whatever was without that name, although it was learned and polished and truly said, did not completely capture me.⁴⁴

Confessiones III, iv, 8.

Here Augustine means that he missed reference to the figure of Jesus. Although Augustine's life prior to his reading of the *Hortensius* had not been very pious his idea of religion was still bound up with Jesus. When he attempted to return to God it was to God the Father of Jesus Christ, because that was what religion meant for him.

Furthermore, Augustine missed in the *Hortensius* the idea of the *mediation* of Christ, of a mediating way to wisdom, as well as wisdom as a divine goal. Throughout the *Confessions*, Augustine understands Christ as the divinely provided means whereby we approach the divine wisdom to which the intellect aspires. We can see this in *Confessions* VII, xvii, 29. There Augustine is considering his inability to make the Platonic intellectual vision really his own because of his human weakness, and he turns to try to find "a way" to the truth of the vision:

And I sought a way of obtaining strength sufficient to enjoy You, nor did I find it until I embraced the Mediator of God and man, the man Christ Jesus⁴⁵

Confessiones VII, xvii, 24.

Christ is here seen as an embodiment or incarnation of the Truth that is sought, and as such He - his person, teachings, church, and sacraments - is the divinely appointed mediation or way to that Truth. When Augustine says that he had felt the lack of the "name of Christ" in the *Hortensius*, he means that he had missed the presence of a mediating way to the Truth, although at the time he would not have understood so explicitly what it was that he missed. At the time he read the *Hortensius*, it was simply that the abstract philosophy of the *Hortensius* did not "completely capture him". Since Augustine had been raised with

Christian assumptions, including the assumption that Wisdom was mediated in Christ, he would not commit himself totally to any abstractly held philosophy, but sought a philosophy that provided "a way"; that is, he sought a philosophy that was also a religion. Furthermore, he sought a religion that had in it the name of Christ, the type of all mediation for him.⁴⁶

This, the Catholic church provided, but as we have already seen, Augustine felt himself unable to accept the form of mediation, the kind of "way" that the church provided. The mediation to the Truth which the Scriptures offered and as that was understood by the church was according to the pattern "believe in order that you may understand". Augustine wanted the mediation of Christ, but he also wanted it to be immediately accessible.

The Manichees promised both an intellectual and a religious whole with the "name of Christ" in it. Augustine refers to both of these aspects in the words with which he introduces the Manichees in the *Confessions*:

Therefore I fell among men arrogantly raving, carnal and full of talk, in whose mouths were the snares of the devil, and birdlime made from a mixture of the syllables of Your name and of the Lord Jesu Christ and of the Paraclete, our comforter, the Holy Spirit... and they said "Truth, Truth", and often mentioned it to me, and it was not in them⁴⁷
Confessiones III, vi,11

In these lines Augustine characterizes the Manichean teachings as "snares" and as "birdlime" (*viscum* - a sticky substance used to trap birds which landed on it). What constitutes the "snare" is that the Manichean teachings use the names of God the Father and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and so pass for the Christian religion.⁴⁸ The Manichees, by using Christian language and the "name of Christ" managed to identify themselves in Augustine's mind with the faith he had grown up with and which had convinced him that the Truth must be embodied in a religious form. At the same time Manicheism seemed to

fulfill Augustine's desire for a wisdom beyond the contingency of "this or that sect" because they promised to reveal the truth by plain reason and not by authority.

This claim to reveal the truth by plain reason is part of what Augustine means when he says the Manichees were always saying "Truth, Truth". More than this, he means that the Manichees claimed to have an intellectual whole. Manicheism claimed to explain the origin of things, the principles underlying them, and they claimed to explain human nature, the way of salvation and man's ultimate destiny. Even more they claimed to provide a science to replace secular science. Augustine says of the Manichees that they spoke:

not only about You who are truly the Truth but about these
elements of the world, Your creatures...⁴⁹

Confessiones III, vi, 8.

It is well known how Augustine waited for Faustus, the Manichean Bishop to come and explain to him the Manichean astronomy. Faustus could not explain it, and his failure moved Augustine towards a rupture with Manicheism because it left him without any prospect of grasping the totality of knowledge that Manicheism promised.⁵⁰

We have already seen that Augustine was not unambiguously committed to the positive teachings of the Manichees on all these points. We would then suggest that the essential positive intellectual attraction of Manicheism to Augustine was that it *claimed* to be the kind of intellectual whole that he was looking for. He could go on so long without being satisfied about the truth of the Manichean teachings because the hope of attaining the whole he desired was continually held out before him. That is why, we will argue, Augustine's ultimate categorization of Manicheism is as a "false whole", a teaching which recognized the need for an intellectual whole and then claimed, falsely, to have provided it.

That Manicheism generally fulfilled Augustine's desire to have the truth embodied in the form of a religious institution is obvious enough. The Manichean Church had a hierarchy of priests, Scriptures, instruction, a sacramental dimension and so on.⁵¹ H.-C. Puech makes the interesting suggestion that the basic pattern underlying the Manichean institutions is the relation of *nous* to *psyche*. When the individual attains enlightenment it is his *nous* that illuminates the *psyche*. The *psyche* is subject to passion and sin, the *nous* assists it towards the light. The basic duality is that which we noted in connection with the figure of Jesus; there is a celestial Jesus beyond suffering and an earthly Jesus who suffers. Puech suggests that this pattern can be seen in the organization of the Manichean Church into Elect and Auditors, those who free themselves from sin and those who are still in it and are helped by those above them.⁵² If Puech's suggestion is true then the essential pattern of the Manichean mythology is also the pattern of the Manichean religious institutions. In any case, with its institutional, educational, and sacramental character, the Manichean religion carried its principles into all areas of life.

Two areas in which this was particularly important for Augustine were the Manichean morality and the fellowship or friendship provided by members of the sect. The first point was not so crucial for Augustine as it was for his friend Alypius, who was attracted to Manicheism principally by their apparently heroic moral standards.⁵³ Nevertheless in *Confessions* IV, ii, 2-3 we see Augustine acting in obedience to the three seals. He is offered the magical assistance of certain sacrifices on his behalf when entering a rhetorical contest; he turns it down on the basis of the seal of the hand. He speaks of trying to maintain a degree of honesty in his teaching of advocacy prompted, we are to understand, by the seal of the mouth, and he explains his faithfulness to one concubine, which would mark his adherence to the seal of the bosom. Although the Manichean moral and ascetical teachings do not seem to have provided a strong attraction to Augustine, they

did mean that the Manichean principles were fully realized in life and thus provided the total religious whole that he wanted.

The second area where the Manichean religion was important was the fellowship or friendship it provided. In the *De Duabus Animabus* Augustine lists this, along with the critical considerations we have already looked at, as having led him into Manicheism:

But two things especially, which easily capture one of that uncautious age, prompted me in astonishing ways; one of them being familiarity with them, [the Manichees], a kind of unexpected image of goodness, as it were a sinuous chain wrapped many times around my neck.⁵⁴

De Duabus Animabus IX, 11.

The friendship that helped lead Augustine into Manicheism might appear to be a factor which had little to do with the desire for a religious whole in itself, but Augustine's treatment of friendship in *Confessions* IV suggest that the friendship referred to there, and in the *De Duabus Animabus*, was specifically friendship within the religious whole of Manicheism. Describing the way in which other friendships consoled him for the death of his friend (*Confessions* IV, iv-vii) he treats the Manichean religion as the context or whole in which these friendships took place:

Indeed, what especially comforted and restored me was the solace of other friends with whom I loved what I loved instead of you, and this was a great fable and a long lie, by the adulterous tickling of which our minds were corrupted through our itching ears. But that fable did not die for me if one of my friends died.⁵⁵

Confessiones IV, viii, 13.

Augustine characterizes the friendships of this period as taking place within a context provided by Manicheism. Manichean teaching was a framework of shared assumptions that "did not die" when individuals came or went. However Augustine's criticism of the character of his friendships at this period suggest that in this aspect, as well as intellectually, Manicheism had provided a "false whole". As Manicheism itself was too tied

to the sensible, so were the friendships that took place within the religious whole it constituted (*Confessions* IV, x).

Augustine's Critique of Manicheism and its Critics

We have suggested that Augustine was attracted to Manicheism because his spirit had an affinity for its critical side. Positively Augustine found in Manicheism the suggestion or the promise of an intellectual whole that he was seeking, and also a full religious embodiment of that whole. We will now turn to consider the account of Manicheism given in Augustine's anti-Manicheism writings and will first look briefly at the main criticisms Augustine makes of the Manichean teachings. Then we will suggest that there is a more positive account of Manicheism implicit in Augustine's argument about the idea of justice. This suggestion will be developed further in the body of the thesis.

We already noted that the friendship that resulted from the Manichean religious whole is criticized by Augustine in *Confessions* IV. His criticism deals with all those areas of life to which Manichean principles were applied. He attacked the Manichean moral teaching and example and defended the Catholic moral teaching and example in the two early treatises *De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae* and *De Moribus Manichaeorum*.⁵⁶ The aim of these two treatises is to show that Catholic morality, and particularly Catholic asceticism is based on universal and rational principles and that Manichean morality and asceticism is based on the failure to distinguish between the properties of sensible things and the divine nature. Augustine draws out the absurdities that result from the application of the Manichean principles to life. In these treatises Augustine also begins to set out his defence of the Scriptures against the Manichean criticisms, a defence that we will discuss more thoroughly when we consider the *Contra Faustum*.

The cornerstone of Augustine's argument against the Manichees turns on the immutability of God. Over and over again in his anti-Manichean writings, Augustine asks why, if God's nature is unchanging and the forces of the Kingdom of Darkness could not harm him, God sent part of himself to repel the attack?⁵⁷ Augustine argues that if the forces of darkness were powerless to harm the divine nature then the Manichean god was cruel and unjust in the highest degree to send some of his own nature into the darkness to suffer defeat, when it was unnecessary. If on the other hand the forces of darkness posed a real threat to the divine nature, then it must be mutable. However, Augustine argues, to say that the divine nature is mutable is blasphemous.

In 392 A.D. as a newly ordained presbyter, Augustine makes this argument the basis of his debate against the Manichee Fortunatus (a debate recorded as the *Contra Fortunatum*) and in 404 A.D., now a bishop and a mature theological thinker, it is still his front line argument against another Manichee, Felix (*Contra Felicem*). This argument is so fundamental to Augustine's anti-Manichean polemic because it is based on a certainty about God's immutability which Augustine reached in his study of the books of the Platonists and from which he never deviated. Furthermore it rested on a basic piety about the unchangingness of God which the Manichees were unwilling to contradict. In their debates against Augustine, his Manichean opponents will not admit that God is mutable.⁵⁸

We have already seen that the origin of evil was one of the important questions which Manicheism claimed to answer. Thus it is natural that another of the crucial arguments in Augustine's criticism of Manicheism was his attack on the Manichean account of evil. Along with this went his defence of the goodness of the world against the Manichean charge that an evil principle was partly responsible for it. Augustine argues that

evil is not a separate principle but rather a privation or lack of good. Anything that exists is good insofar as it exists, therefore those things we call evil, since they exist, must be essentially good. However when a good thing does not have the degree of goodness that it ought to have, then the privation or lack of good is what we call evil.⁵⁹ Rational natures (human beings and angels) sin when they turn away from the good they ought to seek, which is God, and seek lower goods in His stead. When they do this they pervert their own nature, making it less good than it would have been, and this is what constitutes sin.

Augustine's view of the nature of evil comes out in his arguments against the existence of an evil principle. He points out that the Manichean Kingdom of Darkness and its inhabitants exhibit many good qualities, and asks how it can be a principle of pure evil if it has good qualities. For instance the Kingdom of Darkness must both desire good if it desires to possess the Kingdom of Light and possess strength if it is to threaten it. However the desire of good and strength are both good qualities.⁶⁰

Augustine also takes issue with the Manichean view of sin. Sin for the Manichees is a struggle of the two opposed principles of good and evil in the human being, who is thus divided into two natures. Good desires come from the particles of the divine nature, whereas evil impulses come from the opposing evil nature.⁶¹ Against this Augustine argues that without the capacity of a single, undivided will to choose good or evil - the capacity to preserve or to pervert its own nature that we were just speaking of - it does not make sense to speak of good acts or evil acts. A purely evil nature cannot sin because its nature does not leave it free to choose good. Good natures can only sin if they are forced to by an evil nature, or if they choose to. If they are forced then they are not really sinning, because they have no choice. If they choose evil then they are not good natures. This is in part the argument of the *De Duabus Animabus*.⁶² Thus the existence of a will free to justly choose

the proper good or to unjustly choose a lesser good is one of the key points in the Augustinian argument against the Manichean idea of evil, and the *De Libero Arbitrio*, Augustine's treatise on free will, is counted among his anti-Manichean works.⁶³

One further charge that Augustine brings continually against the Manichees is not so much about a specific issue as it is a general characterization of their position. He says that as a religion and as an intellectual position Manicheism is the product of an inordinate attachment to the sensible world. He says this about himself when, in *Confessions* III, vi, 11, he compares the Manichees to the bold adulterous woman of *Proverbs*, chapter 9, and says that "she" (the Manichees) seduced him because "she" found him living too much in the world of the senses:

[The bold woman] seduced me because she found me living out of doors in the eye of my flesh, and ruminating on such things as I had swallowed through it.⁶⁴

Confessiones III, vi, 11.

He characterizes the Manichees themselves as *carnales*, men attached to the senses.⁶⁵

Augustine's charge that Manicheism has an inordinately sensible character extends to many aspects of its teaching. He says that the Manichean god is conceived in a sensible way: in commenting on their teaching that the divine Son's power resides in the sun and His wisdom in the moon, Augustine writes:

It is difficult to understand how you have been taken with the absurd idea of placing the power of the Son in the sun, and His wisdom in the moon... Only material things can be thus assigned to separate places. If you only understood this it would have prevented you from taking the productions of a diseased fancy as the materials for so many fictions... these absurdities might appear to have some likelihood to men of carnal minds, who know nothing except through material conceptions.⁶⁶ *Contra Faustum* XX, 8.

Augustine also suggests that the Manichees are dependent on the senses for their view of the nature of evil:

your idea of evil is derived entirely from the effect on your senses of such disagreeable things as serpents, fire, poison, and so on; and the only good you know of is what has an agreeable effect on your senses as pleasant favours, and sweet smells, and sunlight...⁶⁷

Contra Faustum XXXII, 20.

A sensible character of thought also leads the Manichees and others like them to connect God and evil by an imagined direct chain of causality:

Perhaps someone will say: Where does sin itself come from and evil in general? If from a man, where does the man come from? If from an angel, whence the angel? When it is said that they come from God, although that is true, nevertheless it seems to those who are inexperienced and little able to penetrate deeply to unseen things, as though evil and sin were connected by some kind of chain to God.⁶⁸

De Duabus Animabus VIII, 10.

The kind of causal link that we see Augustine here attributing to those who might be attracted to Manicheism is very much more based on the idea of causal relations we see between sensible objects than the one we see in Augustine's own view of evil as a privation of good.

We will be looking at Augustine's response to the Manichean criticisms of, for instance, the divine commands to kill which are given to some of the patriarchs in the Old Testament, and there too we see that the Manichean attitude is based much more directly on feelings and sensations than Augustine's view. We have already seen that Augustine's view of the friendships he had within the Manichean community was that they were too tied to the senses. In all of these cases there is present either implicitly or explicitly the view that Manicheism was a "carnal" view of things.

Augustine has been criticized for this view by the scholar who has written most extensively on Augustine's criticism of Manicheism in recent years, François Decret. Decret dissents from what he regards as an uncritical acceptance of Augustine's charge that the Manichean conception of god was material rather than spiritual by a number of modern scholars.⁶⁹ He thinks that Augustine assumed that any genuinely spiritual conception of god had to be of the philosophical, metaphysical sort that he himself had. For Decret, the Manichees had a spiritual conception of god but it was conceived in gnostic and mythic terms. He says that if we pay attention to the differing assumptions behind the two different spiritual conceptions of god we will find that Augustine's criticisms of the Manichees on this point never really address the Manichean position. The Manichees had a spiritual conception of God, they simply had a different idea of what spiritual meant.

Decret understands the passage in the *Contra Faustum* that we have already looked at⁷⁰, about the power and wisdom of the Son inhabiting the sun and moon, to be saying that the Manichees had a material view of God, and shows from Augustine himself that the Manichees did not understand the "sun" and "moon" here in a strictly material sense. Rather the "sun" and "moon" were fantastic elements of the Manichean mythology, as Augustine himself recognized elsewhere:

And they placed before me on these plates splendid fantasies [the "sun" and "moon"] than which it would have been better to love this sun which is at least true to these eyes rather than those things that were false to a soul deceived through the eyes.⁷¹

Confessiones III, vi, 10.

So the "sun and moon" are not a material notion as Augustine implies in *Contra Faustum* XX, 8. However, Decret says, Augustine is not right to call the "sun and moon" fantasies either, because what is simply fantasy to Augustine is spiritual for the Manichees, and grasped by a gnostic illumination. Furthermore, Decret cites the same passage in *Contra Faustum* XX that Augustine had quoted, and finds Faustus saying that the Father dwells

above the Son in "light inaccessible". This he understands to be the Manichean way of speaking of the spiritual nature of god.

Thus with these, as with the other Manichean mythic figures, Decret argues that what appears material is really spiritual.⁷² On this basis he dismisses Augustine's charge that the Manichean prayers facing toward the sun and moon were idolatrous.⁷³ Since the Manichean "sun" and "moon" were not material but spiritual, worship directed toward them was not idolatry.

Finally, Decret argues that the whole Manichean Kingdom of Light is opposed in its essence to matter. Matter is above all the property of the Kingdom of Darkness. Therefore the Manichean conception of god is certainly a spiritual one.⁷⁴ Indeed, it is not a philosophical, "metaphysical" one such as Augustine's own. However this should not keep us from considering it to be a genuine spiritual conception:

Why should we want to require of a doctrine that in order for us to give it the label "spiritual" it has to conform to the criteria of the categories of Plato and Aristotle? The Persian Mani did not propose his teaching through philosophical concepts and according to the rules of classical demonstration but he used the ways of *gnosis* and, in place of reason, he had recourse to myth.⁷⁵

All this leads to Decret's conclusion that while Augustine had a precise and accurate knowledge of the Manichean teaching, he was ignorant of and out of sympathy with its gnostic element and therefore his controversial writings largely miss the point. He demands a rationalist and Platonic idea of the spiritual which does not belong to the Manichean gnostic account and tries to refute the Manichees on this basis.

It should be conceded to Decret at once that the Manichean conception of God was, according to their own way of thinking, a spiritual one. However Augustine's charge is

not that the Manichees themselves thought that their conception of God was a material one, but that it was, in fact, a fantastic idea derived from the kinds of objects that belong to the senses. A useful parallel is Augustine's charge that the Manichees made God mutable by their myth of the conflict of the two principles. He did not say that they taught explicitly that God was mutable, which they always denied, but rather that their teaching carried the necessary implication that God was mutable. Thus in his debate with Augustine, Felix will agree that God is immutable (*Contra Felicem* XIX), but Augustine argues in return that the Manichean teaching really implies God's mutability.

Similarly, when Augustine charges the Manichees with having a material conception of God he is not saying that they hold this explicitly. He thinks that it is implicit in their teaching but more importantly he is saying that the Manichean conception of God is the product of an inordinate relation to the sensible. The essence of his charge is expressed in the *De Vera Religione*:

Nothing hinders the perception of truth more than a life devoted to lusts, and the false images of sensible things, derived from the sensible world, and impressed on us by the agency of the body, which beget various opinions and errors.⁷⁶

De Vera Religione iii, 3.

Such, according to Augustine, are the errors of the Manichees. Lust, the inordinate relation to sensible things, produces fantastic images derived from sensible things and these false images are the basis for false opinions.

This is clearly the essence of Augustine's criticism of the Manichean conception of God. Augustine does not say that the Manichees hold God to be material, but that their ideas about him are false opinions, based on the false images of sensible things, derived from the sensible because of an inordinate relation to it. The "sun" and "moon", the fantastic beings that the Manichees presented to Augustine were of this character. The

Kingdom of Light itself, according to Augustine, is not material in the sense that it is thought to be made out of matter, but because it is fantastic images, derived from sensible things, because of an inordinate or lustful relation to the sensible.⁷⁷

This is a criticism which cannot be dismissed by saying, as Decret does, that Augustine is assuming categories of thought that are foreign to the character of the Manichean position. Augustine is not arbitrarily imposing his own Platonic categories on the Manichean teaching and then criticizing it by that standard. His evaluation of the Manichean conception of God gives an account of its origin in an inordinate relation to the sensible. It claims to be more than an external judgement on the Manichean position and that claim must be taken seriously. Nor is Augustine's argument *ad hominem*. When he characterizes the Manichees as "*carnales*", he supports his charge with the totality of his treatment of them. We have already seen that Augustine brings this charge to bear on such differing areas as the Manichean concept of causality and their notion and practice of friendship. Ultimately, as we shall see, this treatment reaches the conclusion that the Manichean position is unjust.

Decret's criticism of Augustine on this point fails to take into account that for Augustine the "material" conceptions with which the Manichees think of God are images derived from the sensible. Whether the Manichees think they represent God in a material way or not, they stem from a "carnal" way of thinking, according to Augustine and are legitimate objects for his criticism and satire.

At this point let us consider the other main point on which François Decret criticizes Augustine's account of Manicheism. We have already seen that one of the things that attracted Augustine was their promise to disclose their truths by plain reason, without

requiring faith. Augustine says frequently that the Manichees promise to present their truths by reason but fail to make good on this promise; in the end they leave their listeners in the position of faith.⁷⁸ To this Decret replies that the Manicheans indeed promised a clearly articulated and evident truth but that the nature of this promise was misunderstood by Augustine. Augustine, with his rationalist bent, thought that the Manichees were going to present him with a sure demonstrable science. Rather, the clear and evident truth that the Manichees promised was realized in an intuitive *gnosis*.

Thus Decret asks:

... the clearly articulated truth which Mani came to teach - did it express itself in rational notions of a sort which could be integrated into a scientific system, or on the contrary did it adopt the structure of myth, which addressed the meditation of *nous*, not the intelligence? Was not this inner self the only thing which could penetrate the significance of the myth, which did not unfold itself in theories or in the laws of the mathematicians but rather in the vision of *gnosis*?⁷⁹

Here again Decret argues that there are differing assumptions between Augustine and the Manichees which prevent Augustine from really grasping the Manichean position and which make his criticisms beside the point. Again the difference Decret sees is between a rationalist view of things and a non-rational intuitive gnostic one.

Decret says that Augustine wanted from the Manichees a rationally demonstrable knowledge of the spiritual world. He quotes *Confessions* VI, iv, 6:

For I wanted to be made as certain of the things I did not see, as I was that seven and three were ten.⁸⁰
Confessiones VI, iv, 6.

It was this certainty that Augustine thought the Manichees were going to provide when they promised to present their truth with reason alone, and without recourse to authority.

Augustine wanted demonstration, rational proof concerning spiritual things, and also about sensible things, as his interest in the Manichean astronomy showed.

However, Decret argues, this was never the kind of truth the Manichees claimed to possess. Their claims to present the truth without recourse to authority were to be made good by the Manichean *gnosis*, by the certainty of an intuitive immediate grasp.⁸¹ He quotes Secundinus, the Manichean auditor who wrote to Augustine trying to bring him back into the Manichean fellowship, saying that the Manichean mysteries were beyond the capacity of human reason:

...there are some things which cannot be expounded so that they can be understood: for the divine reason exceeds the capacity of the breasts of mortals: such as this, how there are two natures, or why he fought who was unable to suffer...⁸²

Epistula Secundini, 6.

This passage, in Decret's view, exemplifies the distinction between Augustine's position and that of the Manichees: Augustine wants certain reasons and the Manichee says that spiritual things cannot be understood that way.

The real certainty about spiritual things is attained by *gnosis*. Decret quotes one Manichean writing which says "you shall see your souls".⁸³ This is the kind of knowledge, the knowledge of illumination, that the Manichees really provided, but Augustine is not interested in it. He did know about it, according to Decret (and indeed it is hard to imagine Augustine being a Manichean auditor for nine years without being very aware of the gnostic aspect of Manicheism) but he was looking for a more rational, more demonstrably certain knowledge.⁸⁴

As was the case with the argument about the Manichees' material conception of God, it is not within the scope of this thesis to address Decret's argument fully and point

by point. However it is important that we consider evidence which suggests that Augustine did not misunderstand the Manicheism he was criticizing. It is often said, and is no doubt sometimes the case, that writers on different sides of controversies do not understand the positions they are attacking. However there are a number of reasons to suggest that Decret's view, that Augustine drastically misunderstood the Manicheism he was writing against, is not to be taken as the last word on the subject.

First, it should be noted that the evidence for the side of Manicheism that Augustine allegedly had little grasp of is presented by Decret out of Augustine's own words and writings. On the issue of the character of the Manichean conception of God and on the issue of the gnostic character of Manichean truth, Decret himself shows that Augustine is aware of the Manichean position.⁸⁵ On the gnostic issue for instance, Augustine not only knows about the Manichean stance but he addresses it directly. In his treatise *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti*, (XIV, 18), in a passage Decret notes, Augustine discusses how Mani's claim to have direct inspiration of the gnostic sort leaves his hearers in the position of having to take what he says on faith:

If someone says that [something] is revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, and his mind is illuminated by God, so that he knows that those things which he says are certain and manifest, he demonstrates the difference between knowing and believing. For the one who "knows", is the one to whom these things are shown in all clarity, but when he tells someone about them, he does not "put the knowledge in them", but persuades them to believe.⁸⁶

Contra Epistulam Fundamenti XIV, 18.

This passage shows that Augustine is aware of the character of the Manichean gnostic claims but it also leads us to the heart of the issue as to whether Augustine sufficiently appreciates this in his anti-Manichean writings. It shows that Augustine is aware that the person who claims to be directly illuminated cannot be judged according to that illumination by those around him. He can only be judged according to his faithfulness

to a tradition he and his hearers accept, that is, according to faith, or according to the rational arguments that accompany his revelation. For Augustine, to judge the reasons that are presented with the Manichean myths is inevitable because the myths themselves, as pure revelation, cannot be judged. The gnostic character of Manicheism which Decret wants Augustine to take account of in his arguments is something which Augustine knows cannot be taken account of by any argument.

If the Manichees had simply told Augustine that they had a revelation which he would either come to see by illumination or not, then Augustine's treatment of them might have been more along the lines that Decret seems to expect - a debate about the merits of gnostic intuition and rational scientific knowledge. One could question how much such a debate could accomplish, since gnostic intuition is in principle undebatable. It claims to grasp the truth with a certainty beyond anything that rational thought could achieve, and therefore is not vulnerable to any criticism rational thought might make. However what Augustine criticizes over and over is the promise that the truth would be made known to him by reason. This he regards as a claim that the Manichees possess not only a pure revelation, about which debate is impossible, but also supporting reasons which lead to the truth of the revelation.

Clearly the Manichees do lay claim to the possession of such reasons. The debates with Fortunatus and Felix, and the writings of Faustus in the *Contra Faustum*, are full of reasons, arguments, and justifications. Nowhere do the Manichean debaters base their claim to truth simply on their gnostic experience. They also know that such a claim is unsupportable. Their arguments about the two principles, about the Scriptures, about the mutability of God are all attempts to present their truth by plain reason.

Augustine goes as far as possible in addressing the gnostic claims of Manicheism at

Contra Faustum XV, 6:

Have you, then, seen face to face, the king with the sceptre, and the crown of flowers, and the hosts of gods, and the great world-holder with six faces, radiant with light, and that other exalted ruler, surrounded with troops of angels, and the invincible warrior, with a spear in his right hand and a shield in his left, and the famous sovereign who moves the three wheels of fire, water, and wind, and Atlas, chief of all, bearing the world on his arms? Have you seen these, and a thousand other marvels, face to face, or are your "songs" teachings learned from lying devils, though you know it not?⁸⁷

Contra Faustum XV, 6.

This passage gives a little of the flavour of the elaboratiness and detail of the Manichean myth. It also shows Augustine addressing directly, in the only possible way, the Manichean claim of illumination. Since for various reasons, drawn from reason and tradition, Augustine thinks the Manichees are in error, he must call into question the Manichean claim to illumination. If they insist that their *gnosis* is from a power beyond themselves, Augustine must draw the conclusion that it is of demonic origin. However neither Augustine nor, as we have suggested, the Manichees choose to argue on this basis.

There is other evidence to suggest that the Manichees did not base their whole claim to the truth on their gnostic experience. Augustine waited for nine years to hear an explanation of the Manichean astronomy that reconciled it with empirical observation. He did not get the explanation he was looking for, but he does not tell us of anyone suggesting that the request was illegitimate. The evidence suggests that the Manichees claimed to possess a science that embraced all worldly as well as spiritual phenomena.⁸⁸ The Manichean teaching about the particles of light contained in plants implies a whole (heterodox) Manichean botany for instance.

Thus the Manichean "science"⁸⁹, although it was primarily a science of salvation, claimed also to be a knowledge of the world that could be argued about. The relation between a worldly reason and the Manichean *gnosis* is perhaps not defined within their teaching but there seems no reason to suppose that they did not use and lay claim to the support of the former.

Thus Augustine's use of reasoned argument and tradition to oppose the Manichees was a legitimate enterprise. No doubt a Manichee like Secundinus thinks that Augustine's arguments miss the point, which is really about a spiritual illumination rather than human reason. When they are pushed however, the Manichees we know about, like Fortunatus and Felix, try to defend their position rationally because they do not want to abandon their claim to a science which explains the world. We suggest that Augustine, far from misunderstanding the Manichean position, was aware of this aspect of it, and argues accordingly.

We would suggest that the positions of Augustine and the Manichees are more or less as follows. Augustine thinks that the Manichean *gnosis* can be shown to be wrong on rational grounds. He sticks to these grounds and avoids the issue of the gnostic claim to be beyond reason, because he realizes that this is unarguable. The Manichees for their part do not base their claim solely on their unique *gnosis*, because that would mean their giving up the claim to having reason on their side.

Therefore Decret has oversimplified both the Manichean position and Augustine's response to it when he makes the contrast between them one of a non-rational gnostic understanding set against a rationalist scientific mind which cannot appreciate it. The Manichees do lay claim to a certain kind of rational and scientific truth. Augustine is aware

of the gnostic character of Manicheism, but he also understands the implications of this for rational debate, and so he does not for the most part address the Manichees in terms of their gnostic claim. Rather he addresses the points on which they claim to have reason on their side. If the Manichees' willingness to enter the debate on this basis did not justify his procedure, the requirements of argument itself would at least raise the question of what else Augustine could have done.

The only role that Decret will allow for reason in the Manichean position is as a preparation for gnostic intuition.⁹⁰ He separates completely the "reason" which the Manichees appeal to when they argue, from the truth to which they claim to lead the hearer.⁹¹ The Manichees themselves do not provide any connection but they refuse to allow that their polemical reasoning has no relation to their truth. This is why Augustine is successful when he debates them. They allow his arguments their force rather than simply rejecting them in favour of the Manichean *gnosis*, as they should do if Decret's account is a complete one.

Augustine's "Positive" Account of Manicheism and the Idea of Justice

We have considered a number of Augustine's criticisms of the Manichean system. These are some of the reasons why the mature Augustine considered Manicheism an erroneous theological position and a false religious whole. Yet we have also seen that Augustine originally adopted Manicheism because of the desire for an intellectual and religious whole which came with his reading of the *Hortensius* in the context of his Christian upbringing. If Manicheism even appeared to be a fulfillment to this desire there must have been elements in it that were genuinely part of what Augustine was looking for. Moreover, since in the *Confessions* Augustine gives us the reasons for which he adopted

the various positions he took up, as well as the reasons for the inadequacy of each position, we can expect to find in the *Confessions* a kind of "positive" account of Manicheism.

It should immediately be emphasized that this does not mean that Augustine thought that Manicheism was in any way a good thing. On the contrary we shall see that Augustine's argument shows that Manichean belief is one of the worst possible evils. However, we may expect that Augustine will treat Manicheism, particularly in the *Confessions*, as an intellectual and religious whole that reveals to us the whole he was striving for, while remaining itself only a counterfeit of it. The argument of *Contra Faustum* XXII, which is parallel to that of *Confessions* III, will have a similar "positive" treatment.

With this in mind let us briefly consider the way Manicheism is introduced in *Confessions* III (this account is dependent on the detailed elaboration of the argument in Chapter I). Augustine notes two things immediately about the way the Manichees made their appeal. The first is that they cried "Truth, Truth" and thus claimed to satisfy Augustine's desire for an intellectual whole. The second is that the names of "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" were continually on their lips, identifying themselves with the Christian religious whole to which Augustine was attached through his upbringing.⁹²

The rest of *Confessions* III, vi is occupied with setting out a hierarchy of natures, from sensible natures at the bottom to the unseen intelligible creation above. Below sensible natures Augustine considers the various kinds of imaginary beings - imaginary representations of things that exist, fantastic constructions and, finally, imaginary constructions that are thought to exist but do not.

Further, Augustine says that the Manichean teachings belong to this last and lowest category of natures and that consequently as a Manichean believer he had been in the "depths of the pit" (*in profunda inferi*). This was a disastrous state into which he was seduced by the Manichees. So chapter III, vi contains both a hierarchy of natures in which the Manichean teachings are placed, and a judgement upon those teachings.

In *Confessions* III, vii-x both of these aspects of chapter vi are developed. In III, vii Augustine addresses one of the questions that the Manichees had originally posed to him, about the morality of the Old Testament. In III, vii Augustine makes it clear that this question may be answered by attaining a proper idea of justice. Then in III, viii the true idea of justice is developed. There are two parts to the treatment. The first (*Confessions* III, viii, 15) is a consideration of *flagitia* or offences against God. The second (*Confessions* III, viii, 16) is about *facinora* or crimes against man. In the first part offences against God are considered to be offences against either nature, custom, or God's rule. In the second part crimes are categorized according to a series of motives corresponding to levels of the hierarchy of natures developed in *Confessions* III, vi.

The justice that Augustine spoke of in III, vii is thus defined in terms of three wholes, of nature, custom, and God's rule and in terms of a hierarchy of motives ranging from revenge, at the top end of the hierarchy of natures, to the pleasure at another's pain, at the bottom. The overall definition of injustice is said to be "loving a false whole in a part" (*diligitur in parte unum falsum*). We are using this Augustinian language when we speak of Manicheism as appealing to the desire for an intellectual and religious "whole".

It is in terms of the definition of *Confessions* III, viii that Manicheism is treated in subsequent chapters of the *Confessions*. For instance in *Confessions* III, x the

implications of the Manichean whole for justice are brought out when Augustine says that for a Manichee giving a fruit to a hungry man would be a capital crime.⁹³ Again, in *Confessions* IV, vii the problem in the friendship between Augustine and his Manichean friend that leads to such inordinate suffering for Augustine is attributed to the place of the Manichean teachings in the hierarchy of natures.⁹⁴

The introduction of whole and parts, a hierarchy of natures, and justice, should not be seen as a bringing in of external elements to describe Augustine's Manichean position. Rather, these are the elements that belong to Augustine's position after he had read the *Hortensius*. After reading the *Hortensius*, Augustine was looking for a philosophical and religious whole. Manicheism presented itself to him as such a whole, and he accepted it as such. Augustine therefore treats Manicheism in the terms that he thinks are appropriate to a philosophical and religious whole. We will try to suggest the reason for the appropriateness of the terms of his treatment in our Conclusion.

The immediate conclusion of the arguments of *Confessions* III, vii-x is that Manicheism is unjust and in fact the lowest sort of injustice in the hierarchy of III, viii. However according to the concept of justice which Augustine develops in III, viii, injustice reveals the character of justice by being a perversion of it. Thus the way is open again for the treatment of Manicheism to reveal a positive content, a true whole.

Turning now to the *Contra Faustum*, in the twenty-second book of that work we find a treatment of justice that is in its essentials the same as the one we have seen in the *Confessions*. Again what prompts the discussion is the Manichean criticism of the morality of the Old Testament. In this case the criticism is that made by Faustus, the Manichean bishop. The section of Faustus' criticism that Augustine is responding to consists of a list

of characters and acts from the Old Testament that prove to Faustus that the Old Testament characters are immoral and cannot be considered authoritative. Augustine takes up these instances one by one and, through his interpretation of them, develops the same idea of justice that we saw in the *Confessions*, only in much greater detail.

This can be easily illustrated in a preliminary way if we look at the arguments Augustine uses at successive points in *Contra Faustum* XXII, to defend different parts of the Old Testament narrative. First, Augustine defends Abraham for having a child by Sarah's handmaid Hagar, on the ground that Abraham's purpose was in accord with the natural purpose of sex - procreation. This argument, at *Contra Faustum* XXII, 30, is based on the justice of nature. Second, Augustine defends Jacob's multiple wives on the ground that in the time of Jacob, polygamy was not contrary to custom. This argument, at *Contra Faustum* XXII, 47, is based on the justice of custom. Third, Augustine defends the actions of Moses and the Israelites in killing the Canaanites, on the ground that God commanded it. This argument, at *Contra Faustum* XXII, 78, is based on the justice of God's command or rule. Thus we see the three wholes of *Confessions* III, viii placed, moreover, according to a scheme of development.

This scheme of development: from nature, to custom, to God's rule is one of the aspects of the idea of justice that is more fully explicated in *Contra Faustum* XXII. Another is the notion of the whole of God's rule which, as we will see in our full discussion of the argument in our chapter II, is identified with the "eternal law" and linked to the doctrines of providence and creation.

One might note that it is not surprising that the same argument about justice should appear in the *Confessions* and the *Contra Faustum* in view of the probable date of

composition of both works. They appear side by side in the chronologically ordered *Retractiones*.⁹⁵ The *Confessions* is dated 397-401 A.D. by Solignac⁹⁶ and Decret dates the *Contra Faustum* at 400 A.D.⁹⁷ Thus the two works come at the same point in the development of Augustine's theological position. It makes perfect sense that he should have developed at greater length, in a work which allowed the scope for it, an important idea that could only appear in a condensed form in the *Confessions*. There are also a few references elsewhere⁹⁸ which pertain to the idea as we see it developed in the *Confessions* and the *Contra Faustum* but these two are the significant texts.

In summary, *Confessions* III, vi-x and *Contra Faustum* XXII, 27-98 both present us with one systematic idea of justice, developed in response to the Manichean criticisms of the Old Testament. Both arguments show that Manicheism is a false intellectual and religious whole and both reveal Manicheism as unjust, since injustice, according to the argument, is a false whole. However, since the false wholes of injustice reveal the character of justice, we may expect the argument to show those elements of Manicheism which reveal the true intellectual and religious whole that Augustine was seeking when he became a Manichee. How the argument does this will be treated in the conclusion of this thesis.

We still need to consider briefly the character of the *Contra Faustum* and then to give an account of and a justification for our method in this thesis. The *Contra Faustum* was written in response to a treatise by the Manichean bishop Faustus criticizing the Catholic Scriptures. Faustus' treatise in its original form is not extant but Augustine reproduces part or all of it, possibly in a reordered form, as part of the *Contra Faustum*.⁹⁹ Augustine writes 33 books, each of which is headed by a section of Faustus' text, to which Augustine responds. When he writes against the Catholic Scriptures, Faustus is following

in the tradition of Manichean criticisms of the Catholic Scriptures, and particularly the Old Testament, by Adimantus and by Mani himself.¹⁰⁰ His charges against the Scriptures are like a compendium of the Manichean criticisms. He objects to the anthropomorphism of the portrayal of God in the Old Testament¹⁰¹ and to the doctrine of the Incarnation¹⁰², but the majority of his objections are to very specific points in the Scriptures.

The first group of objections are what might loosely be called factual objections: these include charges of factual contradictions, inaccuracies, and the charge that there are interpolations into the original text. For instance Faustus emphasizes the contradiction between the genealogies of Christ in Matthew and Luke (*Contra Faustum* II; III; VII; XXIII). He points to the differences between accounts of the same incident in different gospels (*Contra Faustum* XXXIII, 2). He raises the question of whether texts which seem to him to disagree with the Christian teaching have not been interpolated into the text (*Contra Faustum* XI, 1; XVI, 2; XVIII, 3; XXXIII, 2-3).

However, most of Faustus' work is devoted to the raising of more substantial objections - to the Old Testament in particular. He objects to the idea that Christ is prophecied in the Old Testament; he says that he cannot find any prophecies there, and that such a prophetic witness to Christ is unnecessary anyway (*Contra Faustum* XII; XIII; XIV; XVI). He argues that the Old Testament law is made up of either the moral law which is common to the whole world, or to ceremonial practices which are abhorrent and irrational. The Catholics show that they do not accept them when they do not practice them. Christ himself rejected them. The Old Testament's promises and hopes are directed to the unworthy worldly ends of land and riches, whereas the promises and hopes of the New Testament are spiritual. In general the teaching of the Old Testament is opposed to that of the New Testament (*Contra Faustum* IV, VI, VIII, IX, X, XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX,

XXXII, XXXIII). Finally Faustus objects to many characters and deeds in the Old Testament which he thinks are immoral.

Faustus' general purpose is to show that the Scriptures, and the unifying body of Catholic interpretation within which they are understood, do not have the integrity to make them authoritative. He tries to portray the Scriptures as a collection of mutually self-contradictory parts that the traditional Catholic interpretation cannot hold together. Augustine, on the other hand, seeks to defend the integrity of the Scriptures and their Catholic interpretation. His aim as he takes up each of Faustus' points is to defend the principle that the Scriptures are a *rational* authoritative revelation and that the Catholic church understands this accurately. Augustine does not defend the Catholic interpretation by quoting other Patristic authors but by attributing to the Scriptures a unity which the Scriptures give themselves: interpreting the Old Testament the way the New Testament does, presuming its unity with the New, and allegorizing some of its teachings. This presupposition of the unity of the Scriptures is the Catholic way of reading the Scriptures that Augustine defends.

Thus, when he considers the various objections raised by Faustus, Augustine tries to show that the assumption of the integrity of Scriptures, factual and theological, is the most reasonable assumption. For instance on the question of the genealogies, Augustine argues that the discrepancy can be accounted for without calling into question the integrity of the Scriptures if one supposes that Joseph had both an adopted and a natural father and the genealogies trace his descent from the two different men (*Contra Faustum* III, 3-5). It seems that Augustine is not so much arguing that this must be the explanation of the discrepancy between the genealogies as that the possibility of this explanation, or one like it, makes the assumption of the integrity of the Scriptures reasonable.

Similarly, on the question of contradictions between accounts in the different gospels of the same incident, Augustine remarks that anyone telling a story on two different occasions will tell it somewhat differently, but this does not affect the assumption of the reliability of the narrative (*Contra Faustum* XXXIII, 8). On the question of interpolations as well, Augustine points to the unbroken tradition by which the Scriptures have been handed down, to the various manuscripts, and to the interest in the church to maintain the authentic text of Scripture, as evidence that the assumption of the integrity of the Scriptures is reasonable (*Contra Faustum* XXXII, 16). Indeed Augustine's argument leads to the conclusion that the reason for the excessive scepticism of the Manichees is a blind party spirit that irrationally assumes and insists that the Scriptures have no integrity (*Contra Faustum* XXXIII, 7 et passim).

On the question of prophecy in the Old Testament, Augustine's main answer to Faustus is that the Old Testament is seen to be prophetic when it is interpreted allegorically. He argues for the allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament at length in *Contra Faustum* XII and draws on the use of allegory in the New Testament to support this method of interpretation. Augustine does see non-allegorical predictive prophecy in the Old Testament as well: for instance he thinks that the promise to Abraham that in his seed all nations would be blessed is very evidently fulfilled in the existence of the church (*Contra Faustum* XII, 6). However his most frequent answer to Faustus is the allegorical reading of Scripture.

Here again Augustine sees the crucial issue being the attitude of the reader. To read the Scriptures in faith, Augustine holds, is to read them as a revelation that we can trust, and that provides what we need for the strengthening of our faith. Thus one of the reasons

Augustine gives for the allegorical interpretation of Scripture is that many passages would be meaningless without it (*Contra Faustum* XII, 38). The attitude of faith holds that God would not give us meaningless Scripture, so we may find allegorical meaning there. We trust that the meaning is such as to meet our need. Augustine quotes St. Paul: "These things were written for our examples" (*Contra Faustum* XVI, 23; XII, 37).

This does not mean that Augustine is not concerned with the literal sense of Scripture. As we saw above, in his treatment of apparent historical contradictions Augustine is at great pains to defend the historical reliability of Scripture. However, Augustine's position is not to defend Scriptural infallibility for its own sake; rather, he will defend the historical element of Scripture in order to defend the general integrity of the revelation. This is crucial because man, to be saved, needs a reliable revelation. Augustine would presumably not have been interested in defending a degree of historical or scientific accuracy in the Scriptures greater than was necessary for man's salvation.

Faustus' charge that the Old Testament law is opposed to the teaching of the New Testament is one of the most important points under dispute. Augustine's answer to it is that the law has two parts: the ceremonial law and the moral law. The ceremonial law had the purpose of foreshadowing the coming of Christ and Catholics no longer observe it because it has found its fulfillment in Him. The moral law is still observed by Christians but now, by the Holy Spirit, they are enabled to obey it.

The ceremonial law is made up of types or foreshadowings of realities which actually appear with Christ. For instance, the rite of circumcision, which Faustus mocks, is a foreshadowing of the putting off of the carnal man in the New Testament (*Contra Faustum* XIX, 9). Sacrifices are no longer offered because the one true sacrifice has been

made by Christ (*Contra Faustum* XIX, 10). This is one sense in which Christ came to "fulfill the law". If Christians practiced the ceremonial law they would be saying that it had not been fulfilled in Christ. The moral law is fulfilled in Christ because his grace empowers us to keep it. Augustine bases this answer on his reading of Romans V-VIII (*Contra Faustum* XIX, 7-8).

Augustine grants that there is a difference between the promises God gives to the people of the Old Testament and the people of the New. However he says that the promises of the Old Testament, land and kingdoms and so on, were figurative of the realities of the New Testament (*Contra Faustum* IV). The holy people of the Old Testament were all looking forward to the realities given in the New. Thus all the various teachings of the Old Testament form a unity with the New Testament, a unity that Augustine bases on the New Testament's own use of the Old.

Finally Faustus charges that many of the characters and deeds of the Old Testament are immoral and that this discredits it. Augustine responds to this charge in *Contra Faustum* XXII and his answer is precisely the argument about justice that we are considering.

We have suggested above what the general outlines of this argument are (see pages 36-40). Perhaps some remarks about the method we have followed in treating this argument will be helpful. Our commentary on *Confessions* III and *Contra Faustum* XXII (chapters 1 and 2 of the thesis) gives a close and detailed analysis of the structure of these two texts. It is assumed that the sequence of ideas, images, and Scriptural examples in each text can be seen to form a continuous argument if one follows carefully the relation of each part to the next.

This assumption can finally only be justified by the argument that is found there. The difference between a reading that is merely the product of the ingenious imagination of the commentator and a reading that is really in the text, must lie in whether it provides a complete and satisfying account of all the details of the text, with none left out, and none forced into a role which does not naturally belong to it. We believe that the coherence of the arguments revealed in each of these texts, as well as the close parallels between the two arguments, justify our assumption that we are reading Augustine in a legitimate way when we approach these texts as carefully structured arguments.

We are not suggesting that all of Augustine's contemporary readers would have read them this way. No doubt many of his readers would have read *Confessions* III, vi-x as a series of diverse reflections on the kinds of natures, Manichean images, custom and justice and various kinds of corruptions and crimes. No doubt many would have read *Contra Faustum* XXII, 27-98 as a series of diverse answers to Faustus's objections to the Old Testament. Augustine would presumably have had no objection to such readings and would have hoped that edification was being provided to those readers.

However, we would suggest that Augustine also had in mind another sort of reader, a reader who approached the writings of the noted Christian thinker as Augustine himself had read the *Hortensius* - looking for Wisdom. How would such a reader go about trying to find Wisdom in the sequence of ideas and images that Augustine presented to them? By trying, we would suggest, to fit the parts of the sequence together to make an ordered whole. For such readers the overall argument of the text would emerge. The effort involved in uncovering the argument would have been considered part of the

instructiveness of the text (Augustine says something similar about the effort of uncovering the truth of Scripture in *Contra Faustum* XXII, chapter 45).

Some other method could have been adopted to investigate the matters which we have considered in this thesis. Another approach would have been to start from Augustine's criticism of Manicheism as a whole (as indeed we have done briefly above - see pages 20-35). In various places in the anti-Manichean writings we would find some of the same elements that make up the criticism of Manicheism in the passages we have considered. For instance, Augustine often repeats the charge that he makes in *Confessions* III, vi, that the Manichees are *carnales* - materially minded.¹⁰³ As in the *Confessions*, Augustine links this idea of "material mindedness" to the making of false images, particularly in the *De Vera Religione*.¹⁰⁴ If we considered Augustine's criticism of Manicheism as a whole, we would expect to find themes such as these which we have already considered in relation to our texts.

However, there is one crucial element of the argument that we have treated that it would be difficult to find clearly presented in the other anti-Manichean writings and that is the characterization of Manicheism as a "false whole". This teaching is implicit rather than explicit in the *Confessions* and the *Contra Faustum*, in a way that we have tried to make clear in our commentary; so we cannot expect to find it explicitly in the other writings. The idea of injustice as a "false whole" comes out in these arguments, along with the categorization of things in terms of "wholes" and "parts", when contemplation becomes the focus. The language of whole and parts does not represent a kind of empirical classification which is applied to Manicheism, but a language which is appropriate to the "contemplative stage" of an argument, and it is only used appropriately in relation to that argument. Thus we cannot expect Augustine to be referring to Manicheism as a "false

whole” at any point in any argument. The way he categorizes Manicheism in the anti-Manichean writings will be specific to the particular arguments of each work. This is not to say that the truth of the arguments we have considered will not be present in the other works as well, but rather that to see how it is present is a difficult undertaking, requiring one to work out all of the arguments in question.

Alternatively, we could have looked at the various occurrences of the word *iustitia*, its cognates, and related words in Augustine’s anti-Manichean writings or in the whole Augustinian corpus. In a consideration of justice in the anti-Manichean works, some of the most important passages would have been ones that fall within the texts we have considered, such as the definition of the eternal law as “the divine reason or will, ordering that the natural order be preserved, and forbidding that it be disturbed” (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 27). Other passages would reflect the general Augustinian teaching about justice that is also present in the *Confessions* and the *Contra Faustum*. For instance, the idea of justice as something that follows from the place of the soul in the order of things is found in the *Contra Felicem*:

God, who created all things, founded them according to degrees and distinguished them in their *genera*, things celestial and terrestrial, immortal and mortal. He made each thing good in its *genus*. The soul, which has free will, he placed underneath himself, and over everything else, so that if it served the higher, it would rule the lower, whereas if it opposed the higher it would suffer its penalty from the lower.¹⁰⁵

Contra Felicem II, iv

Here, as in the *Confessions*, God’s punishment of injustice is not an arbitrary exercise of the divine will but an outworking of what is given in the created order. The soul harms itself when it leaves its proper place in that order.

This last quoted passage gives an indication of one of the problems of a word study on justice in Augustine. The word *iustitia* does not, in fact, occur in this passage, although it occurs before and after it, and it is clear that that is what is being discussed. This is only one example of the way in which Augustine's use of *iustitia* is not ideally suited to a strictly lexical investigation. He is apt to talk about justice in connection with the words *peccatum*, or *lex aeterna*, or describing the *iustus homo*, and does not give many straight-forward or detailed definitions using the word *iustitia*. We must remember that Augustine was drawing on a long tradition of ancient thought about the word.¹⁰⁶ To some extent he takes for granted that the general sense of *iustitia* is familiar to his readers, as we might take for granted the general sense of some commonly used contemporary moral term like "freedom". He consequently did not feel compelled to give a lot of full definitions or to use his words as uniformly as we, belonging to a different tradition, might like. He introduces the concept of justice into his writings in a variety of different ways.

A comment of R.D. Crouse is helpful on this point. Crouse remarks that Augustine does not present his ideas in a systematic way but that the unity of his thought can be seen in the way it centres around certain key concepts:

The Bishop of Hippo was not, at least in the ordinary sense of the word, a "systematic" theologian. The obscurity of his views on many important philosophical and theological themes is more than adequately attested by the controversies which have surrounded his name during the fifteen centuries since his death. Yet the discerning reader of the Augustinian *corpus* will note the omnipresence of certain key concepts which contribute a unity and coherence to the whole. One such concept is *caritas*. Another is *iustitia*.¹⁰⁷

The important point here for our purposes is that while Augustine's thought does centre around the concept of justice (among other concepts), this concept is not presented in a systematic way: there is no treatise *De Iustitia*. Nor is it presented with a high degree of lexical uniformity. The concept of *iustitia* recurs through Augustine's writings as a concept

rather than in a particular set of linguistic formulations. To build up a complete picture of Augustine's view of justice from his use of *iustitia* and its cognates would require a considerable amount of construction work, putting together an account gleaned from various usages that individually reveal only small parts of the concept. Indeed, one of the advantages of considering a sustained argument about justice as we have done is that in such an argument we find the full range of what Augustine means by the concept. Furthermore, we avoid the danger that is present when putting together an account based on many different passages, that we may unconsciously introduce our own ideas into the construction. The unity of a sustained argument helps to ensure that the way the parts are put together is Augustine's as well as the parts themselves, because Augustine did put them together. Most of all, a sustained argument about justice makes it easier to grasp that for Augustine, justice is a concept that is whole as well as parts - that the relation of the parts leads to a unity beyond the parts themselves.

This is not to deny that a statement of the general sense of the concept of justice in Augustine's writings can be helpful. P. Agaësse, for instance, in a note to the B.A. edition of the *De Trinitate* gives a brief and useful account of the idea of justice in Augustine. He shows how the traditional idea of justice as "giving to each his due" is applied to the idea of the soul, so that the reason receives as its "due" the obedience of the lower parts of the soul. From this comes the Augustinian idea of justice as "God ruling the soul and the soul ruling the body". The soul obeys God by adhering to the form of justice within the divine ideas, which is also conformity to God's will.¹⁰⁸

Another helpful summary of Augustine's idea of justice is given by Eugene TeSelle, who begins from the definition of the eternal law from *Contra Faustum* XXII, 27:

...the natural order is to be preserved (keeping spiritual beings and values above material, the abiding above the fleeting and so on), but the sanction, the law-like obligation comes from the divine reason which presides over it all. When it is intuited by finite minds “above” themselves, the relative values of all beings fall into place, so that the lower are subservient to the higher, and all finite values are “referred” to God as the supreme value. The law is a law of love, appreciating and acting toward each in a way appropriate to its own being.¹⁰⁹

Both Agaësse and TeSelle give us the broad outlines of the idea of justice we have considered in this thesis. However, just as we saw above with Augustine’s criticism of Manicheism, the detail of the idea of justice emerges specifically in the context of the arguments in which it is found.

In general, we can say that it is important in reading Augustine to locate concepts in the context of the arguments in which they occur. Perhaps we can shed some more light on this point if we consider briefly the idea of justice in the context of a different argument. Since justice figures prominently in Book XIX of the *De Civitate Dei*, we will consider it there. Book XIX gives the traditional Augustinian idea of justice:

What of justice, the function of which is to award to each his own (whence it comes that there is in each man a certain just order of nature, so that the soul is subordinated to God, and the body to the soul and through this both body and soul to God)...¹¹⁰ De Civitate Dei XIX, iv

However, as we proceed through the Book XIX we discover that the idea of justice here is very close even in its details to the one we have found in the *Confessions* and the *Contra Faustum*. In chapter xiii Augustine gives an account of the various kinds of “order” (*ordo*) that constitute “peace” for the body, the lower soul, the mind, and the human being as a whole. When Augustine defines *ordo* as the “arrangement of things equal and unequal, awarding each their place” (*ordo est parium dispariumque rerum sua cuique loca tribuens dispositio*), an echo of the traditional definition of justice as “giving to each his own”, it seems clear that *ordo* here implies the concept of justice (again, Augustine is working in

terms of the concept rather than the specific word). We find that in this passage the kinds of ordered peace correspond precisely to the kinds of justice in the *Confessions* and the *Contra Faustum*:

Therefore the peace of the body is an ordered arrangement of parts, the peace of the irrational soul is an ordered rest for the appetites, the peace of the rational soul is an ordered agreement of knowledge and action, the peace of the soul and body is the life and health of the living creature, the peace between mortal man and God is ordered obedience in faith under the eternal law...¹¹¹ *De Civitate Dei* XIX, xiii

Several points in this passage show clearly that this is the same idea of justice that we have been dealing with. First of all, the justice of the rational soul is identified with “an ordered agreement of knowledge and action”. From chapter xiv it is clear that Augustine is referring here to the proper ordering of action and contemplation. The middle term of the idea of justice described in this thesis, the justice of custom, is also defined in terms of the ordering of action and contemplation (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 52). Secondly, the highest form of ordered peace here, the “peace between mortal man and God” is defined as “ordered obedience in faith under the eternal law”. This definition clearly corresponds to the third term of the definition of justice in the *Confessions* and the *Contra Faustum*, the whole of God’s rule or the eternal law. Finally, the order of the irrational soul, “the ordered rest for the appetites”, corresponds to the justice of nature, so we can see that the same three parts of justice are present in all three works.

However, the polemical context in which this idea of justice is situated in the *De Civitate Dei* is not an argument against Manicheism but an argument against the pagan world. In Book XIX Augustine’s criticism of paganism comes out in his criticism of Varro’s view that man’s end is comprised of virtue and the natural goods, sought for their own sakes.¹¹² Augustine argues that both virtue and the natural goods are tied up with the inevitable suffering of the world and therefore cannot be true ends. To place human ends

in this world, whether the end be pleasure or virtue or anything else, is the mark of the city of man, the pagan idea of the world Augustine is combatting. All worldly ends are replaced by the end of a peace which can only be attained in heaven.

As far as the idea of justice is concerned, this criticism of worldly ends leads Augustine to emphasize the third term of his definition of justice, the eternal law, as that on which the whole concept rests. We can see this if we consider what Augustine says about Cicero's concept of the state in chapters xxi-xxiv. Augustine argues that according to Cicero's definition of a state, which demands that a state share a common sense of justice, there never was a true Roman state because there could be no sense of justice among a people who did not serve the true God. Now to serve the true God is to obey the eternal law. Without this obedience the soul cannot rule the body and reason cannot rule the vices according to true justice. So not only is the state that does not serve God no true state, according to Cicero's definition, but virtues which are not submitted to God's will are really vices (*De Civitate Dei* XIX, xxv). Without the third term of our definition of justice, the eternal law, the first two terms do not constitute justice at all.

Again, when Augustine says in chapter xxvii that in this life, justice consists "rather in the remission of sins than in the perfection of virtue (*potius remissione peccatorum ...quam perfectione virtutum*), he is thinking in terms of the third term of justice, the obedience to the eternal law. In the face of the eternal law's demand for a complete subordination of all the minute particularity of life to God's immediate will, even the apparently virtuous are compelled to live in dependence on God's forgiveness and grace. However this presupposes that the other terms in the definition of justice are maintained, that the "soul rules over the body and reason over the vices". The eternal law is the

foundation of justice but it also preserves the other two terms, as is the case in the *Confessions* and the *Contra Faustum*.

Augustine's position in Book XIX of the *De Civitate Dei* can be summed up by saying that the things of this world, including natural goods, virtues, and earthly peace, are to be used for the sake of the peace of heaven, whereas in the city of man they are used for their own sake. Justice as a virtue becomes something that is of concern more for the sake of heaven than for its own sake, and the crucial aspects of justice become God's will, grace, and forgiveness. The three-fold character of justice is the same as that which we have considered in this thesis but the polemical context (the contrast between the attitude of the pagan world and the attitude of the Christian world) means that what is emphasized about justice is the way that the eternal law transforms the concept into one that has heaven as its end.

Thus the treatment of justice in *De Civitate Dei* XIX forms a contrast with the treatment we have examined in the *Confessions* and the *Contra Faustum*. In the *De Civitate Dei* the interest is in justice in relation to human ends. In the *Confessions* and in the *Contra Faustum*, we will be arguing that the interest is rather to show justice as having a three-fold structure of wholes and parts and thus providing a proper object for the desire for contemplation that lies behind Manicheism. In this polemical context Augustine depicts Manicheism within the whole of justice as a false whole. Again, Augustine did not write a treatise *De Iustitia*, and so when one considers justice in Augustine one must take into account the contexts in which it appears. Perhaps the main advantage of the procedure we have followed in this thesis over a more general treatment of justice, is to have kept within the context of two specific arguments and, hopefully, to have brought out both their detail and the particular character that their contexts give them.¹¹³

Introduction - Endnotes

1. ... *utrum iusti existimandi essent qui habent uxores multas simul et occiderent homines et sacrificarent de animalibus.*
Confessiones III, vii, 12 (45, 22-24).
2. Throughout this thesis we will be using the terms "whole" and "wholes" to indicate an order of parts that is complete in itself and determines its parts. We will be speaking of the "whole of nature", the "whole of custom", the "whole of God's rule", and of intellectual and religious "wholes". This way of thinking about things comes from Augustine himself, who introduces it as his own way of thinking about Manicheism and justice in *Confessions* III, viii, as we will show in our commentary on that chapter in our Chapter I. We are adopting his way of speaking in an effort to genuinely enter into his thought. A greater clarity about what "wholes" are and why Augustine thinks about Manicheism and justice in this way must depend on the unfolding of Augustine's argument. See the comments in our Introduction, p.37-38 and in the Conclusion.
3. *Contra Faustum* XXII, 47.
4. *Confessiones* III, viii, 15 (48, 3-5).
5. For Mani's life see the accounts of H.-C. Puech, *Le Manichéisme: Son Fondateur - Sa Doctrine*, Paris, Civilisations Du Sud, 1949; L. J. R. Ort, *Mani: A Religio - Historical Description of his Personality*, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1967. The French scholar H.-C. Puech was a great authority on Manicheism and other forms of gnosticism. His book on Mani and Manicheism is still a good overall account because it sets out a lot of the evidence in a reasonable compass. L. J. R. Ort's book gives a fuller account of the sources and the history of the secondary literature. Since the publication of both of these books, the *Cologne Mani Codex* has shown scholars that the formative influence of Christianity on Mani was greater than had been previously thought: *The Cologne Mani Codex*, translated by R. Cameron and A. J. Dewey, Missoula, Montana, Scholars Press, 1979. See the assessment by L. Koenen: "Augustine and Manicheism in Light of the Cologne Mani Codex", *Illinois Classical Studies*, vol. III, Urbana, Ill., University of Illinois Press, 1978.
6. W. H. C. Frend, "The Gnostic - Manichean Tradition in Roman North Africa", *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* IV, 1953, p. 16.
7. H.-C. Puech, *Manichéisme: Son Fondateur - Sa Doctrine*, p. 61- 68.
8. See Ort for an account of the history of the literature on this subject, p. 1-20.
9. See note 10. See also the comments of François Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, Paris, Études Augustiniennes, 1978, vol. II, p. 25-26, p. 213-214. The French scholar François Decret has written on Manicheism in

general and extensively on Augustine's relation to Manicheism and the history of North African Manicheism. He is the preeminent scholar in the area of Augustine and Manicheism. We will have occasion to dispute some of his conclusions below; see the following sub-section of our Introduction: *Augustine's Criticism of Manicheism and its Critics*, p. 20-35.

10. For instance L. H. Grondijs in "Analyse du Manichéisme Numidien au IVe Siècle", *Augustinus Magister*, vol. III, Paris, Études Augustiniennes, 1954, p. 391-410.
11. See again F. Decret *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, vol. II, p. 25-26.
12. See F. Decret *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, vol. I, p. 348. Also L. Koenen, "Augustine and Manicheism in Light of the Cologne Mani Codex", p. 195.
13. François Decret's criticisms of Augustine's grasp of the spirit of Manicheism are discussed below, p. 20-35.
14. "Myth" and "mythology" are not used here in any sense which would presuppose the truth or falsehood of the Manichean teachings.
15. *Contra Faustum* II, 3-5.
16. See *Confessiones* III, vi, 11 (44, 26-27).
17. See H.-C. Puech, *Sur le Manichéisme et Autre Essais*, Paris, Flammarion, 1979, p. 33, 48, 71, note 276.
18. *Contra Faustum* XX, 2, 11. See the references in the previous note and F. Decret *L'Afrique Manichéenne* p. 217-218.
19. See H.-C. Puech, *Sur le Manichéisme*, p. 7-28.
20. Puech, *Sur le Manichéisme*, p. 26, 76.
21. A short account of the three seals can be found in J.J. O'Meara, *The Young Augustine*, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1954, p. 75-77. J.J. O'Meara, the noted Irish Augustinian scholar, has written extensively on Augustine and the early Medieval Augustinian tradition. More detail and references can be found in François Decret, *Aspects du Manichéisme Dans L'Afrique Romaine*, Paris, Études Augustiniennes, 1970, p. 301-310.
22. *Confessiones* III, X. We discuss the Auditors and Elect on p.8 of the Introduction. See Prosper Alfarcic, *L'Évolution Intellectuelle de Saint Augustin*, Paris, Emile Nourry, 1918, p. 152-153 for a discussion of the food issue. This study by Alfarcic, a classic of 20th century Augustinian scholarship, was an important contribution to the debate over whether Augustine's conversion was to neo-Platonism or Christianity. An account of this debate can be found in J. J. O'Meara's introduction to: *Augustine, Against The Academics*, ancient Christian Writers Series, vol. 12,

- Westminster, Md., 1950, p. 19ff. Alfaric's book is still one of the most thorough accounts of Augustine's Manichean period.
23. Alfaric, *L'Evolution Intellectuelle*, p. 136-138.
 24. These nine years represent the time Augustine spent as a convinced Manichee. See C.J. Starnes, *Augustine's Conversion: A Guide to the Argument of Confessions I - IX*, Waterloo, Ontario, Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1990., p.106, n.1
 25. See the discussion of scholarship concerning this point in François Decret, *Aspects Du Manichéisme Dans L'Afrique Romaine*, p. 27-38. We are not concerned in our discussion with the precise historical details of Augustine's conversion to Manicheism. See the account of A. Solignac in the B.A. edition of the *Confessions*, vol. I, 1962, p. 126, n.1
 26. This categorization was suggested by the somewhat different account of A. Solignac in the introduction to the B.A. edition of the *Confessions*. Solignac writes: "Augustin alliait en son tempérament deux tendances complémentaires: une tendance spéculative, avec une exigence critique très marquée; une tendance religieuse et mystique avec le désir de goûter intimement les réalités divines." *Les Confessions*, B.A., vol. I, p. 126. For our use of the terms "philosophical and religious whole", see Introduction, note 2.
 27. See *De Duabus Animabus* ix, 11, and our discussion of it below, p. 19.
 28. L. J. R. Ort, *Mani: A Religio - Historical Description of His Personality*, p. 134.
 29. See also *De Libero Arbitrio* I, ii, 4, on how the problem of evil prompted Augustine to join the Manichees.
 30. *Nosti enim, Honorate, non aliam ob causam nos in tales homines incidisse, nisi quod se dicebant, terribili auctoritate separata, mera et simplici ratione eos qui se audire vellent introducturos ad Deum, et errore omni liberaturos. De Utilitate Credendi* 1, 2.
 31. Augustine says that he found the Scriptures unworthy of comparison with Cicero for "dignity" (eloquence)...*sed visa est mihi indigna, quam Tullianae dignitati compararem. Confessiones* III, v, 9 (42, 21-22)
 32. *et ecce video rem non comperatam superbis neque nudatam pueris, sed incessu humilem, successu excelsam et velatam mysteriis, et non eram ego talis, ut intrare in eam possem aut inclinare cervicem ad eius gressus... tumor enim meus refugiebat modum eius et acies mea non penetrabat interiora eius. Confessiones* III, vi, 9 (42, 15-19, 22-24). *Modum* has been translated "method" to bring out the sense that Augustine found in the Scriptures a particular propaedeutic and paedagogical approach. The word probably carries the sense of "style" as well.

33. *Ad hoc valet, quod scriptum est: concupisti sapientiam, serva mandata et dominus praebet illam tibi... Contra Faustum XXII, 53 (647, 18-19).*
34. *Sermo 51, iv, 5.*
35. See, for example, *Contra Faustum XXXII, 7*. On interpolations see also *Contra Faustum XI, 1 and 2*. On this whole subject of Augustine's defence of the Bible, see C. Douais, *Saint Augustin et la Bible*, Revue Biblique, vol. 3, 1894, p. 110-135, p. 410-432. Douais provides a summary of the different arguments.
36. François Decret, *Aspects du Manichéisme*, p. 123-124.
37. See the article of C. Douais, *Saint Augustin et la Bible*, referred to in note 35.
38. *Nesciebam enim aliud, vere quod est, et quasi acutule movebar, ut suffragarer stultis deceptoribus, cum a me quaerent, unde malum et utra forma corporea deus fineretur et haberet capillos et ungues et utrum iusti existimandi essent qui haberent uxores multas simul et occiderent homines et sacrificarent de animalibus. Confessiones III, vii, 12 (45, 18-23).*
39. *... hoc tamen solo delectabar in illa exhortatione, quod non illam aut illam sectam, sed ipsam quaecumque esset sapientiam ut diligerem... Confessiones III, iv, 8 (42, 1-4).*
40. *... quaedam noxia victoria pene mihi semper in disputationibus proveniebat disserenti cum christianis imperitis, sed tamen fidem suam certatim, ut quisque posset defendere molientibus. Quo successu cereberrimo gliscebat adolescentis animositas, et impetu suo in pervicaciae magnum malum imprudenter vergebat. Quod altercandi genus quia post eorum auditionem aggressus eram, quidquid meo vel qualicumque ingenio vel aliis lectionibus poteram, solis illis libentissime tribuebam. Ita ex illorum sermonibus ardor in certamina, ex certaminum proventu amor in illos quotidie novabatur. Ex quo accedebat ut quidquid dicerent, miris quibusdam morbis, non quia sciebam, sed quia optabam verum esse, pro vero approbarem. De Duabus Animabus IX, 11.*
41. *... quia te putabam, manducabam, non avide quidem, quia nec sapiebas in ore meo sicuti es... Confessiones III, vi, 10 (43, 24-26).*
42. *et ieram per vias pravas superstitione sacrilega, non quidem certus in ea, sed quasi praeponens eam ceteris, quae non pie quaerebam, sed inimice oppugnabam. Confessiones VIII, vii, 17 (168, 10-13).*
43. Such quotations have led some scholars to deny that Augustine was ever a Manichee at all. See note 24.
44. *... excitabar sermone illo et accendebar et ardebam, et hoc solum me in tanta flagrantia refrangebat, quod nomen Christi non erat ibi, quoniam hoc nomen secundum misericordiam tuam, domine, hoc nomen salvatoris mei, filii tui, in ipso adhuc lacte matris tenerum cor meum pie biberat et alte*

retinebat, et quidquid sine hoc nomine fuisset quamvis litteratum et expolitum et veridicum, non me totum rapiebat. Confessiones III, iv, 8 (42, 5-13). See the discussion of this passage in Starnes, Augustine's Conversion, p.61-62

45. *Et quaerebam viam comparandi roboris, quod esset idoneum ad fruendum te, nec inveniebam, donec amplecterer mediatorem dei et hominum, hominem Christum Iesum... Confessiones VII, xviii, 24 (146, 23-26)*
46. From the beginnings of his philosophical quest, Augustine always sought Wisdom as a religious "way", and not just as a divine reality. He sought religious mediation first as a Manichee, then as a catholic catachumen. Christ was associated with both of these religious affiliations.
47. *Itaque incidi in homines superbe delirantes, carnales nimis et loquaces, in quorum ore laquei diaboli et viscum confectum conmixtione syllabarum nominis tui et domini Iesu Christi et paracliti consolatoris nostri spiritus sancti... et dicebant: "veritas et veritas" et multum eam dicebant mihi, et nusquam erat in eis... Confessiones III, vi, 10 (42, 27-43, 6).*
48. W. H. C. Frend argues that becoming a Manichee would not have meant renouncing Christianity for Augustine: W.H.C Frend, "The Gnostic - Manichean Tradition in Roman North Africa", *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vol. IV, 1953, p. 13-26.
49. *... loquebantur non de te tantum, qui vere veritas es, sed etiam de istis elementis mundi, creatura tua... Confessiones III, vi, 10 (43, 6-8).* On the claim to completeness of Manichean science see H.-C. Puech, *Sur le Manichéisme*, p. 30.
50. *Confessiones V, iii-vii.* A. Solignac suggests much the same thing in his Introduction to the B.A. edition, p. 125.
51. Various aspects of the institutional side of Manicheism are discussed in H.-C. Puech *Sur le Manichéisme* and other works cited here. Decret notes the tension between the other- worldliness of the Manichean gnosis and the mediating Manichean religious institutions: *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 267-270.
52. See Puech *Sur le Manichéisme*, p. 54, 95. See also Puech, *Le Manichéisme: Son Fondateur - Sa Doctrine*, p. 71-72 and notes 277 and 278.
53. *Confessiones VI, vii, 12 (111, 4-7)*
54. *Sed me duo quaedam maxime, quae incautam illam aetatem facile capiunt, per admirabiles attrivere circuitus; quorum est unum familiaritas, nescio quomodo repens quadam imagine bonitatis, tamquam sinuosum aliquod vinculum multipliciter collo involutum. De Duabus Animabus IX, 11.*
55. *maxime quippe me reparabant atque recreabant aliorum amicorum solacia, cum quibus amabam quod pro te amabam, et hoc erat ingens fabula et*

longum mendacium, cuius adulterina confrictione corrumpebatur mens nostra pruriens in auribus, sed illa mihi fabula non moriebatur, si quis amicorum meorum moreretur. Confessiones IV, viii, 13 (63, 23-64, 2).

56. These are generally dated at 388 B.C. They were written before Augustine returned to North Africa. See Decret *L'Afrique Manichéene*, p. 20.
57. This question was first posed by Augustine's friend Nebridius at Carthage when they were both Manichees. However Augustine could not see the full force of it until he moved towards Platonism. *Confessiones VII, ii, 3.*
58. See *Contra Fortunatum* 33-37, *Contra Felicem* II, xv.
59. *Confessiones VII, xi-xvi; De Natura Boni I-XIX.* Augustine drew on his knowledge of neo-Platonism for this account. See G. R. Evans, *Augustine on Evil*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982, p. 29-36. Also *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti XXIX-XXXI.*
60. See *De Natura Boni XLI, De Moribus Manichaeorum IX.*
61. *Confessiones V, x, 18; Confessiones VIII, x, 22-24.*
62. *De Duabus Animabus X-XIV.* Scholars question whether Augustine is accurately representing the Manichean teaching by calling the good and evil natures at work in humanity "two souls". It seems that the Manichees would not have called the evil nature a second soul - see Puech, *Sur le Manichéisme*, p.53. Whether Augustine was mistaken on this point or whether he was saying, in effect, that since the Manichees gave all the attributes of the soul to the evil nature they might as well teach that there are two souls is not relevant to our discussion. François Decret makes the case against Augustine - *L'Afrique Manichéene*, p. 323-336.
63. See *Epistula XXIV*, where Paulinus of Nola refers to Augustine's anti-Manichean Pentateuch - five early treatises against the Manichees, of which *De Libero Arbitrio* is generally reckoned to be one. On the question of evil and free will see G. R. Evans, *Augustine on Evil*, p. 112-118.
64. *... quae me seduxit, quia invenit foris habitantem in oculo carnis meae et talia ruminantem apud me, qualia per illum verassem. Confessiones III, vi, 11 (45, 15-17).*
65. *Confessiones III, vi, 10 (42, 27).*
66. *vestrae autem vanitati quid placuit in sole ponere virtutem filii et in luna sapientiam? ... cum per huiusmodi locos nisi corpora dividi separarique non possint. quod si sciretis, numquam stulto insanoque phantasmate tantas fabulas texeritis ... utcumque invenissent ista figmenta verisimilitudinis nebulam hominibus carnalibus et animalibus decipiendis, qui nihil putant esse, nisi quod corporale cogitaverint... Contra Faustum XX, 8(542, 17-5431).* On the Manichees' sensible conception of God see *De Moribus Manichaeorum XVI, 39-43; De Vera Religione XVI, 30.* See also Augustine's frequent assertions that he remained in the Manichean

position because he did not know how to think of a spiritual substance:
Confessiones IV, ii, 3; IV, xv, 24; IV, xvi, 29-31; V, x, 19.

67. nihil mali putare potuisti, nisi quo tuus carnalis sensus offensus est, sicut serpentem, ignem, venenum et similia, nec aliquid boni, nisi quod eundem tuum carnalem sensum aliqua iucunditate permulsit, sicut saporum iucunditas et odorum suavitas et lucis huius aspectus... *Contra Faustum* XXXII, 20(782, 1-5). See also *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* XXXII.
68. *Hic fortasse quis dicat: Unde ipsa peccata, et omnino unde malum? Si ab homine, unde homo? Si ab angelo, unde angelus? Quos ex Deo esse cum dicitur, quamvis recte vereque dicitur, videntur tamen imperitis et minus valentibus acriter res abditas intueri, quasi per quamdam catenam ad Deum mala et peccata connecti. De Duabus Animabus* VIII, 10.
69. François Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, vol. II, p. 26-27.
70. See note 66.
71. *et apponebantur adhuc mihi in illis ferculis phantasmata splendida, quibus iam melius erat amare istum solem saltem istis oculis verum quam illa falsa animo decepto per oculos. Confessiones* III, vi, 10 (43, 20-24). See Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 317, On the precise mythic character of sun and moon, see *Contra Faustum*, XX, 6.
72. Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 317.
73. Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 309-312.
74. Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 320.
75. Pourquoi vouloir exiger d'une doctrine, pour que lui soit conféré le label de "spiritualiste", d'avoir à se conformer aux critères des catégories de Platon et d'Aristote? Le Perse Mani n'a pas proposé son enseignement à travers les concepts philosophiques et selon les règles des démonstrations "classiques", mais il emprunte les voies de la Gnose et, au lieu du raisonnement, il recourt au mythe. *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 321-322.
76. ...ad quam percipiendam nihil magis impedire, quam vitam libidinibus deditam et falsas imagines rerum sensibilibus, quae nobis ad hoc sensibili mundo per corpus impressae, varias opiniones erroresque generarent...
De Vera Religione III, 3.
77. Decret notes Augustine's characterization of the Manichean teachings as *phantasmata* (*L'Afrique Manichéenne* p. 314-315) but thinks his charge against the Manichees is of having a simply material conception of God. *Phantasmata* are fantastic images. See our chapter I, part I.
78. *De Moribus Manichaeorum* XVII, 55; *De Utilitate Credendi* VI, 13; *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti* XIV, 18. See Decret *L'Afrique Manichéenne* p. 245-247.

79. ... la verité *enodata*, que Mani est venue enseigner, s'exprime-t-elle en notions rationnelles, intégrables telles quelles dans un système scientifique, ou au contraire adopte-t-elle la structure du mythe qui s'adresse non point à l'intelligence... mais à la méditation du *nous*? Ce moi intérieur n'est-il pas le seul à pouvoir pénétrer la signification du mythe qui ne se dévoile pas en théorèmes ou en lois de *mathematici* mais en vision de *gnose*? *Aspects du Manichéisme*, p. 222.
80. *volebam enim eorum quae non viderem ita me certum fieri, ut certus essem, quod septem et tria decem sint. Confessiones VI, iv, 6 (104, 17-19).*
81. Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 264.
82. ...*quia sunt quaedam res quae exponi sic non possunt ut intelligantur: excedit enim divina ratio mortalium pectora: utputa hoc ipsum, quomodo sint duae naturae, aut quare pugnaverit qui nihil poterat pati...* *Epistula Secundini*, 6.
83. Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 261; see *Contra Felicem I, 16*.
84. Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 266. On the Manichean conception of God see *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 317-320; on the gnostic character of Manichéisme, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 264-266.
85. Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 266.
86. *Si dicit sibi esse revelatum a Spiritu sancto, suamque mentem divinitus illustratam, ut ea quae dicit, certa et manifesta cognosceret; ipse significat quid intersit inter cognoscere et credere ipse enim cognoscit, cui apertissime ista monstrantur: eis autem quibus haec narrat, non cognitionem insinuat, sed credulitatem suadet. Contra Epistolam Fundamenti XIV, 18.* Decret also quotes this passage but does not draw the same conclusion from it: *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 266.
87. *itane tu facie ad faciem vidisti regnantem regem sceptrigerum floreis coronis cinctum et deorum agmina et splenditene em magnum, sex vultus et ora ferentem micantemque lumine, et alterum regem honoris angelorum exercitibus circumdatum; et alterum adamantem heroam belligerum dextra hastam tenentem et sinistra clipeum; et alterum gloriosum regem tres rotas inpellentem, ignis, aquae et venti; et maximum Atlantem mundum ferentem humeris et eum genu flexo brachiis utrimque secus fulcientem? haec et alia mille portenta tu facie ad faciem vidisti, an haec tibi doctrina daemoniorum mendaciloquorum per ora deceptorum cantat et nescis?* *Contra Faustum XV, 6(428, 5-16).*
88. See Puech, *Essais sur le Manicheism*, p. 30.
89. For the use of this term see *Contra Fortunatum II, 20*. See also Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 262.

90. Decret addresses this question in his chapter "Les Voies de la Gnose", *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 259-289.
91. Decret notes this polemical appeal to reason in Faustus (*L'Afrique Manichéenne*, p. 260-261) but places it in no relation to the Manichean *gnosis*.
92. *Confessiones* III, vi, 10 (42, 27-43, 10).
93. *Confessiones* III, x, 18 (51, 9-14).
94. *non mihi eras aliquid solidum et firmum, cum de te cogebam. non enim tu eras, sed vanum phantasma et error meus erat deus meus. Confessiones* IV, vii, 12 (63, 2-5).
95. *Retractiones* II, vi and II, vii
96. Introduction to the B.A. edition of the *Confessiones*, p. 54.
97. Decret, *Aspects du Manichéisme*, p. 62-63.
98. *De Bono Coniugali* 33, 34; *De Musica* VI, xi, 32.
99. See P. Monceaux, *Le Manichéen Faustus de Milev, restitution de ses capitula*, Paris, 1929. See also J. P. Maher, "Saint Augustine and Manichean Cosmology", *Augustinian Studies* 10, 1979, p. 91-101, particularly p. 93.
100. Decret, *Aspects du Manichéisme*, p. 123-124.
101. *Contra Faustum* XV; XXII, 4.
102. *Contra Faustum* III.
103. See for instance *De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae* XVII, 30
104. *De Vera Religione* iii,3; x, 18; xx, 40; xxiv, 64
105. *...Deus, omnia quae condidit, gradibus suis condidit, generibusque distinxit, coelestia atque terrena, immortalia atque mortalia, et omnia bona in suo genere condidit: animam habentem liberum arbitrium, sub se ipso et supra caetera collocavit; ut si serviret superiori, dominaretur inferiori; si autem offenderet superiorem, poenam ex inferiore sentiret. Contra Felicem* II, iv
106. A very helpful summary of the ancient tradition about justice in relation to Augustine's conception is found in: R.D. Crouse, "The Augustinian Background of St. Anselm's Concept *Iustitia*", *Canadian Journal of Theology*, Vol. IV
107. R.D. Crouse, "The Augustinian Background of St. Anselm's Concept *Iustitia*", p. 116-117

108. *De Trinitate*, B.A. vol. 16, note 11, p. 583
109. Eugene TeSelle, "Towards an Augustinian Politics" *Journal of Religious Ethics* 16, p. 89, Spring 1988.
110. *Quid iustitia, cuius munus est sua cuique tribuere (unde fit in ipso homine quidam iustus ordo naturae, ut anima subdatur Deo et animae caro, ac per hoc Deo et anima et caro)... De Civitate Dei* XIX, iv, 4
111. *Pax itaque corporis est ordinata temperatura partium, pax animae irrationalis ordinata requies appetitionum, pax animae rationalis ordinata cognitionis actionisque consensus, pax corporis et animae ordinata vita et salus animantis, pax hominis mortalis et Dei ordinata in fide sub aeterna lege oboedientia...* *De Civitate Dei* XIX, xiii, 1
112. For a more detailed discussion of the structure and meaning of *De Civitate Dei* XIX, see Oliver O'Donovan, "Augustine's City of God XIX and Western Political Thought", *Dionysius* XI, 1987, p. 89-110
113. A further question that might be asked is the relation of the argument about justice to the overall pattern of Augustine's thought. That there is a close relation can be seen if one brings the argument of this thesis in relation to other treatments of Augustine's thought and writings. Augustine's pattern of thought is elucidated in great detail and with particular relevance to this thesis in C. J. Starnes, *Augustine's Conversion*, and the view set forth in that book has been the genesis of this study. R. D. Crouse's articles on Augustine, such as "Recurrens in te unum: The Pattern of Saint Augustine's Confessions" and "St. Augustine's "De Trinitate: Philosophical Method" will be of assistance in a more extended consideration. The Augustinian pattern of "ab exterioribus ad interiora, ab inferioribus ad superiora" that Dr. Crouse notes in the former article, and treats more thoroughly in the second, is the pattern that underlies the argument we are considering. See C. J. Starnes, *Augustine's Conversion : A Guide to the Argument of Confessions I - IX*, Waterloo, Ontario, Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1990. Also: R. D. Crouse, *Recurrens in te unum: The Pattern of Saint Augustine's Confessions*", *Studia Patristica* vol. XIV, Berlin Akademie-Verlag, 1976, p. 389-392; R. D. Crouse, "St. Augustine's *De Trinitate* : Philosophical Method.", E. A. Livingstone, ed., *Studia Patristica*, Vol. XVI, Berlin, 1985. The following article sets Augustine's idea of justice in the context of the tradition of thought about justice: R.D. Crouse, "The Augustinian Background of St. Anselm's Concept *Iustitia*.", *Canadian Journal of Theology*, IV

Chapter I - The Elements of the Argument
In the Confessions

Part 1 - The Hierarchy of Natures (Book III, Chapter vi)

Introduction

Augustine's discussion of his Manichean period in the *Confessions* does not begin the way we might expect it to. He gives us neither a detailed account of how he became a Manichee nor a general introduction to what Manicheism is. Rather he begins with an argument against Manicheism, specifically on the question of the nature of justice. In Book III, chapter vi, he outlines a hierarchy of natures and places the Manichean myths at the very bottom of that hierarchy. He also briefly states why the Manichean teachings appealed to him. In chapter vii he addresses the Manichean charge that much of the Old Testament is immoral and he raises the question of the nature of justice. In chapters viii-x he continues his discussion of justice, outlining his own view and coming to the conclusion that Manichean belief is itself unjust. This discussion of justice is connected with, and assumes, the hierarchy of natures given in chapter vi.

The Manichean Cosmology

Book III, chapter vi, begins with a discussion of the nature of the teachings that the Manichees presented to Augustine to satisfy his desire for the truth:

O truth, truth, how deeply then did the marrow of my soul pant for you, when they sounded your name to me, with voice alone and with many and huge books. These were the plates on which they served me, who hungered for you, the sun and moon, beautiful works of yours, but your works nevertheless, not you, nor themselves the highest sort of works. For your spiritual works are higher than these corporeal things though bright and celestial.¹

Confessiones III, vi, 10.

In these lines, Augustine says that the Manichees "served me the sun and moon". He is referring to the Manichean cosmology, in particular to the Manichean doctrine that the sun and moon were the vehicles in which the divine particles of light that had been trapped in the world were carried back to God.² The "sun and moon", the particles of light, the Kingdom of Light and Darkness, are all elements in a complex Manichean cosmology and mythology which the Manichees presented to Augustine when he first joined them.³

However, Augustine does not give us an account of the Manichean teachings. Instead, he begins to locate the objects of this cosmological and mythological system in a hierarchy of natures. In the passage we just quoted, he remarks that the sun and moon, far from being God, are not even the highest of created works. He goes on to say that the "sun and moon" of Manichean mythology, were not the real sun and moon of the senses but "glittering fantasies" (*splendida phantasmata*).⁴ They are the false objects of a "soul deceived through the eyes" (... *illa falsa animo decepto per oculos*).⁵ Then Augustine proceeds to outline the complete hierarchy or order (these terms will be used synonymously) of natures and to place the objects of the Manichean cosmology in it. This hierarchy has not appeared in the argument of the *Confessions* before. It is laid down or assumed and is the basis for the argument that follows.

The Three Criteria

Augustine develops this hierarchy of natures according to three criteria. The first is *priority*. As we saw above, God's "spiritual works" are said to be "higher" than the sun and moon. The Latin word is *priora* and the sense is of something higher in rank. The second criterion is *certainry*. Augustine writes of the Manichean cosmology:

... These were corporeal fantasies, than which these true bodies are more certain, which we see with corporeal vision.⁶
Confessiones III, vi, 10.

The third criterion is put in terms of the *nourishment* afforded by each level of nature:

Because I supposed that they were You I chewed on them... nor was I nourished by them, but I was rather exhausted by them.⁷
Confessiones III, vi, 10.

With these three criteria of *priority*, *certainly* and *nourishment* Augustine lays out the hierarchy of natures. At the two extreme points of this hierarchy are God and the Manichean cosmology. God is the true nourishment of the soul; the Manichean cosmology is "exhausting" rather than nourishing. God is absolutely certain because He is unchanging Truth:

... You yourself, the Truth, in whom is no change nor shadow of motion.⁸
Confessiones III, vi, 10.

The Manichean cosmology is the least certain of things:

... [the Manichean myths] were corporeal fantasies, false bodies, than which these true bodies are more certain which we see with physical sight; we see these things along with animals and birds and they are more certain than when we imagine them. Again we imagine them more certainly than when from them we believe in other things, grander and infinite which have absolutely no existence.⁹
Confessiones III, vi, 10.

Finally, God is the first and highest, whereas the Manichean mythology is the *profunda inferi* - the depths of the pit.¹⁰

These three criteria of priority, certainty, and nourishment together determine the place of each level of nature in the order. Things have a priority which depends on their degree of certainty, and their certainty determines the kind of nourishment they afford.

Augustine says:

... it would have been better to love this sun which is at least true to these eyes than those things that were false to a soul deceived through the eyes.¹¹ *Confessiones* III, vi, 10.

He means that it would have been better to love and worship the physical sun because it is a more certain, and thus higher, nature than the Manichean cosmological fantasies. What is more certain and higher affords more "nourishment" to the soul that loves it. The Manichean "sun and moon" did not nourish but rather "exhausted" because they were the lowest and least certain level of nature.

The Hierarchy of Natures

First in the hierarchy is the unchanging Truth of God. It is He on whom Augustine really desires to feed and he says that he took up the Manichean fantasies because he thought they were the truth about God:

... and because I supposed [they were] You, I chewed upon [them]...¹² *Confessiones* III, vi, 10.

Then come the "spiritual works", which we cannot see with the eyes:

But you my love... are not these bodies which we see, although in the heavens, nor those things which we do not see there...¹³ *Confessiones* III, vi, 10.

For Augustine there is a whole realm of objects which are objects for the mind but not the senses. He discusses this realm in Book XII of the *Confessions* where he calls it the "heaven of heavens".¹⁴ It is created and therefore less than God, but higher and more certain than sensible things.

Next comes the visible, physical creation which we share with animals and birds. After that comes the imaginary forms of real physical objects. Even these are higher and more certain than imaginary forms which do not correspond to existing sensible things:

Again we imagine [existing sensible objects] more certainly than when we believe from them in other things, grander and infinite, which have absolutely no existence.¹⁵

Confessiones III, vi, 10.

Augustine calls these last and least things *phantasmata*.¹⁶ They are lower than imagined sense objects because they have no existing reality to which they must conform. Therefore they are even more changeable than imagined sense objects and are less certain and lower in the hierarchy of natures.

There is one other level of nature that Augustine speaks of in chapter vi. That is the soul. Of it Augustine says:

... better is the life of bodies and more certain than bodies...¹⁷

Confessiones III, vi, 10.

That is to say, the soul, the "life of bodies", is higher and more certain than the body.

However Augustine does not say here where the soul lies in relation to the "spiritual works". We have seen that the soul is higher than the body, and Augustine frequently says that the soul is lower than God, because of its mutability.¹⁸ It would seem to belong between the sensible creation and the "heaven of heavens" which, though mutable in nature, is immutable in fact.¹⁹

The order of natures then, is headed by the immutable Truth of God, followed by i) the "spiritual works", ii) the soul, iii) the sensible world, iv) imagined sensible objects and v) *phantasmata* or the imaginary forms of things that do not exist. The different levels of the hierarchy are ranked according to their degree of certainty. Their priority and degree of certainty determines the degree of "nourishment" they provide. Thus Augustine writes about the least certain objects, the *phantasmata*:

On such empty things I then fed, and I was not fed.²⁰

Confessiones III, vi, 10

The phantasmata are not "nourishing" because they are the lowest and least certain of natures. Certainty is the degree of unchangingness. Highest is God "in whom is no change nor shadow of motion". This highest degree of unchangingness is the Truth, which is identified with God - *te ipsam Veritas*.²¹

The relation of the hungry soul and the food it needs is also expressed as the soul's love and the object of its love. We already saw this when we quoted Augustine saying it would have been better to "love this sun and moon which is true to these eyes" than the Manichean *phantasmata*. God is the pre-eminent object of love and our love of God is like nourishment, which gives the soul strength. Thus Augustine calls to God as the object of his love and his soul's nourishment:

... You, my love, for whom I faint, that I would be
strong...²² *Confessiones* III, vi, 10.

Finally God, whom Augustine desires to feed on and to love, is identified with life:

But neither are You the soul, which is the life of bodies, but
You are the life of souls, the life of lives, living Yourself and
You are not changed, O life of my soul.²³
Confessiones III, vi, 10.

As the object of the soul's love and the soul's nourishment, God becomes the life of the soul.

These three criteria of priority, certainty, and nourishment form one of the Trinitarian images that proliferate in the works of Augustine.²⁴ They are reflections of the Trinitarian nature of God in the created order. One example is the three lusts in *Confessiones* III, viii (49, 9-10): the *libido principandi et spectandi et sentiendi*; the lust of ruling, seeing, and feeling. Augustine got this tri-partite division of sins from 1 John 2,16 and it appears with great frequency in his works.²⁵ However the classic exposition of the Trinitarian image in man in the *Confessiones* is in Book XIII, chapter ix:

I would like men to consider these three things in their own selves. These three things are far distant from that Trinity but I speak of them so that they may exercise themselves and verify and know how far away they are. I speak of these three: being, knowing, and willing. For I am and I know and I will: I am knowing and willing, and I know that I am and will, and I will to be and know. Let him see who is able how there is an inseparable life of these three and one life, one mind and one essence, and finally how there is an inseparable distinction, but nevertheless a distinction.²⁶
Confessiones XIII, ix, 12.

The Trinitarian images including the image of the three lusts and the three criteria of priority, certainty, and nourishment, all correspond to this fundamental pattern of being, knowing, and willing or loving.²⁷

The criterion of *priority*, determined by *certainty* or the degree of unchangingness, corresponds to being. Augustine makes this connection between being and unchangingness in his *De Moribus Manichaeorum*:

That [being] exists in the highest sense of the word which continues always the same.²⁸ *De Moribus Manichaeorum I*

Thus, the *priority* at each level corresponds to its being. The *certainty* or degree of unchangingness corresponds to the truth of each nature and thus to knowing. As we move up the hierarchy each nature, by being more certain and unchanging, becomes more knowable, till we reach the unchanging truth of God. The aspect of "nourishment" or love, corresponds to willing or loving.

If these identifications are correct then we have a hierarchy of natures with each nature having three aspects. First, it has a being which is of higher or lower degree. Second, the degree of being is determined by the degree of truth or certainty. Finally the rank of each nature according to the first two aspects determines its quality as an object of love, which is the degree of nourishment it affords.

Poetic Images and Manichean Images

Augustine now introduces a further distinction between poetic *phantasmata* and the Manichean *phantasmata*. This passage, paragraph 11, has the air of being the culmination, or rather the furthest point of descent, of the argument of the chapter. Augustine introduces it with an image drawn from the story of the Prodigal Son, which he interprets allegorically:

Where were You then for me and how far away? I was
journeying far from You, excluded even from the husks
belonging to the pigs, which I fed with those husks.²⁹
Confessiones III, vi, 11.

In this image, the husks that the Prodigal Son feeds the pigs are likened to the fantastic poetic images which Augustine, as a teacher of rhetoric, fed to his students. But, says Augustine, he himself was excluded even from such meagre fare. The images of the Manichees are still further removed from the truth than poetic images because they are believed:

... but even if I declaimed about Medea in flight, I did not
assert it as true, even if I heard it declaimed, I did not believe
it; but these things I believed. Alas, alas, by what steps I
was led down into the depths of the pit.³⁰
Confessiones III, vi, 11.

Augustine draws a sharp distinction between the poetic *phantasmata* and the Manichean *phantasmata*, because the former are not believed to be true, whereas the latter are.

The basis of this distinction is the criterion of truth or certainty. The poetic *phantasmata*, such as "Medea in flight", and the Manichean *phantasmata* are both imaginary forms but the difference in the way they are thought of means that they differ in the kind of "nourishment" they afford the soul. The poetic images are only "husks" fit for pigs. The

Manichean images are even less nourishing because they are falsely thought to be the truth about things.

It might seem that Augustine makes too sharp a distinction here. The most fundamental fact about these two different kinds of *phantasmata* would seem to be that they are both images. If that is their essential nature, then what is believed about them would not seem to affect their common essence. However, in Augustine's hierarchy of natures, the essential nature of things is based on the three criteria of being, truth, and love or nourishment. Thus the distinction between the two kinds of images is an essential one. The soul has a radically different relationship to the two different kinds of *phantasmata*.

The Soul and the Manichean Images

The argument of *Confessions* III, vi leads up to Augustine's statement that at the time of his Manichean involvement, he was "in the depths of the pit". That is to say that in his soul Augustine had a kind of essential relation to the lowest level of the hierarchy of natures, as determined according to the three criteria. He alludes to this essential relation at the start of Book III, chapter vii, in a sentence that summarizes the argument of chapter vi:

[I could only see] with my eyes as far as a body and with my soul as far as a *phantasma*.³¹ *Confessiones* III, vii, 12.

The argument of chapter vi leads up to defining Augustine's relation to Manicheism as being fundamentally this relation of the soul to the level of nature represented by the Manichean cosmology and teaching - the lowest possible level.³²

At the end of chapter vi Augustine says how this relation of his soul to the lowest level of natures came about. He speaks in a number of ways. He says that his condition was one of needing truth:

[I was] labouring feverishly for lack of truth...³³
Confessiones III, vi, 11.

This would seem to be a reference to the fact that he mistakenly believed the Manichean images to be the truth. He says further that he came to this condition through "seeking God according to the senses" and not according to the "understanding of the mind" (*intellectus mentis*).³⁴ Augustine also uses the language of nourishment to describe his inordinate relation to the sensible, saying that he came to his position through being:

... outside, living in the eye of my flesh, ruminating on such things as I had swallowed through it.³⁵
Confessiones III, vi, 11.

This "lack of truth", this "seeking God according to the senses", this "ruminating on" the things of the senses, all led to the condition of ignorance that Augustine describes at the beginning of chapter vii:

For I did not know that other which truly is...³⁶
Confessiones III, vii, 12.

When Augustine says that he did not know "that other which truly is", Augustine is saying in other words what he says elsewhere repeatedly, that he did not know how to think of a spiritual substance and hence he was unable to think of God's nature: "that other which truly is".³⁷

These assertions must be understood against the background of Augustine's doctrine of illumination. For Augustine, the highest part of the mind, the intuitive reason (which he refers to as the *mens*, *intellectus mentis*, *acies mentis* and by other terms as well) is the faculty in which man is illuminated by the divine Truth and contemplates the intelligible realm.³⁸ However, Augustine says that he did not seek God according to this

faculty by which God is known, but "according to the senses". He expresses this same criticism of his condition during his Manichean period when he says in *Confessions*, Book IV, that he was "turned away" from the illuminating truth:

For I stood with my back to the light and my face toward those things that are illumined; therefore my face itself, by which I saw the things that are illumined, was not illumined.³⁹ *Confessiones* IV, xvi, 30.

In this quotation he says in another way that he did not seek the divine Truth according to the faculty by which it is found (which he here calls "my face") but was rather directed toward the sensible.

Thus when Augustine says that he sought God "according to the senses" rather than according to the "understanding of the mind" he is saying that his soul was not ordered in such a way that he would seek the truth according to the proper faculty of the *intellectus mentis*, but rather he sought it in the realm of the sensible. Furthermore, when he says that he was "labouring feverishly for lack of truth" he means that he sought truth in the wrong way because he did not know where he should seek it. The general character and nature of truth was unknown to him and this lack of understanding made it possible for him to believe he was finding the truth when in fact he was not. We will try to say more precisely what the sense of all this is in our Conclusion.

This diagnosis that Augustine gives for his condition as he entered into Manicheism is a thoroughly Platonic one. The soul is prevented from discovering God by its attachment to the sensible. The Platonic character of what Augustine is saying is confirmed if we consider what Augustine says about the Platonic vision of truth in *Confessions* VII. There are many indications that the condition he diagnoses here found at least a partial cure in the attaining of the Platonic vision of truth. In Book VII he says he learned to see

"above my mind, with the eye of my soul, the unchanging light of truth".⁴⁰ He learns to know God "with certainty through his interior sight".⁴¹ Whereas in Book III Augustine says that he could not know God because He was "more inward than my inwardness"⁴², in Book VII he says "I entered into my inwardness with Your guidance".⁴³ Thus in the Platonic vision of truth Augustine found a fulfillment of that longing which had mistakenly led him into Manicheism in the first place, the longing for "that which truly is".⁴⁴

Moreover in Book VII Augustine explicitly identifies the tendency away from the truth and toward the sensible that led him, in his Manichean period, to seek the truth "according to the senses". He calls it the "habit of the flesh" (*consuetudo carnalis*).⁴⁵ For him this "habit of the flesh" opposes the movement of the intuitive reason to grasp the truth. Thus when he speaks of "ruminating on" the things of the senses he is referring to the "habit of the flesh" which kept him directed toward and attached to the sensible so that he sought the truth in the form of sensible images.

Finally, Augustine also speaks as if there is something illicit and deceptive about the Manichean teachings. He uses an image drawn from the book of *Proverbs*, chapter 9:

I stumbled upon that shameless woman, lacking in prudence, in the allegory of Solomon, sitting on a seat in the doorway and saying; "eat secret bread with pleasure and drink sweet stolen water."⁴⁶ *Confessiones* III, vi, 11.

The "shameless woman" in *Proverbs* is a harlot seated on a porch, inviting an unwary man to a forbidden liaison. For Augustine, the "bold woman" is an image of the Manichees who had enticed him to the "depths of the pit".

This image of seduction and deception is taken up at the start of chapter vii:

For I did not know that other which truly is and I was subtly moved to assent to foolish deceivers when they asked me

where evil came from, and whether God had a corporeal form ... and whether those men were to be considered just who had many wives at the same time, and killed men, and sacrificed animals.⁴⁷ *Confessiones* III, vii, 12.

Augustine says that he was moved or seduced into becoming a Manichee by the Manichean polemic against Catholic Christianity. This was the "bold woman" of *Proverbs*. He speaks as if the inordinate relation of his soul to the sensible left him vulnerable to this kind of seduction:

[The shameless woman] seduced me because she found me living out of doors in the eye of my flesh, and ruminating on such things as I had swallowed through it.⁴⁸
Confessiones III, vi, 11.

The seduction by the Manichees left Augustine in the "depths of the pit", convinced that the truth lay in the Manichean images, yet unable to satisfy himself with them.

We will have to consider this whole complex of ideas from the end of chapter vi when we attempt to summarize Augustine's idea of justice in our Conclusion. Meanwhile let us briefly review what we have said about chapter vi.

Summary

We have been discussing the elements of the argument in *Confessions* III, vi. In chapter vi, Augustine sets out a hierarchy of natures, with God being the highest nature and the Manichean cosmological and mythological fantasies the lowest. The levels of the hierarchy of natures are determined according to three criteria: priority, certainty, and nourishment, which correspond to the Trinitarian image of being, truth, and love. The soul's fundamental relation to natures occurs under these three aspects of being, truth, and love. Augustine's becoming a Manichee has to do with an essential relation of his soul to the level of natures of the Manichean *phantasmata* - imaginary non-existent forms that are

believed to be true. This relation comes about because he was not seeking the truth by the faculty of intuitive reason. Rather his mind was attached to the sensible through the habit of the flesh and he sought the truth in the form of sensible images. This left Augustine open to being "seduced" by the Manichean polemic. Let us turn now to the elements of the argument of chapter vii.

Chapter I

Part II : The Whole of Custom and the Morality of the Old Testament (Book III, Chapter vii)

The Manichean Charges

Augustine begins chapter vii by recalling three questions that the Manichees posed when they persuaded him to believe their teachings:

For I did not know that other, which truly is, and I was subtly moved to assent to foolish deceivers when they asked me where evil came from, and whether God had a corporeal form and had hair and nails, and whether they were to be considered just men who had many wives at the same time, and killed men and sacrificed animals.⁴⁹

Confessiones III, vii, 12.

The questions that persuaded Augustine stem from three charges that the Manichees made against Catholic Christianity: that it could not account for the origin of evil, that it had an anthropomorphic conception of God, and that much in the Old Testament was immoral.⁵⁰ Two of these questions, about the origin of evil and the nature of God will be dealt with later in the *Confessions*, particularly in Book VII when Augustine discovers the Platonic conception of God. The third question about the morality of the Old Testament is taken up in the next three chapters. Augustine treats it by developing his own idea of justice by which to judge the figures of the Old Testament.

The kind of thing the Manichees said against the Old Testament is recorded at length in the quotations from Faustus that Augustine gives us in the *Contra Faustum*. The first charge is against the polygamy of various figures of the Old Testament. The second charge is against the killing in the Old Testament, whether in the wars of the people of Israel or in individual acts. The third charge is against the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament. It is evident from Augustine's response in *Confessions* III, chapter ix that the Manichees

attributed the polygamy of the patriarchs to lust, and the Old Testament killing to cruelty.⁵¹ Animal sacrifices were objected to because of their grossness and materiality and because of the Manichean strictures against killing animals and plants.⁵²

Augustine thinks it necessary to respond to these charges because, to at least some of his readers in the Roman world, these points would have been stumbling blocks to Christian faith. He responds that he himself had accepted these Manichean criticisms of the Old Testament because he did not know the *true justice, according to which customs are formed*:

And I did not know the true inner justice which judges not from custom but from the choice law of almighty God, by which are formed the customs of regions and times, for regions and times, when it is everywhere and always, not one way in one place and another in another, according to which Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and David, and all those that are praised by the mouth of God are just. They are judged to be evil by particular ages, measuring the universal customs of the human race from the part of their own custom...⁵³ *Confessiones* III, vii, 13.

Augustine says that those who criticize the morality of the Old Testament figures do not see the universal justice by which particular customs are formed, because they judge only according to their own customs. The true justice, the "choice law of almighty God" includes all changing particular customs within itself, though it is absolutely unchanging.

The Three Images

Augustine develops this idea of a divine law which determines the individual customs of particular times and places using four images: i) pieces of armour ii) a marketplace iii) a farm or household iv) the poetic art. He gives the first three images first:

[it is] as if someone ignorant of arms - (what piece was suited for each body part) should wish to cover the head

with a greave or to be shod with a helmet, and complain that they do not fit, or as if someone should be angry that he was not allowed to sell something in the afternoon when business was forbidden, because on the same day it was permitted in the morning, or as if he should see something handled by a certain servant which the servant who handled the cups in the same household would not be permitted to handle, or something done behind the barn which is prohibited at the table, and he should be indignant that, when it is one household and one family, the same thing is not allowed for everyone in every place.⁵⁴ *Confessiones* III, vii, 13.

The three images are: i) different pieces of armour which fit different parts of the body, ii) a market-place in which business is forbidden in the afternoon which is permitted in the morning, and iii) a household or farm in which some servants do things which the servants who wait at table do not do, and things are done behind the barn which are not allowed at the table. The Manichees are said to be like those who, in these different cases, cannot accept the distribution of different laws, offices, and functions. They cannot see that differing human customs are similarly distributed according to an overall governing order.

The third of these three images corresponds to the objection of the Manichees to the Old Testament sacrifices. The "servants who handle things" are the ministers of the Old Testament who handle the sacrifices; the "servant who handles the cups" is the minister of the New Testament who offers the sacrifice of the Eucharistic cup. The things that are "permitted behind the barn" are the Old Testament sacrifices which were suitable for the people for whom they were instituted⁵⁵; the "table" at which they are forbidden is the Christian altar. For Augustine the Old Covenant sacrifices were proper in their own place and time although they have no place among the sacraments of the New Covenant. The other two images do not clearly correspond to the other two Manichean objections.⁵⁶

The point of these images is that situations in day to day life show us that law and custom dictate one thing in one time and place and another thing in another. Nevertheless

law and custom are still unified wholes. Consequently the practices of the Old Testament figures may differ from those of Augustine's own time, but still be just according to "the choice law of almighty God, by which are formed the customs of regions and times". This is what the Manichees, and all who judge "according to custom" cannot see, and Augustine tells us why:

But men, whose life on earth is short, because with the senses they are not able to weave together the causes of previous ages and of other nations which they have not experienced, but in one body or day or home are easily able to see what fits which member, which moments, which parts and persons -- in former cases they are offended but here they serve.⁵⁷ *Confessiones* III, vii, 13.

Augustine says that the Manichees can see the variations in what custom dictates in day to day situations, but are offended at the different customs by which the Old Testament figures lived because the causes of men's actions in their own age are seen easily by those who seek truth "according to the senses" whereas the causes of men's actions in a different age are not.

Particular customs and laws, according to Augustine, lie within the universal justice of God's law. Each set of customs also constitutes a partial order of justice. Anyone can grasp the way his own partial order distributes different precepts for different times and peoples. However those who do not perceive the larger order of justice to which their particular order belongs, are too wedded to their own customs to be able to "weave together the causes"⁵⁸ of another time or place. Thus Augustine says "in the former cases they are offended but here they serve".⁵⁹ They hold their own customs and laws as unexamined assumptions and "serve" them but do not see the universal justice that underlies them. Each of the images we considered consists of an overall order that determines the disposition of the parts of the order, which differ from each other. Those who criticize the

morality of the Old Testament are like people who cannot see the order and therefore think that the parts contradict each other.

The Argument about Custom

It is clear that this view is related to the criticism of Manicheism in the chapter vi. Those who cannot see "true interior justice" are those who "judge according to custom" ("*ex consuetudine iudicantem*"⁶⁰), which is also judging "with the senses". It seems that this "judging according to custom" is a product of that "habit of the flesh" (*consuetudo carnis*) that keeps the soul from being illuminated by the truth which was referred to in chapter vi. In both cases there is an attachment to the world that obscures the divine Truth. However, in chapter vi, the attachment is described in terms of the different faculties, the senses and the intuitive reason, and their objects in the order of natures. In this second argument the attachment is to particular sets of customs and laws, and what is obscured is the "divine law" according to which these customs are formed.

The first argument, the argument of chapter vi, is abstract in a way that the second argument is not. The terms of the first argument are what is given in nature, faculties and their natural objects, and these terms are reached by abstraction from the human world of customs, cultures, and history. In the argument of chapter vii, the changing and contingent human world is not resolved into more abstract natural distinctions but the goal is to try to see them as contained in the "divine law". The movement is towards an idea of justice which contains all the detail and concreteness of the human world.

The Fourth Image

This is what Augustine expresses in the fourth image, the image of the poetic art:

And I declaimed poems and it was not permitted to me to
place any foot anywhere, but one way in one metre and one

way in another, and in one and the same verse I could not put the same foot in every place; and the art itself, by which I composed was not different in different places, but the same everywhere. And I did not see that justice, which good and holy men serve, in a far more excellent and sublime manner has at the same time all the things which it prescribes and does not vary in any part and nevertheless distributes and prescribes the things appropriate to various times, and not everything at once.⁶¹ *Confessiones* III, vii, 14.

In relation to the other images this final image is the most internal. In fact, they are given in order of increasing internality and self-relatedness. The order that governs the fitting of the pieces of armour is entirely external to the wearer; it exists only in the mind of the one who designed the armour and in the pieces themselves. The law that governs the times of business in the market-place is in the minds of the people of the market-place, so it is more internal. The order that governs the household, to a greater extent than the law, *is* what the household itself *is*. The household as a social entity *is* its ordering customs, so the order is yet more internal or inward. This movement culminates in the fourth image of the poetic art where the parts, the rules that govern each metre and the placing of each foot, are within the poetic art itself, in the mind of the poet. An earthquake could destroy the household and its members, and it would not exist anymore, but the poetic art does not depend on the existence of things in the world for its own existence. It is the most inward or internal and self-related image.

This movement inward toward the idea of justice, as we have said, does not involve an abstraction from the human world. As the order that governs the household preserves the individual and differing roles of the servants, so the divine law preserves the differing customs of different times and places. Thus within the divine law there is maintained not only the justice of the order of nature but also the justice of what Augustine calls "the universal customs of the human race".⁶² It appears that for Augustine human law and custom has a kind of universal status within the divine law. The differences between laws and customs in different societies do not make law or custom merely contingent

phenomena. Rather, they receive their universality from the divine artist, who distributes them in their differences to different societies according to his art.

Now we can see how polygamy, for instance, can be morally blameless for the patriarchs and yet immoral in Augustine's own day. In the order of nature, either monogamy or polygamy is moral as long as it is for the purpose of the generation of children. Yet custom determines which arrangement is right in its own day, and it gets its binding force from the universality given by the divine law. The custom which allowed polygamy in the past and the custom which forbids it in the present are both to be seen as coming from the mind of the divine poetic artist who "distributes and prescribes the things appropriate to various times".

Many questions could be asked of this remarkable teaching. At this point let us refrain from asking them and move on to the elements of the argument of *Confessions* III, vii-x.

Chapter I

Part III - The Idea of Justice and Manicheism (Book III, Chapters viii-x)

Confessions III, chapter vii ended with the image of justice as a divine art, remaining unchanging itself, yet ordering and containing the variety of different customs and laws of different times and places. Chapter viii begins with the idea of justice as the love of God and one's neighbour, introduced in a rhetorical question:

For is it at any time or anywhere unjust to love God with your whole heart and your whole soul and your whole mind and to love your neighbour as yourself?⁶³

Confessiones III, viii, 15.

The answer is 'no'; the love of God and the love of one's neighbour constitute a genuinely universal idea of justice. The chapter has three divisions: i) a discussion of three kinds of *flagitia* or corruptions, which are the opposite of the love of God, ii) a discussion of *facinora* or crimes which are the opposite of the love of one's neighbour and iii) a concluding discussion of justice.⁶⁴

Augustine defines the terms *flagitia* and *facinora* in the *De Doctrina Christiana*:

What an unconquered lust does to corrupt its own soul and body is called a corruption [*flagitium*], but what it does to harm another is called a crime [*facinus*].⁶⁵

De Doctrina Christiana III, vi, 10

Flagitia are the soul's inward corruptions that disrupt its relation to God and *facinora* are unjust acts toward one's neighbour. Taken together these two kinds of injustice provide a complete idea of what justice itself is, both in relation to God and one's neighbour.

The Three Wholes

Augustine treats *flagitia* or corruptions first and he gives three kinds: those against nature (*contra naturam*), those against custom (*contra mores*) and those against God. The first two, corruptions against nature and corruptions against custom, correspond to the arguments we have already seen from Book III, chapters vi and vii about the whole of nature and the whole of custom. Here we have first a recapitulation of the subjects of those two chapters and then the introduction of sins which belong to a new kind of justice, the justice of God's specific commands, which are to be obeyed no matter what custom or pact they break. This new order could be called the whole of God's rule; elsewhere Augustine frequently calls it the divine law. We have called these three orders of justice "wholes" because as we have seen and will continue to see, Augustine's idea of justice is conceived in terms of parts and ordering wholes.

The *flagitia* against nature do not have the degree of relativity that belongs to human culture:

Therefore corruptions which are against nature are everywhere and always to be detested and punished, such as the sins of Sodom were. If all peoples did these things they would still be held guilty of the same crimes according to the divine law which did not make men so that they should use each other in this way.⁶⁶ *Confessiones* III, viii, 15.

Flagitia against nature interrupt the society that we ought to have with God because of the lust involved with them:

That society which ought to be between us and God is violated when that same nature of which He is the author is polluted by the perversity of lust.⁶⁷
Confessiones III, vii, 15.

Sins against custom and laws are to be avoided because they violate the whole which each society forms:

of governing wholes and parts: "For every part is bad which does not agree with its whole". The principle of justice underlying the justice of God's command is obedience to God's will and specific commandments.

The evidence from the rest of chapter viii confirms that what we have in this list of *flagitia* against nature, custom and God, is a tri-partite scheme of justice. Later in the chapter the source of injustice is said to lie in three forms of lust:

These are the heads of evil, which spring from the lust of ruling, the lust of seeing, and the lust of feeling...⁷¹
Confessiones III, viii, 16.

These three forms of lust, derived from 1 John 2:16, represent one of the Trinitarian patterns that are frequently found in Augustine.⁷² We would suggest that this Trinitarian pattern corresponds to the three kinds of justice: the justice of the whole of nature, the justice of the whole of custom, and the justice of the whole of God's command.

The *libido sentiendi*, the lust of feeling, corresponds to the justice of the whole of nature. The *libido spectandi*, the lust of seeing, is related to the sin of *curiositas*, the directing of the mind improperly.⁷³ *Curiositas* is the sin of seeking to know or pay attention to what does not properly concern you. The whole of truth is distorted for the sake of a part. The character of this sin is the same as that of the sin against the whole of custom: a willful setting aside of the boundaries of the order one is involved in. Finally the *libido principandi*, the lust of ruling, is the desire to rule where one should be ruled and corresponds to the justice of God's command, where what is essential is obedience.

Thus we have in chapter viii three *flagitia* or forms of the soul's corruption, linked to three lusts which lead to them. In both cases the number three is not accidental but represents a Trinitarian completeness: both are intended to be a complete account, of

flagitia and of the soul's lusts. A few lines after he lists three lusts Augustine gives a summary statement which repeats the pattern:

... they act impiously against their own souls, and iniquity gives itself the lie either [i] corrupting and perverting its own nature, which You have made and ordained, by immoderately using things which are permitted, or acting corruptly with things whose use is contrary to nature or [iii] men are held guilty, raging against you in their hearts or in words, kicking against the pricks, or [ii] when the limits set by human society are broken and men boldly delight in private unions or separations, as each thing delights or offends.⁷ *Confessiones* III, viii, 16.

I have indicated in small roman numerals the Trinitarian pattern of i) nature: the lust of feeling; ii) custom: the lust of seeing; iii) God's command: the lust of ruling.

We suggest that there is present here a Trinitarian idea of the nature of justice.⁷⁵ According to this idea of justice each of these aspects of nature, custom, and God's command form a whole. Each whole is more comprehensive and more concrete than the ones that precede it and each contains the ones that precede it. The justice of acts that cannot be judged according to the order of nature can be judged by custom, which thus includes more within it. Acts which might seem wrong according to custom may be ordered by God, and this realm is thus more comprehensive than custom. Furthermore, the realm of God's command more immediately and concretely governs men's actions than the realm of custom. Custom only says "this sort of act is right" whereas God's command says "this specific act is right". Custom more immediately and concretely governs men's actions than the order of nature. Nature tells us "the proper end of sex is reproduction". Custom tells us how many wives are permitted.

Another name for the whole of God's command is the "divine law". It not only contains the other two wholes within it; it maintains them in their integrity. We already saw this in connection with custom in chapter vii:

... not judging from habit but from the choice law of almighty God, by which are formed the customs of regions and times for regions and times, when itself it is everywhere and always.⁷⁶ Confessiones III, vii, 13.

In the *Contra Faustum* where we will be seeing the same idea of justice developed at greater length, we read several times that the divine or eternal law maintains the order of nature:

But the eternal law is the divine reason or will of God which requires the preservation of the natural order.⁷⁷
Contra Faustum XXII, 27.

Consequently these three wholes are like three concentric circles, the outer circle being the justice of God's command or the eternal law, the middle circle being the justice of the whole of custom, and the inner circle being the justice of the whole of nature.

All three of these kinds of justice are described as relations of wholes and the parts which they contain. Augustine indicates this and at the same time characterizes injustice as being a "false whole" in the concluding discussion in chapter viii:

And these [forms of injustice] are done when you are abandoned, fountain of life, who are the one and true creator and ruler of the universe, and with a private pride, a false whole is loved in a part.⁷⁸

Confessiones III, viii, 16.

The completeness with which things are being looked at in terms of whole and parts here comes out more in the Latin where the word-play between *creator et rector universitatis* and *falsum unum* is evident.⁷⁹ In injustice, either the whole of the order of nature is forsaken out of love of one part of it, or the whole of custom is forsaken for the "part" of a private order, or the whole of God's rule is forsaken out of the love of a part which is self-love.

The nature of sin in this account is that it is fundamentally a matter of rebelling against God, raising against God "the horns of a false liberty" (an image taken from *Psalms* 75, v.5-6). This is the self-exaltation of pride;⁸⁰ its opposite is "pious humility", by which we return to submission to God and undo the effects of sin:

Therefore with a pious humility we should return to you and you will purge us from evil habit and you are propitious to the sins of those who confess... as long as we do not raise against you the horns of a false liberty through greed for having more, with the penalty of losing all, loving one's own rather than You, the good of all.⁸¹

Confessiones III, viii, 16.

The root of sin is pride, which desires freedom rather than offering the obedience which is owed to God. It incurs the "penalty of losing all".⁸² The "penalty of losing all" that follows upon the "raising the horns of a false liberty" is the loss of being, truth, and love.

A very clear account that parallels this one is given in *De Civitate Dei* XIV, xiii, in Augustine's account of the Fall. First he describes the loss of being:

Man did not lapse so completely as to lose all being, but turning to himself he ended by having less true being than he had when he was rooted in Him who was the highest being. Therefore to leave God and to have being in oneself, that is, to follow one's own pleasure, is not to be nothing already, but to come nearer to being nothing.⁸³

De Civitate Dei XIV, xiii.

In the same chapter Augustine speaks of the loss of truth and love, the "light to see" and the "fire of love":

... if the will had remained steadfast in the love of the higher unchangeable good that provided it with light to see and kindled it with fire to love, it would have remained stable and not been diverted from this love to please itself and from that to grow dark and cold...⁸⁴

De Civitate Dei XIV, xiii.

Thus in the *De Civitate Dei* the results of the Fall are said to be loss of being, darkness instead of the light of truth, and coldness rather than the fire of love.

These are the results of sin in general which, starting from the rebellion of pride, has its consequences in the loss of being, truth, and love. In this teaching we see another sense in which the whole of God's command or the divine law encompasses the other two; disobedience to God's will necessarily results in a disruption of the other two wholes. The structure of whole and parts is all held in proper relation if it is held in submission to God and falls into distortion if the soul rebels. This structure is what Augustine means by justice.

The Causes of Crimes

Let us turn now to the second division of sins, the crimes against the neighbour or *facinora*. Augustine divides these according to the motives for which they are committed:

Similarly with crimes, where there is a desire to harm, whether by injurious language or physical injury, and whether [i] for revenge, as one enemy to another, or [ii] to acquire something more than is due, as with a robber and a traveller, or [iii] to avoid harm, as to one who is feared, or [iv] from envy, as one less fortunate to one who is more fortunate, or someone who is prosperous in some respect to him who he fears will equal him, or who regrets one who is equal, or [v] only for the pleasure of another's harm, like the spectators of gladiators or any sort of scoffers or malicious jokers.⁸⁵

Confessiones III, vii, 16.

He lists the motives for crimes as follows: i) the desire for revenge (*causa ulciscendi*), ii) for gain (*causa adipiscendi alicuius extra comodi*), iii) to avoid harm (*causa evitandi mali*), iv) envy (*invidendo*), and finally v) pleasure in another's harm (*voluptate alieni mali*).

What principle is this list based on? It appears at least to be in some kind of descending order. The crimes that come from envy or "pleasure in another's harm" would seem to be baser than those coming from the desire for revenge or gain.⁸⁶ In fact, the

descending order of the list of motives is based on the hierarchy of natures that we saw in chapter vi. We can see this correspondence if we consider the crimes one by one.

The characteristic of "crimes" that makes them different from "corruptions" is that they are concerned with one's relation to one's neighbour. The justice that rules the relation with the neighbour is a whole that orders its parts, as with the three wholes of nature, custom and God's rule, but here it is specifically the traditional definition of justice as "rendering to each his due".⁸⁷ All of the motives for crimes listed here may be seen as corruptions of the idea of rendering to each his due, although at the bottom of the list they become more and more distant reflections of it.

The desire for revenge proceeds from a wrong suffered, or what is thought to be a wrong suffered. Justice, which always dictates that there be a harmony in the relationship between parts of an order,⁸⁸ says that retribution is due to the perpetrator.⁸⁹ Augustine, writing as a Christian, never denies that retribution is due. In *Confessions* II, vi he even writes of God revenging himself:

But who more justly revenges himself than You?⁹⁰
Confessiones II, vi, 13.

God Himself in some sense seeks retribution so it must be a legitimate part of the idea of justice.⁹¹

If man is properly in submission to the divine law then the just retribution which is part of the idea of justice will have its proper place within God's will. However man, in exalting himself to the position of rule that belongs to God, loses the whole of justice and finds a false whole instead, a private idea of justice which is self-serving. The motive of revenge pretends to have the idea of reciprocity and the restoration of harmony that belongs

to justice. The man seeking revenge says "you did that to me; so I'll do this to you". However the revenge that is a motive for crimes does not really seek a reciprocity, but rather self-gratification, in what is done to the other. Thus the false whole of revenge is a distortion of the true whole of justice, where all the goods involved are kept in balance.⁹² Nevertheless revenge is a kind of imitation of justice because without the idea of justice there would be no conception on which revenge could base itself.

Next on the list are crimes committed "to obtain more than what is proper". The example Augustine gives is of a robber who steals from a traveller. Here the order of "rendering to each his due" that is contravened is the law of property. According to Augustine, the law of property is recognized by everyone possessing reason. At *Confessions* II, iv it is said to be "written on the hearts of men":

Theft is certainly punished by Your law, Lord, and the law is written on the hearts of men, which not even evil itself wipes out. For what thief can suffer another thief with equanimity? Not even a rich one when the other is driven by want.⁹³

Confessiones II, iv, 9.

The idea of a rational, social distribution of goods that is binding, so that the distribution of goods is not simply subject to the appetites and physical power of individuals is so fundamental to men that even a thief who contravenes the law of property himself still recognizes the principle that has been broken when someone steals from him.⁹⁴

The pursuit of gain assumes the existence of this law of property. Without it, nothing can "belong to" anybody except what they are actually holding on to. However the idea of a rational distribution of goods means that goods have also been distributed to other people and "belong to" them in a binding way. For Augustine, if one's will is properly submitted to the divine law, in which this law of property is maintained, the whole order of distribution will be accepted. However, as was the case with revenge, a disobedient

relation to the divine law results in a distortion of the kind of justice that the law of property represents. "Through a private pride, a false whole is loved in a part (*Confessions* III, viii)." The thief accepts the law of property insofar as he wants to own things but denies it by stealing. Through his private interests, his relation to the law of property becomes contradictory. The criminal desire for gain, to Augustine, is like cheating at solitaire. The desire is to win the game, but the game ceases to be itself if one cheats. The thief desires to own something, but he cannot by definition own something he has stolen.

It might be objected that ownership does not really involve accepting the law of property. A more "realistic" view might be put forward according to which ownership is only the physical power to use and enjoy something and does not need to involve a moral idea of "belonging to". This is the kind of position Thrasymachus advances in Book I of Plato's *Republic*. Augustine does not address such a position at this point. Here he might simply say that such a view would not account for any thief who recognized that someone taking something from him was stealing. The kind of justice that is purely concerned with the level of the senses and the physical belongs to the next stage.

Crimes committed in order to avoid evil (*causa evitandi mali*) involve an idea of justice and "rendering to each his due" at precisely this level of sensible and physical needs and well-being. In *Contra Faustum* XXII, 32, Augustine gives the example of Abraham, who pretends Sarah is his sister in order to preserve his life. Augustine defends that action, saying that it was legitimate for Abraham to try to preserve his life, and this is an example of the level of nature with which justice is concerned here. The principle of justice which comes into play at this level when other men are involved is the golden rule, given in *Confessions* I, xviii:

And certainly the science of letters is not more interior than that which is written on the conscience: that one has done that to another which one would be unwilling to suffer.⁹⁵
Confessiones I, xviii, 29.

Crimes based on "fear of suffering evil" presumably occur when someone, thinking that his own well-being is threatened, harms someone else in excess. He acts partially and gives his own well-being an importance that he denies to another, although it is "written on his conscience" that he is treating the other in a way that he would not want to be treated. Again, the crime is a matter of a "false whole", loved because of a "private pride".

Now let us consider how the three motives for crimes that we have considered so far, the desire for revenge, the desire for gain, and the desire for avoiding harm, correspond to the levels of the hierarchy of natures. The idea of justice present in revenge is free of any particular objects with which it is concerned. Unlike the law of property, where there has to be property for that kind of justice to exist, any kind of human interaction can be the subject matter for revenge. It is a distortion of the pure idea of justice, rendering each his due, which does not depend on the matter it concerns. Therefore revenge corresponds to the level of the "spiritual works" which do not depend on the sensible.

The idea of justice present in the desire for gain is not removed from the objects with which it is concerned in the same way. The law of property is a rational order that is not to be identified with the sensible order it governs. We saw this in the passage quoted from *Confessions* II, iv where Augustine asks whether a thief doesn't recognize it when another thief steals from him:

For what thief can suffer another thief with equanimity? Not even a rich one when the other is driven by want.⁹⁶
Confessiones II, iv, 9.

One might suppose that a human need, such as hunger, would negate the law of property in that particular situation. However, even a thief will recognize a theft as theft, whatever the need that prompts it. The law of property is maintained independently of sensible needs. Nevertheless it is not independent of the sensible in the way that the idea of justice present in revenge is. Without "pieces of property" of some kind the idea of property does not make any sense. We suggest that this means that the law of property corresponds to the level of the soul in the hierarchy of natures. The soul is beyond the level of the sensible but is still involved with mutability in a way that the "spiritual works" are not.

The third idea of justice, the golden rule of respecting in others the needs you have in yourself, corresponds to the level of the sensible. The needs, dangers, and fears of this kind of justice are immediate, obvious things. The idea of justice that governs them does not constitute a rational order beyond them, like the law of property, but rather dictates a kind of immediate equity with regard to them. However, the determining of equity concerning natural needs and dangers is an operation of reason. It is distinguished from the previous two kinds of justice by the nature of the order in relation to which equity is determined. Here it is the natural order of needs and dangers. With the desire for unjust gain it is the rational order of property. With the desire for revenge it is the demand for reciprocity and retribution that is there in justice itself.

With jealousy (*invidendo*), the fourth cause of crimes on the list, we have a motive with no real idea of justice in it at all. The justice that is perversely imitated in revenge, the justice of the law of property, and the justice of immediate human needs and well-being are all real measures of justice. In the case of jealousy, there is a kind of "rendering each his due" but only as a parody of justice. The jealous man imagines that the good of another is causing him harm, and feels the need to redress the situation, when in fact this is not so. If

he were suffering any real harm then the matter would belong to the category of "avoiding evil". When one *rhetor* is jealous of another's success, as in *Confessions* I, ix, it is not because the other's success will really cost him anything, but because he has set up an imaginary hierarchy of worth, with himself at the top, which the other's success threatens. This imaginary hierarchy of status does not correspond to any real human need; it is an imaginary need that the other should not be equal to him or greater than him. Since jealousy has no real idea of justice it can never be good, whereas the desire to avoid a real evil, the last motive we considered, is in itself good.⁹⁷

There is still present in jealousy a kind of parody of justice because it still draws on the idea of what is due to each. The thought that "I do not want that man to succeed because it will lower my own status" still draws on the idea of a proper distribution of goods even if this idea is determined purely according to private ends. Consequently this idea of justice corresponds in the hierarchy of natures to the first kind of imaginary objects; imaginary objects of real things. The goods that the jealous man sees going to whoever he is jealous of - love, success, money - are falsely imagined to be taking away from his own goods. Nevertheless they still are real human goods that are a part of this imaginary distribution.

The final cause of crimes given here, the pleasure in another's harm (*voluptate alieni mali*), corresponds to a still lower level in the hierarchy of natures. It also issues from "private pride". With the pleasure in another's harm, one does not even imagine that another's gain is my loss, as with jealousy. There is only the desire that the other be harmed and I exalted. The idea of a distribution of goods goes no farther than "when you are down, I am up". This motive is entirely private; there is not even a parody of the idea of what is due to each. Its relation to justice is by denying it.

This is the kind of motive Augustine describes in the chapters on the theft of pears in *Confessions* II:

... [the theft] was done by us because it was pleasing in that it was not permitted. Behold my heart, Lord, behold my heart, which you pitied in the depths of the abyss.⁹⁸
Confessiones II, iv, 9.

Augustine's long discussion of the theft of pears shows that the motive for the theft was not the desire for gain. Rather it was the desire to do wrong simply. This is akin to the motivation of those who "take pleasure in another's harm". The phrase "you pitied in the depth of the abyss" shows that here, as with the phrase in *profunda inferi* which he used of Manicheism in III, vi, Augustine is speaking of a very low level of the order of natures. Those who "take pleasure in another's harm" are living in a real sense in a fantasy world. Characters such as Augustine and his companions in the theft of pears and the *eversores* of *Confessions* III, iii, who like "overturning" others simply because they find pleasure in it, feel that they are liberating themselves from all restraints.⁹⁹ Augustine's purpose in the places where he discusses them and again here is to show how this is an illusory freedom, a false whole. Neither are the goods that they pursue real goods. The pleasure in breaking the law, or in seeing one gladiator kill another, to use another of Augustine's examples, is not a real human pleasure. It corresponds to nothing natural or sensible that could make it one. Thus with the "pleasure in another's harm" we see that we are at the level of *phantasmata* - imagined objects that do not exist. The closest thing to an idea of justice is an imagined indeterminate freedom from the idea of rendering what is due. The imagined pleasures are similarly fantastic and indeterminate.¹⁰⁰

The list of motives for crimes has presented us with motives that correspond to each of the levels of the hierarchy of natures: i) the desire for revenge - spiritual works, ii) the

desire for gain - the soul, iii) the desire to avoid evil - the sensible creation, iv) envy - imagined existing objects, v) pleasure in another's harm - *phantasmata*. According to the hierarchy of chapter vi there should be room for one more motive for crimes corresponding to the lowest level, the *phantasmata* that are believed to be real. According to Augustine, Manichean belief itself is a motive for crimes that corresponds to this level of the hierarchy.

The Injustice of Manicheism

In *Confessions* III, ix, 17 Augustine shows briefly how the idea of justice in III, viii can account in different ways for the actions in the Old Testament to which the Manichees object. He goes over ground that he will cover much more thoroughly in *Contra Faustum* XXII. Then in *Confessions* III, x, 18, Augustine turns to the views of the Manichees themselves. He speaks of some of the more eccentric Manichean beliefs: for instance that figs weep when they are plucked but that, if they are eaten by a member of the Manichean elect, the divine particles inside them will be freed. Then Augustine points out the consequences of this view that there is divine life inside fruit and vegetables, for the nature of justice:

And I believed, unhappy wretch, that mercy was more to be shown to the fruits of the earth than to men, for whom they were created. For if some hungry man who was not a Manichee should have begged for a morsel, it would seem worthy of capital punishment, if it were given to him.¹⁰¹
Confessiones III, x, 18.

Augustine says that the consequence of the Manichean teaching that fruit contained particles of God, is a view of justice in which eating a fig is a capital crime.¹⁰²

Of course the Manichees did not try to enforce such a view because they did not have the political power. However, by inviting us to imagine what a state based on

Manichean principles would look like, Augustine shows us that the kind of motivation that belongs to the Manichean level of the order of natures would be the worst conceivable. The "pleasure in another's harm" retains enough connection with justice in its rejection of it that it is not completely irrational, as a Manichean scheme of justice would be. Even killing people out of love of cruelty is not as bad as would be a state that could conceivably execute people *en masse* for eating fruit. The latter has a systematic and unconscious irrationality to it that is worse than the anarchic irrationalism of the "pleasure in another's pain".

Individual Manichees may never have followed the consequences of their views so far, but Augustine is not speaking of individuals. Indeed when he speaks of the Manichean Faustus as an individual he speaks in very moderate tones, at *Confessions* V, vi. Rather Augustine is speaking of the motivations for crimes that stem from the different levels of natures. He shows that because the Manichean teachings are completely removed from the truth about justice and yet are accompanied by no knowledge of their separation from true justice, they have as their consequence the lowest form of injustice, according to the scale that he has been developing.

This is the culmination of Augustine's argument about Manicheism and justice. He starts out by considering the Manichean charges that the Old Testament is unjust and ends by showing that the consequences of Manichean belief are a terrible form of injustice. However, before we conclude our discussion about the elements of this argument in the *Confessions*, we need to say something more about the character of the view of justice that Augustine has developed. Augustine sums up what he has to say about justice at the end of chapter viii (49, 8 - 50, 5) and we will draw on his summary, attempting to lay out the elements of his argument out as clearly as possible.

The argument about justice in *Confessions* III, viii may be taken as a development of the phrase in chapter vi "Alas, alas, by what steps was I led to the depths of the pit". Augustine says that as a Manichee his soul had an essential relation to the lowest level of natures, the *phantasmata*:

How could I see this, who could only see with the eyes as far as a body, and with the soul as far as a fantasy.¹⁰³
Confessiones III, vii, 12.

Then he takes up the question of justice and in chapter viii, discusses it under the headings of *flagitia* and *facinora*, corresponding to the love of God and neighbour. The discussion of *facinora*, or crimes, treats the causes or motives of crimes and we have seen that these correspond to the levels of the order of natures. These causes, desire for revenge, gain, and so on, are the essential relation of the soul to one of these levels of natures as far as a particular unjust act is concerned. As Augustine describes his relation to Manicheism as an essential relation of his soul to the level of *phantasmata*, so he attributes to each of these causes of crimes a primary relation to a particular level of natures.

Each of the causes represents a whole made up of, i) one of the three lusts or a combination of them,¹⁰⁴ ii) the level of natures the lust is operating on, and iii) the idea of justice, present at each level (the law of property etc.). All crimes are a product of a whole made up of these three elements. The wholes all stem from a proud separation of the soul from God:

And these things are done, when You are forsaken, fountain of life, who are the one and true Creator and Ruler of the universe...¹⁰⁵
Confessiones III, viii, 16.

In separating themselves from God, the unjust are rebelling against the divine order which governs them (against the *rector universitatis*) but their rebellion does not effect that order. Rather the divine law determines that when the soul tries to rebel it only distorts itself:

When they sin against You, they act impiously in their own
souls...¹⁰⁶ *Confessiones* III, viii, 16.

This self-imposed distortion of the soul is what we saw when we said that each of these causes of crimes is a "false whole", a distortion of the idea of justice present at each level. The inevitable self-distortion that accompanies injustice proves that the order of justice, the divine law, does in fact rule:

... and iniquity gives itself the lie...¹⁰⁷
Confessiones III, viii, 16.

Summary

The conclusion of the argument is Augustine's presentation of Manicheism as cause of the lowest level of injustice in *Confessions* III, x. This presentation of the false whole of injustice that is the consequence of Manichean belief serves to show how Manicheism itself is a "false whole". Moreover, there are three senses in which Manicheism is presented as unjust. First, it is unjust because it directs the soul towards a level of natures which is the opposite of the soul's true end. Second, it is unjust because it leads to a sinful breaking with custom and institutions, the sin we already saw Augustine describe in *Confessions* III, viii:

... when the limits set by human society are broken and men
boldly delight in private unions or separations, as each thing
delights or offends.¹⁰⁸ *Confessiones* III, viii, 16

Third, it is also unjust in the same way that any of the other causes, the desire for revenge or gain, are unjust; as a rebellion against the divine law and a distortion of justice. We can see all three of these forms of injustice in the hypothetical example Augustine gives of eating fruit as a crime worthy of capital punishment. The offence against the whole of nature is that the soul, seeking to consider justice, has been led to seek it in an unreal

fantasy world in which fruit are taken as being partly divine. The soul ought to seek the nature of justice above; it is led to seek it far below itself. The offence against the whole of custom is that the Manichean view of justice violates all the ideas of justice that have been mediated through human society in favour of its own utterly idiosyncratic view. The offence against the whole of the divine law is seen in the sinister and unconscious irrationality of the view of justice that follows from the Manichean teachings.

Thus Augustine responds to the Manichean charges that the Old Testament is unjust with a counter-charge that Manicheism is itself unjust. Now, having laid out the elements of the argument, let us go on to consider the similar and parallel argument in the *Contra Faustum*. By considering this more extended and fully articulated argument we will be enabled to see more clearly what the idea of justice really is that Augustine develops in the context of the Manichean polemic.

Endnotes

Chapter I - Part I

1. *O veritas, veritas, quam intime etiam tum medullae animi mei suspirabant tibi, cum te illi sonarent mihi frequenter et multipliciter voce sola et libris multi et ingentibus et illa erant fercula, in quibus mihi esurienti te inferebatur pro te sol et luna, pulchra opera tua, sed tamen opera tua, non tu, nec ipsa prima. priora enim spiritualia opera tua quam ista corporea quamvis lucida et caelestia. Confessiones III, vi, 10 (43, 10-18).*
2. See introduction, p. 6 For the place of the sun and moon in the Manichean cosmology see: *Contra Faustum*, XX, 2; *De Haeresibus* XLVI. See also Francois Decret's discussion of Manichean prayers to the sun and moon: Francois Decret, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, vol.1, p. 309.
3. See introduction, p.2-8.
4. *Confessiones III, vi, 10 (43, 20-21)*
5. *Confessiones III, vi, 10 (43, 23-24)*
6. *... illa erant corporalia phantasmata, falsa corpora, quibus certiora sunt vera corpora ista, quae videmus visu carneo... Confessiones III, vi, 10 (44, 2-4).*
7. *et tamen, quia te putabam, manducabam... nec nutrebar eis, sed exhauriebar magis. Confessiones III, vi, 10 (43, 24-27).*
8. *...te ipsam, veritas, in qua non est commutatio nec momenti obumbratio... Confessiones III, vi, 10, (43, 19-20).*
9. *... illa erant corporalia phantasmata, falsa corpora, quibus certiora sunt vera corpora ista quae videmus visu carneo; cum pecudibus et volatilibus videmus haec, et certiora sunt, quam cum imaginamur ea. et rursus certius imaginamur ea quam ex eis suspicamur alia grandiora et infinita, quae omnino nulla sunt. Confessiones III, vi, 10 (44, 2-8).*
10. *quibus gradibus deductus in profunda inferi... Confessiones III, vi, 11 (45, 4-5).*
11. *... melius erat amare istum solem saltem istis oculis verum quam illa falsa animo decepto per oculos. Confessiones III, vi, 10 (43, 22-24).*
12. *... quia te putabam, manducabam... Confessiones III, vi, 10 (43, 24-25).*
13. *at tu, amor meus... nec ista corpora es, quae videmus quamquam in caelo, nec ea, quae non videmus ibi... Confessiones III, vi, 10 (44, 9-13).*
14. See *Confessiones XII*, i-xiii. For a discussion of the "heaven of heavens" see Solignac's note in the BA edition of the *Confessiones*, pp. 592-598. The "heaven of heavens" is both the Platonic ideas of things, and the intellectual creatures, angels and redeemed humanity, contemplating God.

15. *et rursus certius imaginamur ea quam ex eis suspicamur alia grandiora et infinita, quae omnino nulla sunt. Confessiones III, vi, 10 (44, 6-8).*
16. This distinction between imagined sense objects and purely imaginary figures, which Augustine calls *phantasiae* and *phantasmata* respectively, is also made in *De Musica* VI, xi, 32. There Augustine remarks: *Sed vera etiam phantasmata pro cognitis, summus error est.* This statement remarkably parallels the argument of *Confessiones* III, vi. See also *De Vera Religione* X, 18; XX, 40; XXXIV, 64., BA, vol.VIII,1951
17. *... melior vita corporum certiorque quam corpora... Confessiones III, vi, 10 (44, 18).*
18. See for instance *Confessiones* IV, xv, 24-26 (72, 1-73, 10).
19. See *Confessiones* XII, ix, 9.
20. *qualibus ego tunc pascebar inanibus et non pascebar. Confessiones III, vi, 10 (44, 8-9).*
21. *Confessiones* III, vi, 10 (43, 19).
22. *... tu, amor meus, in quem deficio, ut fortis sim... Confessiones III, vi, 10 (44, 8-10).*
23. *sed nec anima es, quae vita est corporum... sed tu vita es animarum, vita vitarum, vivens te ipsa et non mutaris, vita animae meae. Confessiones III, vi, 10 (44, 17-19).*
24. Olivier Du Roy, *L'Intelligence de la foi en la Trinité selon saint Augustin*, Paris, Etudes Augustiniennes, 1966. Du Roy extensively documents these Trinitarian images in Augustine's works. The *Confessions* themselves are organized according to a Trinitarian pattern: See C. J. Starnes, "The Place and Purpose of the Tenth Book of the *Confessions*", *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 25, Rome, 1987 p. 95-103.
25. See Du Roy pp. 343-357.
26. *vellem, ut haec tria cogitarent homines in se ipsis. longe aliud sunt ista tria quam illa trinitas. sed dico, ubi se exercent et probent et sentiant, quam longe sunt. dico autem haec tria; esse, nosse, velle. sum enim et scio et volo; sum sciens et volens et scio esse me et velle et volo esse et scire. in his igitur tribus quam sit inseparabilis vita et una vita et una mens et una essentia, quam denique inseparabilis et tamen distinctio, videat qui potest. Confessiones XIII, ix, 12 (336, 9-17).*
27. Willing for Augustine is a form of loving. See Etienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, (trans. by L. E. M. Lynch) New York, Random House, 1960, pp. 134-135.
28. *Hoc enim maxime esse dicendum est, quod semper eodem modo sese habet... De Moribus Manichaeorum I, P.L., vol.32 (1346, 61.1).*

29. *Ubi ergo mihi tunc eras et quam longe? et longe peregrinabar abs te exclusus et a siliquis porcorum, quos de siliquis pascebam. Confessiones III, vi, 11 (44, 21-23).*
30. *... volantem autem Medeam etsi cantabam, non asserebam, etsi cantari audiebam, non credebam: illa autem credidi. Vae, vae! quibus deductus in inferi... Confessiones III, vi, 11 (45, 2-5).*
31. *... videre usque ad corpus erat oculis et animo usque ad phantasma. Confessiones III, vii, 12 (45, 28-29).*
32. Augustine argues elsewhere that the fantastic and imaginary character of Manicheism makes it worse than pagan religion (*Contra Faustum XX, ix-x*). He finds a kind of realism in pagan sacrifices which is lacking in Manicheism. See Maurice Nédoncelle, *L'Abandon de Mani par Augustin ou la logique de l'optimisme*", *Recherches Augustiniennes II*, 1962, p.28
33. *... quippe laborans et aestuans inopia veri... Confessiones III, vi, 11 (45, 5).*
34. *... cum te non secundum intellectum mentis... sed secundum sensum carnis quaererem. Confessiones III, vi, 11 (45, 8-10).*
35. *... foris habitantem in oculo carnis meae et talia ruminantem apud me, qualia per illum vorassem. Confessiones III, vi, 11 (45, 15-17).*
36. *Nesciebam enim aliud, vere quod est... Confessiones III, vii, 12 (45, 18).*
37. Augustine says often that the problem that kept him in Manicheism was his inability to think of a spiritual substance. *Confessiones IV, ii, 3; IV, 15, 24; IV, xvi, 29-31; V, x, 19.*
38. An introduction to Augustine's teaching on this can be found in R. Jolivet and M. Jourjon, *Six Traités Anti-Manichéens*, BA, note 2, p.762-763 and notes 57, 58 and 59, p.786-787. For further references see R. Nash, *The Light of the Mind: St. Augustine's Theory of Knowledge*, Lexington, Kentucky, University Press of Kentucky, 1969.
39. *dorsum enim habebam ad lumen, et ad ea, quae inluminantur, faciem: unde ipsa facies mea, qua inluminata cernebam, non inluminabatur. Confessiones IV, xvi, 31 (75, 3-5).*
40. *intravi et vidi qualicumque oculo animae meae supra eundem oculum animae meae, supra mentem meam lucem incommutabilem... Confessiones VII, x, 16 (140, 19-21).*
41. *... donec mihi per interiorem aspectum certus esses. Confessiones VII, viii, 12 (137, 2-3).*
42. *tu autem eras interior intimo meo... Confessiones III, vi, 11 (45, 10).*
43. *... intravi in intima mea duce te... Confessiones VII, x, 16 (140,17-18).*

44. *et pervenit ad id quod est... Confessiones VII, xvii, 23 (146,16).*
45. See *Confessiones VII, xvii, 23 (145, 16).*
46. *offendi illam mulierem audacem, inopem prudentiae, aenigma Salamonis, sedentem super sellam in foribus et dicentem: panes occultos libenter edite et aquam furtivam bibite. Confessiones III, vi, 11 (45, 11-15).*
47. *Nesciebam enim aliud, vere quod est, et quasi acutule movebar, ut suffragerer stultis deceptoribus, cum a me quaerent, unde malum et utrum forma corporea deus fineretur ... et utrum iusti existimandi essent qui haberent uxores multas simul et occiderent homines et sacrificarent de animalibus. Confessiones III, vii, 12 (45, 18-24).*
48. *quae me seduxit, quia invenit foris habitantem in oculo carnis meae et talia ruminantem apud me, qualia per illum vorassem. Confessiones III, vi, 11 (45, 15-17).* E. Peters understands the "seduction" represented by the "bold woman" of *Proverbs* as being the sin of *curiositas* simply, in his article E. Peters, "Aenigma Salamonis: Manichean Anti-Genesis Polemic and the *Vitium curiositatis* in *Confessiones III, 6*", *Augustiniana* vol. 36, 1986, p. 48-64. Peters' point that Augustine became a Manichee partly because he could not understand the sense in which the Scriptures were "veiled in mysteries" (*velatam mysteriis - Confessiones III, v*) is well taken. His contention that *Confessiones III, vi* is specifically about the Manichean polemic against *Genesis* is less convincing.

Endnotes

Chapter I - Part II

49. *Nesciebam enim aliud, vere quod est, et quasi acutule movebar, ut suffragarer stultis deceptoribus, cum a me quaerent, unde malum et utra forma corporea deus fineretur et haberet capillos et ungues et utrum iusti existimandi essent qui haberent uxores multas simul et occiderent homines et sacrificarent de animalibus. Confessiones III, vii, 12 (45,1823).* Anne-Marie la Bonnardière comments on these questions in connection with the development of Augustine's attitude to Scripture. See "L'initiation biblique d'Augustin", in Anne-Marie la Bonnardière (edt.), *Saint Augustin et la Bible*, Paris, Beauchesne, 1986, p. 34-35.
50. That the last question about 'men who had many wives' is about the figures of the Old Testament is plain from paragraph 13: "*secundum quam iusti essent Abraham et Isaac...* Confessiones III,vii, 12 (46, 11-14).
51. *Et sunt quaedam similia vel flagitio vel facinori et non sunt peccata... cum conciliantur aliqua in usum vitae congrua et tempori, et incertum est an libidine habendi, aut puniuntur corrigendi studio potestate ordinata, et incertum est an libidine nocendi.* Confessiones III, ix, 17 (50, 9-15).
52. Augustine discusses the question of the Old Testament sacrifices in *Contra Faustum* II, 18 and *Contra Faustum*, XVIII,6.
53. *Et non noveram iustitiam veram interiorem non ex consuetudine iudicantem, sed ex lege lectissima dei omnipotentis, qua formarentur mores regionum et dierum pro regionibus et diebus, cum ipsa ubique ac semper esset, non alibi alia nec alias aliter, secundum quam iusti essent Abraham et Isaac et Iacob et Moyses et David et illi omnes laudati ore die, sed eos ab imperitis iudicari iniquos, iudicantibus ex humano die et universos mores humani generis ex parte moris sui metientibus...* Confessiones III, vii, 13 (46, 7-16).
54. *... tamquam si quis nescius in armamentis, quid cui membro adcommodatum sit, ocrea velit caput contegi et galea calciari et murmuret, quod non apte conveniat, aut in uno die indicto a promeridianis horis iustitio quisquam stomachetur non sibi concedi quid venale proponere, quia mane concessum est, aut in una domo videat aliquid tractari manibus a quoquam servo, quod facere non sinatur qui pocula ministrat, aut aliquid post praesepia fieri, quod ante mensam prohibeatur, et indignerur, cum sit unum habitaculum et una familia, non ubique atque omnibus idem tribui.* Confessiones III, vii, 13 (46, 14-27).
55. In *Contra Faustum* XVIII, 6, Augustine says that animal sacrifices were instituted because they were fitting for a "perverse people".
56. Perhaps the reason why the question of sacrifices is addressed in this series of images and not the other two objections is that the other two objections, Old Testament killing and polygamy, concern justice and are addressed by the argument about justice. The question of sacrifices is a matter of typology and is therefore not addressed by the argument about justice.

57. *homines autem, quorum vita super terram brevis est, quia sensu non valent causas contexere saeculorum priorum aliarumque gentium, quas experti non sunt, in uno autem corpore vel die vel domo facile possunt videre, quid cui membro, quibus momentis, quibus partibus personisve congruat, in illis offenduntur, hic serviunt. Confessiones III, vii, 13 (47, 8-116).*
58. "*causas contexere*" -- note the etymological connection with our word "context". We would say that the people Augustine is referring to cannot discern the context.
59. Watts translates "*hic serviunt*" as "but to these they are slaves". Giving *servire* this negative sense of slavery is attractive because it could have the sense that those who judge "by the senses" are slaves to the wholes they obey because they hold to them as unexamined assumptions. However, as Gibb points out in his note (Gibb and Montgomery, p. 69) the verb *servire* is used twice in immediately adjoining passages (47, 3 and 47, 24) and in both cases what is served is justice. It therefore seems unlikely that *servire* would have a negative sense here.
60. *Confessiones III, vii, 13 (46, 8).*
61. *... et cantabam carmina et non mihi licebat ponere pedem quemlibet utiliter, sed in alio atque alio metro aliter atque aliter et in uno aliquo versu non omnibus locis eundem pedem; et ars ipsa, qua canebam, non habebat aliud alibi, sed omnia simul, et non intuebar iustitiam, cui servirent boni et sancti homines, longe excellentius atque sublimius habere simul omnia quae praecepit et nulla ex parte variari et tamen variis temporibus non omnia simul, sed propria distribuentem ac praecipientem. Confessiones III, vii, 14 (47, 19-28).*
62. *... universos mores humani generis ex parte moris sui merientibus...*
Confessiones III, vii, 13 (46, 15-16).

Endnotes

Chapter I - Part III

63. *Numquid aliquando aut alicubi iniustum est diligere deum ex toto corde et ex tota anima et ex tota mente et diligere proximum tamquam te ipsum? Confessiones III, viii, 15 (47, 32 - 48, 3).*
64. In the Skutella edition these divisions are i) 48, 3-28, ii) 48, 29 - 49, 8, iii) 49, 8 - 50, 5.
65. *Quod autem agit indomita cupiditas ad corrumpendum animum et corpus suum, flagitium vocatur; quod autem agit, ut alteri noceat, facinus dicitur. De Doctrina Christiana III, x, 16, CC.*
66. *itaque flagitia, quae sunt contra naturam, ubique atque semper detestanda atque punienda sunt, qualia Sodomitarum fuerunt. quae si omnes gentes facerent, eodem criminis reatu divina lege tenerentur, quae non sic fecit homines, ut se illo uterentur modo. Confessiones III, viii, 15 (48, 3 8).*
67. *violatur quippe ipsa societas, quae cum deo nobis esse debet, cum eadem natura, cuius illa auctor est, libidinis perversitate polluitur. Confessiones III, viii, 15 (48, 8-10).*
68. *quae autem contra mores hominum sunt flagitia, pro morum diversitate vitanda sunt, ut pactum inter se civitatis aut gentis consuetudine vel lege firmatum nulla civis aut peregrini libidine violetur. turpis enim omnis pars universo suo non congruens. Confessiones III, viii, 15 (48, 10-15).* Eugene TeSelle contrasts Augustine's idea of the social "pact" (*pactum*) with the modern social contract theory in Eugene TeSelle, "Toward An Augustinian Politics", *Journal of Religious Ethics* 16, Spring 1988, p. 94-95. He says that the modern theory emphasizes a multiplicity of self-interested individuals, while Augustine is more concerned with shared values.
69. *cum autem deus aliquid contra morem aut pactum quorumlibet iubet, etsi numquam ibi factum est, faciendum est... Confessiones III, vii, 15 (48, 15-17).*
70. See *Contra Faustum* XXII, 71.
71. *haec sunt capita iniquitatis, quae pullulant principandi et spectandi et sentiendi libidine... Confessiones III, viii, 16 (49, 8-10).*
72. Du Roy, *L'Afrique Manichéenne*, pp. 343-357.
73. For the identification of the *libido spectandi* with *curiositas*, see Du Roy p. 348. C. J. Starnes, in his paper "The Place and Purpose of the Tenth Book of The Confessions", outlines the treatment of the three lusts in chapters 30-40 of *Confessiones* Book X. On the origin of Augustine's concept of *curiositas*, see E. Peters, "Aenigma Salamonis: Manichean Anti-Genesis Polemic and the *Vitium curiositatis* in *Confessiones* III, 6", p. 51-53.

74. ... *impie faciunt in animas suas, et mentitur iniquitas sibi sive corrumpendo ac pervertendo naturam suam, quam tu fecisti et ordinasti, vel immoderate utendo concessis rebus vel in non concessa flagrando in eum usum, qui est contra naturam aut rei tenentur animo et verbis saevientes adversus te et adversus stimulum calcitrantes, aut cum diruptis limitibus humanae societatis laetantur audaces privatis conciliationibus aut diremptionibus, prout quidque delectaverit aut offenderit.* *Confessiones* III, viii, 16 (49, 16-26). These three sinful motivations in their relation to God, plus the various combinations of them as causes of crimes against one's neighbour make up what Augustine calls the "psaltery of ten strings" - a metaphor for the Ten Commandments: ... *et vivitur male adversus tria et septem, psalterium decem chordarum, decalogum tuum...* *Confessiones* III, viii, 16 (49, 11-13). The psaltery of ten strings also occurs at *Contra Faustum* XV, 4. The combination of motives that Augustine seems to have in mind as making up the "ten" are: each motive singly as a *flagitium*, each motive singly as the source of a *facinus*, and the four possible combinations of the motives as the sources of *facinora*.
75. This three part scheme of justice is also intimated at *De Bono Coniugali* XXV, 33 and XXVI, 34, BA, vol.II, 1948
76. ... *non ex consuetudine iudicantem, sed ex lege lectissima dei omnipotentis, qua formarentur mores regionum et dierum pro regionibus et diebus, cum ipsa ubique ac semper esset...* *Confessiones* III, vii, 13 (46, 7-11).
77. *lex vero aeterna est ratio divina vel voluntas dei ordinem naturalem conservari iubens...* *Contra Faustum* XXII, 27, (621, 13-14). See R. D. Crouse, "The Augustinian Background of St. Anselm's Concept *Iustitia*:", *Canadian Journal of Theology*, Vol. IV (1958), No. 2, p. 117 for a summary of traditional conceptions of justice and Augustine's in particular.
78. *et ea fiunt, cum tu derelinqueris, fons vitae, qui es unus et verus creator et rector universitatis, et privata superbia diligitur in parte unum falsum.* *Confessiones* III, viii, 16 (49, 26-28). Some passages that are helpful for the metaphysical background of this doctrine of true wholes and false wholes are given in Solignac's note on *Confessiones* VII, vii, 11, pp. 679- 681.
79. See Solignac's note ad loc. in the BA edition.
80. Augustine gives a more explicit and detailed account of the way pride is the root of sin in his account of the Fall: *De Civitate Dei* XIV, xiii.
81. *itaque pietate humili reditur in te, et purgas nos a consuetudine mala et propitius es peccatis confitentium... si iam non erigamus adversus te cornua falsae libertatis avaritia plus habendi et damno totum amittendi, amplius anando proprium nostrum quam te, omnium bonum.* *Confessiones* III, viii, 16 (49, 29 - 50, 5).
82. In our view *damno totum amittendi* should be translated with the sense of "with the penalty of losing all" with Gibb and Montgomery rather than with the sense of "with the risk of losing all" with Watts in the Loeb and Trehorel and Bouisseau in the BA edition. Augustine is talking about the "penalty" that results when "iniquity gives itself the lie", not about "risk".

83. *Nec sic defecit homo ut omnino nihil esset, sed ut inclinatus ad se ipsum minus esset quam erat cum ei qui summe est inhaerebat. relicto itaque Deo, esse in semet ipso, hoc est sibi placere, non iam nihil esse sed nihil propinquare. De Civitate Dei XIV, xiii, BA, vol.35.*
84. *si voluntas in amore superioris immutabilis boni, a quo inlustrabatur ut videret et accendebatur ut amaret, stabilis permaneret, non inde ad sibi placendum averteretur et ex hoc tenebresceret et frigesceret... De Civitate Dei XIV, xiii.*
85. *item in facinoribus. ubi libido est nocendi sive per contumeliam sive per iniuriam et utrumque vel ulciscendi causa, sicut inimico inimicus, vel adipiscendi alicuius extra commodi, sicut latro viatori, vel evitandi mali, sicut ei qui timetur, vel invidendo, sicut feliciori miserior aut in aliquo prosperatus ei, quem sibi aequari timet aut aequalem dolet, vel sola voluptate alieni mali, sicut spectatores gladiatorum aut inrisores aut inlusores quorum libet. Confessiones III, viii, 16 (48, 29-49, 8).*
86. That there is a kind of descent in the series of motives for crimes presented here would seem to be supported by a non-philosophical reflection such as the following maxim by La Rochefoucauld: "We pride ourselves on even the most criminal passions, but envy is a timid and shamefaced passion we never dare acknowledge." (On fait souvent vanité des passions même les plus criminelles, mais l'envie est une passion timide et honteuse que l'on n'ose jamais avouer.) La Rochefoucauld, *Maximes*, Paris, Librairie Larousse, 1975, p. 28 The "timidity" and "shamefacedness" of envy separate it from revenge and the desire for gain and have to do with the low level of the images it deals with in the hierarchy of natures.
87. For this idea in Augustine, see *De Diversis Quaestionibus* LXXXIII, Q. 31; *De Civitate Dei* XIX, iv, 3-4.
88. See R. D. Crouse, "The Augustinian Background of St. Anselm's Concept *Iustitia*", *Canadian Journal of Theology*, Vol. IV (1958), No. 2, for a summary of traditional conceptions of justice and Augustine's in particular.
89. See *De Civitate Dei* XIV, xv.
90. ... *te iustius quis vindicat?* *Confessiones* II, vi, 13 (33, 20).
91. For Augustine's teaching about how the idea of a just revenge is to be reconciled with Christ's commandment to "turn the other cheek", see *Contra Faustum* XIX, 25.
92. A modern-day Platonist, Simone Weil, sees the same truth that Augustine is setting forth here: "The search for equilibrium is bad because it is imaginary. Revenge. Even if in fact we kill or torture our enemy it is, in a sense, imaginary." Simone Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, New York, Ark Paperbacks, 1987, p. 6. Augustine says that revenge is a counterfeit of justice at *Epistula* 167, 6, PL, vol.33.
93. *Furtum certe punit lex tua, domine, et lex scripta in cordibus hominum, quam ne ipsa quidem delet iniquitas; quis enim fur aequo animo furem patitur? nec copiosus adactum inopia. Confessiones* II, iv, 9 (30, 4-7).

94. This account of Augustine's view of the law of property follows that of C. J. Starnes, *Augustine's Conversion : A Guide to Confessions I - IX*. See his comments on *Confessiones* II, iv, p. 38-39.
95. *et certe non est interior litterarum scientia quam scripta conscientia, id se alteri facere quod nolit pati. Confessiones* I, xviii, 29 (22, 23-25).
96. See note 93.
97. The essence of envy is captured by Horace in his *Epistle* I, 2, l. 57: "The envious man grows lean when his neighbour waxes fat." [Loeb translation](*invidus alterius macrescit rebus opimis*) Horace, *Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*, London, William Heinemann, 1926. If we can again refer to La Rochefoucauld, he captures the irrationality that makes *invidia* something other than the desire to avoid evil (La Rochefoucauld's "jealousy" corresponds to Augustine's *causa evitandi mali* and his "envy" to Augustine's *invidia*). "Jealousy is in some way just and reasonable because it only tries to preserve a good which belongs to us, or which we think belongs to us, whereas envy is a madness which cannot abide the good of others." (La jalousie est, en quelque manière, juste et raisonnable, puisqu'elle ne tend qu'à conserver un bien qui nous appartient ou que nous croyons nous appartenir, au lieu que l'envie est une fureur qui ne peut souffrir le bien des autres.) La Rochefoucauld, *Maximes*, p. 28.
98. *... fieret a nobis quod eo liberet, quo non liceret. ecce cor meum, deus, ecce cor meum, quod miseratus es in imo abyssi. Confessiones* II, iv, 9 (30, 19-21).
99. On this kind of motivation, see C. J. Starnes, *Augustine's Conversion*, p.57-60, on the theft of pears and the *eversores* of *Confessiones* III, iii.
100. The distinction between envy and pleasure in another's pain is put succinctly by Plutarch: "Envy is pain at another's good, while malignity is pleasure at another's evil." (). Plutarch, *Moralia : On Curiosity*, 518c, London, William Heinemann, 1939. Plutarch's word for "malignity" () occurs in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (1108b) where it is one extreme of which envy () is the other and righteous indignation () is the mean. For Aristotle (and Plutarch) it would seem that envy and malignity are on the same level but opposed. Augustine's "pleasure in another's pain" is a step down from envy as far as its nature is concerned. Nevertheless it seems possible that Augustine got the concept from the tradition stemming from Aristotle.
101. *et credidi miser magis esse misericordiam praestandam fructibus terrae quam hominibus, propter quos nascerentur. si quis enim esuriens peteret, qui manichaeus non esset, quasi capitali supplicio damnanda bucella videretur, si ei daretur. Confessiones* III, x, 18 (51, 9-14). The Manichees were well known for their refusal to give food to beggars, see Alfarc, *L'Evolution Intellectuelle de Saint Augustin*, p. 152-153.
102. In *Contra Faustum* XV, 4-7, Augustine further develops the idea that the consequences of the Manichean mythology are unjust, showing that the Manichean teaching implicitly violates all the Ten Commandments. Augustine accuses the Manichees of extreme injustice at *Contra Faustum* VI, 5; XII, 47; XX, 5; XX, 23.

103. *quod unde viderem, cuius videre usque ad corpus erat oculis et animo usque ad phantasma. Confessiones III, vii, 12 (45, 27- 29).*
104. *haec sunt capita iniquitatis, quae pullulant principandi et spectandi et sentiendi libidine aut una aut duabus earum aut simul omnibus... Confessiones III, viii, 16 (49, 10-11).*
105. *et ea fiunt, cum tu derelinqueris, fons vitae, qui es unus et verus creator et rector universitatis... Confessiones III, viii, 16.*
106. *cum in te peccant, impie faciunt in animas suas... Confessiones III, viii, 16 (49, 16).*
107. *... et mentitur iniquitas sibi... Confessiones III, viii, 16 (49, 17).*
108. *... cum disruptis limitibus humanae societatis laetantur audaces privatis conciliationibus aut diremptionibus, prout quidque delectaverit aut offenderit. Confessiones III, viii, 16 (49, 23- 26).*

Chapter II

The Argument in *Contra Faustum* XXII

Introduction

At about the same time as Augustine was writing the argument about Manicheism and justice which we have just examined, he developed a similar argument at much greater length in the *Contra Faustum*.¹ The *Contra Faustum* is devoted to the refutation of the arguments the Manichees used against the Scriptures, arguments such as the criticisms of the morality of the Old Testament that Augustine lists in *Confessions* III, vii. If we read the *Contra Faustum* beside *Confessions* III, vi - x, we see that questions that are only touched on in the *Confessions* are repeated in a greatly expanded form in the *Contra Faustum*. Here as elsewhere, it is as if Augustine wanted to cover so much in the overall plan of the *Confessions* that he could only give a page or two there for matters that would elsewhere take up a whole treatise.

We will begin our consideration of the argument about justice in the *Contra Faustum* XXII by outlining the structure of the book. Chapters 1 - 5 consist of the criticisms of the Scriptures that Augustine is responding to. Of these, chapter 1 introduces Faustus' criticisms of the Old Testament; chapter 2 deals with the Old Testament law; chapter 3 deals with the Old Testament narratives in general; chapter 4 argues that the Old Testament portrayal of God is anthropomorphic and impious; and chapter 5 makes the specific charges against Old Testament figures that Augustine responds to in the main part of the book.

Augustine begins chapter 6 by saying that the Manichean criticisms result from their not understanding either sanctity (*sanctitas*) or justice (*justitia*).² The whole of book XXII

is structured according to these two main concepts. Faustus' criticisms of the first 4 chapters are addressed by Augustine in chapters 6 - 25 under the heading of *sanctitas* because they mainly deal with the conception of God. Then in chapters 26 and 27 Augustine starts to develop the idea of justice (*justitia*) in response to the specific charges against the figures of the Old Testament. This development occupies the rest of the book (chapters 27 - 98). It is this argument about justice which is our particular interest. However we should briefly consider chapters 6 - 25.

In chapters 6 and 7 Augustine responds to Faustus' criticism of the Old Testament law. He argues that the Manichees do not understand the role of the law in relation to the New Testament. The moral law is fulfilled in the New Testament by the bestowal of grace enabling us to fulfill it. The cultic and ceremonial law is fulfilled because its purpose was to foreshadow the realities which the New Testament proclaims.

Then in chapters 8 - 22 Augustine considers Faustus's criticisms of the way the Old Testament speaks about God. In chapters 8 - 11 Augustine takes up Faustus's criticism of the first verses of Genesis and interprets the light and darkness mentioned there in terms of the theory of intellectual illumination which we have already mentioned in connection with *Confessions* III, vi. In chapters 12 - 14 he defends some of the characteristics that Faustus says are attributed to God in the Old Testament, such as surprise at the goodness of his own creation, from the example of Christ, whom the Manichees accept as God.

In chapters 15 - 20 he defends more aspects of the Old Testament, such as sacrifice and the attribution of jealousy to God, by arguing that even a Pagan could interpret these things in a sense which did not offend piety. In chapter 22 he argues from commonly received morality that even the caricature of the God of the Old Testament that the

Manichees present is better than the god of the Manichees. Here as he often does, Augustine attacks the cruelty of the Manichean god in letting his own members be mixed with the kingdom of darkness and evil. In chapters 23 - 25 he briefly turns aside to defend the actions of the Old Testament figures to Catholic Christians who might misinterpret them. Finally in chapter 26 he turns to consider the nature of sin in order to defend the actions of the patriarchs and prophets against the charges Faustus levels in XXII, 5.

The general character of Augustine's arguments from chapters 6 - 25 is that they are arguments from authority. He argues from natural reason (chapters 8 - 11), from religious truths held in common with the Pagans (chapters 15 - 20), from the New Testament (chapters 12 - 14), and from commonly received morality (chapter 22). None of these are arguments from first principles, but all assume some kind of received doctrine or authority. It seems that he is dealing with Faustus's criticisms just enough to defend the Catholic faith until he gets to the criticisms in response to which he will develop the theme that really interests him in this book; the consideration of what justice really is.

He begins to address this question at chapter 26 and develops a lengthy argument about it, considering as he goes the Old Testament passages Faustus criticizes in XXII, 5 as well as other passages. The argument contains elements that we have already seen in the *Confessions*. It begins with a brief treatment of justice at the level of the order of nature. The question at issue is whether it was just for Abraham to have a child by Sarah's handmaid Hagar or not, and Augustine addresses it by considering the purpose of sex within the order of nature. Augustine then goes on to consider questions of justice that cannot be resolved by referring to the order of nature. In resolving these questions one needs to bring in the mediation of Scripture and of custom and law. Augustine says

(chapters 38 and 39) that the soul's natural goal is union with the Word but because of its weakness it knows the Word first through the forms of mediation it provides.

Augustine goes on to consider these various forms of mediation: custom, law, human experience. These all serve as a kind of preparation for the contemplative life. This section (chapters 41 - 59) culminates in an allegorical exposition of the story of Jacob and of Rachel and Leah, who represent the contemplative and active lives respectively. The question of justice at this point has become how the active and contemplative lives are reconciled. The movement toward contemplation can be either just or unjust and the reconciliation is as yet only in terms of the external mediation of custom, law, or the church.

Then the argument moves toward a final reconciliation of the two, which is to be found in the divine law, which orders every individual life according to its created nature and purpose. This section (chapters 60 - 81) culminates in a discussion of the operation of the eternal law, creating and ruling the whole world, in chapter 78. Justice and injustice, action and contemplation are all seen to be contained in the justice of the eternal law. God who creates all the individual natures of individual men also rules their lives providentially so that they fulfill the purpose for which he created them. Unjust men do nothing but what God allows them to do and nothing that can affect the souls of the just.

Up till now Augustine has been concerned with justice from the point of view of the individual. In chapters 82 - 98 he treats the movement of grace which lies behind individual justice. The argument culminates in the image of Christ, his ascended Head and his body, the Church on earth. The activity of grace, operating through the head is converting the nations into the body so that Christ contains all things in himself. Justice in

the highest sense is cooperating with this gracious activity and injustice is rejecting it. Finally, in chapter 98 we have a picture of the god of Manicheism; impure, cruel, unjust and subject to necessity. Such a belief is seen to be in itself unjust, yet such is the power of the true nature of justice that its pattern is reflected in the pattern of the Manichean falsehoods.

That is a sketch of the argument Augustine gives in chapters 27 - 98. It has three main divisions, corresponding to the divisions of the argument in the *Confessions*: i) the whole of nature (chapters 27 - 35), ii) the whole of mediation, or custom (chapters 36 - 59), and iii) the whole of God's rule or command (chapters 60 - 98). It differs from the argument in the *Confessions* in that the relationship between one division of justice and another is fully articulated in the movement of the argument.

Before he begins this argument, Augustine sets out in chapter 26 a twofold aim. First of all he is going to explain "what sin is" (*quid sit peccatum*) - the argument about justice. Secondly he is going to look at why Scripture includes the material it does: sinful acts of the saints, acts that are not sins (though they might look like them) but are not examples of virtue either, and acts that might mislead the weak by causing them to sin. It is important to note here the sense in which, for Augustine, these are not two separate considerations, justice and hermeneutics. Augustine is defending the justice of the Scriptures and this means both setting forth the idea of justice contained in the Scriptures and defending the way that the Scriptures set that idea forth. Throughout the ensuing argument Augustine deals continually with the question of the *function* of passages for the reader; for instance in chapter 45 he discusses why Scripture should depict sins without condemning them. We will show in our comments on chapter 45 that Augustine argues

that Scripture, by forcing the reader to make his own judgements on some incidents, trains his moral experience. This trained moral experience is one aspect of the idea of justice.

Similarly, other discussions of interpretive difficulties are resolved in terms of the purpose of Scripture in relation to justice. Augustine's aim is always to show that the *method* used by Scripture is just, and the standard for justice is the same one that he is disclosing in his argument. Thus discussions of the principles of Scriptural interpretation are interspersed among discussions of the morality of different Scriptural incidents and characters, but the argument is *one* argument concerning the justice that is there in the Scriptures.

Since the two strands of justice and Scriptural interpretation are closely related, we should be all the more careful to consider a serious difficulty that the modern reader will have with Augustine's argument. Augustine responds to Faustus' specific criticisms of the figures of the Old Testament by taking each passage from the Bible that Faustus criticizes and interpreting it in such a way that the authority of the Old Testament is vindicated. A large part of Augustine's interpretation of the Bible is allegorical, and we will find it difficult to sympathize with his arguments if we do not have some sympathy for, or at least tolerance of, the allegorical interpretation of Scripture. Allegorical interpretation is very strange to the modern reader and yet Augustine has quite a clear rationale for his practice which, although it may not convince us, may at least enable us to listen to what he has to say.

The two main ways of interpreting the Bible, according to Augustine, are literal or historical interpretation, and allegorical or figurative interpretation.³ Literal interpretation (*ad litteram* - according to the letter), the interpretation of the literal sense of Scripture, is

concerned with the matters that are directly referred to by the words of Scripture.⁴ In a historical narrative, for instance, the literal sense of Scripture is the historical events that the Scriptures describe. However the literal sense does not need to be about factual or historical realities. Augustine's *De Genesi ad Litteram*, his "literal" interpretation of the first three chapters of *Genesis*, deals with many supra-historical realities, such as the Creation, but it is a "literal" interpretation because it deals with the matters that the words of *Genesis* actually speak about, in this case philosophical or theological.⁵

Allegorical or figurative interpretation, on the other hand, takes the words of Scripture to mean something other than what they mean directly.⁶ There are various ways that Scripture speaks figuratively⁷ but in each case there is a meaning which is not the direct meaning of the words. So, for example, when Augustine says that Abraham and Sarah as husband and wife represent the ineffable union of the internal Word and the soul, but as brother and sister they represent the relation between believers through grace (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 38), he is interpreting Scripture allegorically. According to Augustine most passages of the Old Testament have both a literal and an allegorical or more than one allegorical meaning.⁸

When Augustine is challenged as to whether allegorical readings of Scripture are really valid, as he is by Faustus (*Contra Faustum* XII, 1), he defends the practice first of all from the example of the New Testament, which both he and the Manichees accepted as authoritative. He often quotes 1 *Corinthians* 10, 6 "All these things were types for us" (*omnia illa figurae nostrae fuerunt* - (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 24) as validating the reading of allegories in the Old Testament. He also quotes New Testament allegories as models, such as the passage in the 4th chapter of Galatians where the children of Hagar and Sarah represent the old and new covenants respectively (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 51).

Augustine argues that many passages in the Old Testament would have no significance if they did not possess an allegorical meaning. The events of scripture cannot be meaningless if "all these things were types for us". As well the universal esteem in which Scripture is held ensures that it all has meaning (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 96). Providence would not have turned so many people to God through the instrument of the Scriptures if they were not full of profound divine meanings. Some of Augustine's arguments in this vein may seem quaint:

Abraham is commanded to sacrifice his son: we may allow that this proof of his obedience was required in order to make it conspicuous to all ages... But what had the shedding of ram's blood to do with Abraham's trial? or if it was necessary to complete the sacrifice, was the ram any the better of being caught by the horns in a bush? The human mind, is led by the consideration of the way in which these apparently superfluous things are blended with what is necessary, first to acknowledge their significance, and then to try to discover it.⁹ *Contra Faustum* XII, 38.

Thus Augustine thinks that rationality and piety will lead us to discover the allegorical meanings in Scripture.

Allegory gives a contemporary relevance to passages that would otherwise not have any. For instance, in Augustine's day many intellectual Christians were inclined to leave the active life of the world in favour of a contemplative retreat. The church would often co-opt such individuals into serving with their intellectual gifts as bishops. Augustine sees this situation allegorized in his interpretation of the story of Leah obtaining a night with Jacob in return for some mandrake root (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 58). This might seem absurd but we must take Augustine very seriously when he quotes "all these things were types for us". The Old Testament stories were meant to address contemporary situations.

Relevance was one reason for allegorical interpretation. Another was the pleasure that the studious Christian got from discerning the allegorical significance for a passage (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 38). This pleasure was linked to the benefit the interpretation of allegory provided for the learner:

The presentation of truth through signs has great power to feed and fan that ardent love by which, as under some law of gravitation, we flicker upwards, or inwards, to our place of rest.¹⁰
Epistula 55, xi, 21.

Another reason for allegorical meanings is the support they give to the believer by showing that the events of the New Testament were foreshadowed throughout the Old (*Contra Faustum* XII, 45). Some of these many prophetic foreshadowings are given in *Contra Faustum* XII. Augustine believes that faith will have no difficulty discerning them (*Contra Faustum* XII, 46). We will discover further reasons for the presence of allegorical meanings in Scripture as we follow the course of the argument in *Contra Faustum* XXII (especially in connection with chapters 95 - 96).

The modern reader will object to the seeming arbitrariness of this procedure but despite the objections of some like Faustus it was common in the ancient world.¹¹ While our purpose is not to defend allegorical interpretation, the ways in which it is not as arbitrary as it at first seems should be noted. All allegorical meanings must conform to what Augustine calls the rule of faith. The rule of faith is the reliable consensus of Scripture (as seen in the literal passages where the sense is obvious) and of the tradition of the church.¹² All Scripture must be interpreted in accordance with the rule of faith, and so when Augustine sets out the rules for the interpretation of Scripture in the *De Doctrina Christiana*, he begins with a summary of the Christian faith. This might seem like a strange procedure in itself, defining what a book is going to be about before you interpret it. Rather, it seems that what Augustine has in mind is a kind of dialogue between the text of

Scripture and the body of belief that goes with it. The presupposition of this dialogue is that the truth has been revealed to us, and through Scripture and tradition we can enter into that revelation. The rule of faith exists as a measure for all interpretations of Scripture as a result of the sufficiency of the revelation in Scripture and the faithful preservation of it in the church.

The rule of faith provides one sort of objectivity. A different sort of objectivity is given to allegorical interpretation by the care with which the text itself is approached. Augustine's writings on Scripture continually show evidence of the care and precision with which he studies the literal sense of the text on which the allegory is based. An example from *Contra Faustum* XXII is the trouble that Augustine takes to investigate the properties of the mandrake root to arrive at the allegorical interpretation mentioned above. In the *De Doctrina Christiana* he talks about the importance of linguistic, historical, natural and geographical knowledge for determining accurately the literal meaning of the text.¹³ The flights of allegory may seem to us to leave the text behind but Augustine does insist that the text the interpretation arises from has been understood as thoroughly as possible and the rule of faith is never left behind.

Nevertheless Augustine does allow for a strong subjective element in allegorical interpretation. He says that there can be more than one valid interpretation and that the Biblical writers may not have had all of them in mind.¹⁴ When Augustine reads that "All these things are types for us" the "us" - our situation and thought is very much part of the process of interpretation. This is because Augustine sees the allegorical meaning of Scripture as a reaching out of God through his word in Scripture to the church. Augustine argues that all of Scripture must have meaning for us because it is that reaching out to us of God's grace. The problem posed by Augustine's allegorical interpretation of Scripture is in

fact very similar to the problem which we saw already in connection with the whole of custom. How can the changing content of custom or the changing content of allegorical meaning be the vehicle of God's unchanging truth?

It would be a mistake to see Augustine as primarily the champion of the allegorical interpretation of Scripture. As his successive attempts to interpret *Genesis*, culminating in his "literal" interpretation, show, Augustine was more devoted to establishing the literal sense.¹⁵ However he did think that the Old Testament had both a literal sense and an allegorical sense, and in *Contra Faustum XXII*, he provides both.

Let us now go on to consider the argument about justice in *Contra Faustum XXII* in detail, beginning at chapter 27. It will assist us to follow the progress of the argument in book XXII if we number the chapters as we comment on them. Some chapters will not receive comment because what Augustine says about Scripture is also true of his own writing; some passages are there only in order to provide links between other passages (*Contra Faustum XXII*, 94).

The Whole of Nature

Chapter 27. Augustine introduces his argument about justice by giving a definition of it in chapters 27 - 28. Sin or injustice is defined as follows:

Therefore sin is a deed or a speech or a desire contrary to the eternal law. But the eternal law is the reason or the will of God which commands that the natural order be preserved and forbids that it be disturbed.¹⁶ *Contra Faustum XXI*, 27.

Here we see the first and the third parts of the account of justice in *Confessions* III, viii.

The "eternal law", which is the "divine reason" or the "will of God", is the "whole of

God's rule" which we saw in the *Confessions*.¹⁷ Contained within it is the "natural order", which is the "whole of nature" from the *Confessions*. The other part, the whole of custom, will enter the argument at *Contra Faustum* XXII, 36.

Now justice is obedience to the "eternal law", which is conformity to the divine reason and the divine will. If the "eternal law" is obeyed then the natural order in human beings will be preserved. This natural order, according to Augustine, is i) the body, ii) the lower soul that we share with the animals, iii) the active reason, and iv) the contemplative reason. Each higher part rules the parts below it, with the contemplative reason ruling all.

When humanity is perfected in heaven the natural order within us will operate as it was intended to. We will be like the angels who both contemplate God directly and obey him willingly, because they are not alienated from the divine reason and will. However our life on earth is lived with the natural order in us disrupted. The lower parts of the soul are not properly ruled by the higher parts, and their disordering influence clouds the contemplative reason's capacity to contemplate the divine reason directly. Thus we must live by faith, in obedience to God's revelation, as the contemplative part of our minds, the *imago dei*, is healed and we are "reformed through faith to sight".¹⁸ In this life, this process is always incomplete.

Thus Augustine says:

But we, whose bodies are dead through sin, until God makes our mortal bodies alive also, live justly, according to the measure of our infirmity, following the eternal law, by which the natural order is preserved, if we live from an unfeigned faith, which operates through love, having in a good conscience the hope stored up in the heavens of immortality and incorruptibility, and of the very perfecting of justice to an ineffable satiety...¹⁹

Contra Faustum XXII, 27.

The hope that guides our attempt to live justly is the hope of a restoration of the natural order in us and of our mind's capacity to contemplate and obey the "eternal law". This involves the reconciliation and harmonizing in us of the active and contemplative life as they are in harmony in the angels.

Chapter 28. Our mortal lives are to be lived in the hope of a restoration of the natural order in our souls. As far as our own activity goes this means that the lower affections (*mortales delectationes*) need to be restored to their proper order in subordination to the active and contemplative reason:

Therefore the action of a man who obeys the faith which is obedient to God, restrains all the mortal affections and keeps them within a natural limit, placing the better over the inferior ones with an ordered affection.²⁰

Contra Faustum XXII, 28.

"Placing the better over the inferior affections" is the way one lives justly according to the natural order, the "whole of nature". The mortal affections, for instance hunger and sexual desire, are to be restrained to keep their "natural limit" and to be ruled by the higher faculties of the mind.

The affections are such that, in his original condition, man had the possibility of either restraining them from improper objects or not. Our restoration, says Augustine, operates through this same possibility of limiting the affections through the rule of the reason. It is a matter of restoring the proper order in us. The goal is the perfecting of justice in us, but this is something for which we must hunger and thirst as long as we "walk by faith" in this life.

Chapter 30. Augustine has established in chapter 29 that the lower affections are meant to be indulged or restrained in accord with the purpose of the preservation of humanity

through nourishment and procreation. With this and the definition of chapters 27 and 28 before us we can now consider the first incident from Scripture that is singled out by Faustus as an example of the immorality of the Old Testament. The story is from *Genesis* 16: 1-4. Sarah asks Abraham to have a child by her servant Hagar since she is barren herself. Faustus calls this "an insane desire for children" (*insana cupidine prolis*). He evidently thinks this episode was caused by a disordered passion for children that caused Abraham to act immorally in having sexual relations outside his marriage. Augustine defends Abraham, arguing from the order of nature according to which the proper end of sexual passion is procreation.

Augustine's argument is that what is evident in the story of Abraham and Sarah and Hagar is an instance of just action. Sexual passion is kept within its natural limit by the rule of the mind.

Chapter 31. Augustine goes on to argue that Sarah's willingness to give her husband to her handmaid shows that her action was just as well. She was not jealous, as a woman motivated by the lower passions would have been, but wanted children "according to the natural order".

Chapter 32. Finally Augustine responds to Faustus's charge that Sarah and Abraham were moved by a lack of faith to try to have children in this way. Faustus assumes that Abraham lacks the faith to believe God's promise that Sarah will bear a child in her old age. Augustine points out that since Abraham had not yet received that promise, it was not a lack of faith but the desire to provide an heir for himself that motivated Abraham.

If we consider this chapter alongside the last two chapters, it seems that Augustine has considered the justice of the story according to three different parts of the order in man. First the affections Abraham exhibited in having intercourse with Hagar were just because they were directed at their proper end; this shows that there was justice with respect to the body and the lower soul. Second, Sarah's control over her passions shows justice according to the mind, which properly rules the passions. Third, the defence of Abraham's faith shows that the intuitive or contemplative mind, which rules the other faculties in this world through faith, is in a just relation to the rest. As in the *Confessions*, we see that the justice of the order of nature is the proper correspondence of the various human faculties to their proper objects and Augustine has shown by that standard that Abraham and Sarah were acting justly.

Chapter 33. In chapter 33 Augustine replies to the second of Faustus's charges. Faustus refers to two episodes in the book of *Genesis* (chapters 12 and 20) where Abraham is in a foreign kingdom and pretends that the beautiful Sarah is his sister and not his wife, for fear that someone will kill him and take her. In both episodes, Sarah is taken into the king's household in the belief that she is Abraham's sister. When God makes known to the king that she is Abraham's wife, Sarah is returned to Abraham along with many gifts. Faustus, misreading the story, writes as if Abraham in these episodes were selling Sarah for gain. Augustine corrects this and goes on to argue that, according to the order of nature, Abraham's action was just.

Again the issue turns on whether the story concerns passions that are within the "natural limit" or not. Abraham's desire to preserve his own life is not an unjust passion and so, unless he acted out of a lack of faith in God's protection, he did not behave unjustly.

The Whole of Custom

Chapter 36. In chapter 36 we come to the point that marks a real advance in the argument. It arises from the question of whether Abraham would have shown more faith if he had simply trusted God for his safety rather than acting out a subterfuge. This is a question that cannot be decided from the order of nature. The order of nature tells you that you should preserve your life but it does not tell you whether it is better to act to save it or to trust in God. Augustine says that according to "sound doctrine" (*sanam doctrinam*) Abraham acted rightly by using the human means at his disposal so as not to "tempt God". Augustine supports his view with examples from Scripture, from the life of Christ and the life of St. Paul that show them using available human means to save their lives. The application of the principle is that since Abraham faced two dangers, the danger to his life and to Sarah's chastity, and had only the means to save his own life, he rightly did what he could about the one and trusted to God about the other.

The idea of justice that has now been introduced is beyond the justice of the whole of nature. According to that justice one might have supposed that since the "higher" is to rule the "lower" it would have been better for Abraham to have trusted in God than to try and save his life. God is a higher principle than human activity, and faith, which is the way the contemplative reason rules in this world where we "walk by faith", is a higher operation of the soul than the instinct for self-preservation. However, in this case to adhere to the "higher" would be "tempting God" because the "lower" would not be preserved. The instinct for self-preservation, which made Abraham want to save his life from the king, is not to be simply done away with in the cause of faith.

As the eternal law "preserves the order of nature and forbids the disruption of it", so faith does not preclude human activity but sustains it. However, this is not a truth that can come from the whole of nature itself. The justice of the whole of nature, where faculties of the soul must correspond to their natural objects and the higher must rule the lower, is not sufficient to deal with questions about God's rule in the world, such as whether it is proper to trust in God or have recourse to human means. For this a mediating truth, a truth that does not arise from the whole of nature but comprehends it, is necessary. In this case it is the mediating truth of Scripture and "sound doctrine": that one should not "tempt God" (*Matthew 4: 7*), and the doctrinal principle which comes from that, that one should avail oneself of human means when they are available.

Chapter 37. The argument continues to deal with questions about justice where recourse to mediating truth is necessary. Augustine raises the question of whether Sarah's chastity would really have been violated if one of the kings had had intercourse with her since her intention would have been to save her husband's life. Augustine says that he is not clear how this would have involved a breach of the "natural limit for the passions" any more than Abraham's intercourse with Hagar did.²¹

However, Augustine rejects the idea that this could have been permissible. He says that it is not the same for a woman to have intercourse with two different men as it is for a man to have intercourse with two different women, because of the force of principles (*propter vim principiorum*). It is not yet entirely clear what this phrase, which is also used in *De Bono Coniugali XVII, 20* as part of the same explanation of the difference between polygamy and polyandry²², is meant to signify. However, the next chapter sheds light on the question.

Chapter 38. In this chapter, Augustine interprets the story of Abraham and Sarah and the two kings allegorically. He sees an allegorical significance to Sarah, secretly the wife of Abraham but openly his sister, preserved in her chastity by God. Sarah is an allegory of the Church who is secretly married to Christ the heavenly bridegroom. The "marriage" of the Church and Christ is represented by the secret marriage of Sarah and Abraham because:

...secretly and inwardly in the hidden depths of the spirit the human soul inheres to the Word of God, so that the two are one flesh, which great sacrament of marriage in the Church and in Christ Jesus the apostle commands.²³

Contra Faustum XXII, 38.

Marriage itself is a sacrament of the Church and Christ Jesus (Ephesians 5, 31-32), in that it represents the hidden union of the soul and the Word. Just as the faithfulness of Sarah to her husband is only revealed through the threat to it posed by the kings, so the faithfulness of the Church to Christ was revealed by the persecutions of the pagan Roman rulers.

This is the first allegorical meaning Augustine sees in the passage and the explanation of the "force of principles" which causes polyandry to differ from polygamy may be here. Augustine says that the faithfulness of the Church to Christ is "as to a principle":

...the earthly kingdom of the age...would not have experienced or found the Church to be the spouse of Christ, that is, how faithfully she adhered to Him, subjected to her husband as to a principle, till it tried to violate her...²⁴

Contra Faustum XXII, 38.

Thus Augustine states that the Church adhered to Christ during the persecutions "as to a principle" (*tamquam principio*).²⁵ The relationship of Christ to the Church and the relationship of the Word to the soul are like the relationship of a principle to what it is the principle of. This would seem to be the reason why polygamy, for Augustine, can be permissible whereas polyandry cannot. The unity of the Word in relation to what it is the

principle of, can be represented by a husband and more than one wife but not by a wife and more than one husband.

The meaning of "the force of principles" by which polygamy is different than polyandry seems to be that there is a symbolism given in Scripture wherein the male represents the Word and the female represents the soul.²⁶ This symbolic meaning of marriage is not to be found by considering the natural order simply. It is a mediating truth, given in Scripture. It is on the basis of this kind of truth that the argument proceeds.

Chapter 39. The second allegory that Augustine sees in this story is based on another detail: that Sarah, who is Abraham's half-sister (*Genesis* 20, v.12), is related to him through his father but not his mother. This, Augustine takes to symbolically represent the relationship in which the Church is the sister of Christ by grace. The brother-sister relationship between Sarah and Abraham, coming through the father, represents a relationship by grace, as against a natural relationship which would be through the mother. Augustine quotes Christ's teaching that whoever does the will of God is brother and sister and mother to him, showing that the relationship by grace is more fundamental than the natural relationship.

Chapter 40. In chapter 40 it is made clear that what Augustine is speaking of in this second allegory is precisely the mediating truth that has been introduced into the argument at this point. Augustine says here that the hidden relationship between the soul and the Word is difficult to understand; that is symbolized by Abraham's secret marriage to Sarah. However, the relationship by which Christ is a brother to the Church, the relationship of his humanity to the Church as fellow heirs of grace is easily seen; it is symbolized by the open brother-sister relationship between Abraham and Sarah. In other words the inner

relationship of the Christian to God is difficult to understand but it is made clearer by the mediating truth of Christ's humanity and of the Church itself, where the members are related to Christ and show forth Christ by grace.

We cannot grasp the truth of the Word directly so we are given the mediating truths of Christ's humanity and the Church instead. They come to us by grace in that they reveal to us truths that we would not grasp according to the order of nature. The end of the mediation is that we ultimately be able to contemplate the truth of the Word directly. This we cannot do without the assistance of mediating truth in the Scriptures and elsewhere and we cannot ever do it completely in this life.

Thus the allegory of Abraham and Sarah as brother and sister reveals both the purpose of the introduction of mediating truth and the principle which justifies it. The purpose is that we come to such contemplation of the Word as we can achieve in this life by means that our weakness is capable of. The truths that have been introduced are such that from the starting point of the natural order we could not know them ourselves. They need to be given to us. The principle which justifies this is the incarnation, which is God's provision of mediation to humanity. As the humanity of Christ mediates between our humanity and God, so the mediating truths of this stage of the argument mediate to a true contemplation of the Word. Following the argument in the *Confessions* we have called this stage of the argument the whole of custom but custom is only one of the forms the mediating truth takes. So far we have seen it also in the form of "sound doctrine", of the Scriptural symbolism of male and female, and of the Church.

Chapter 41. Now Augustine turns to the story of Lot, also singled out for criticism by Faustus for incest, and continues to use allegorical interpretation. The story, from *Genesis*

19, is that Lot is living in Sodom with his family when two angels in the guise of men come down to destroy the city. Lot and his family are spared because of his righteousness. As they flee the city Lot's wife looks back on its destruction and is turned into a pillar of salt. Later Lot's daughters, thinking there are no more men left to have children by, make Lot drunk, sleep with him, and conceive children.

The first allegory that Augustine finds in this story is taken from the figure of Lot living justly while surrounded by the evil of Sodom. This symbolizes the Church surrounded by the world and yet pointing towards God. In the second allegory, Lot's wife looking back at Sodom and being destroyed symbolizes those who are called by grace but look back rather than "looking forward to the things that are before". These two allegories are a continuation of the argument from chapter 40 where we saw the Church as a mediated form in which by grace, the soul's relationship to the Word is seen in the world. For the Church to point in this way to the Word it must remain oriented towards God though it is surrounded by evil. If it looks backward and participates in the evil around it then it perishes, like Lot's wife.

The third allegory, based on the episode of Lot being made drunk by his daughters, continues the argument a step further:

For then Lot seems to have prefigured the future law which those who have been begotten by it and are placed under it, "make drunk", in a sense, when they misunderstand it and not using it legitimately, bring forth the works of unbelief. "For the law is good", says the apostle if a man uses it lawfully".²⁷ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 41.

If the subject matter of the first two allegories is the Church, either oriented towards the Word or the world, the third allegory is about what happens to the mediating truth if the Church (or one of its members) does not "seek the things that are before". Instead of

pointing to the Word the mediating truth, here called the law, is ..."made drunk" by those who "use it unlawfully". Those who use it unlawfully are those who are "begotten by the law", who have accepted the mediating truth, but look back and succumb to the sin of the world. They then distort the mediating truth. Thus not "looking forward to the things before" produces heresy (the context of the quotation, from 1 *Timothy* 1:8, about "using the law unlawfully" shows that it refers to heretics). Heresies are not produced by those who simply belong to the order of nature but rather by those who accept the need for a mediating truth to God and then from sinful motives distort that truth.

With the introduction of doctrine, of Scripture, of the Church we were introduced to a kind of truth that went beyond the order of nature. Now we see that this movement brings with it a different kind of justice. The mediating truth of Scripture and the Church had become the determining whole for justice but if it is not held to "by an unfeigned faith, with the hope of immortality and of the perfecting of justice" then the result is a distortion of the mediating truth. Heresy is a new kind of injustice that could not be there in the whole of nature.

Chapter 43. Augustine goes on to consider new aspects of justice that are opened up by the introduction of mediating truth. In the next two chapters he considers the moral complexities involved in the actions of Lot and his daughters when his daughters made Lot drunk and slept with him in order to have children. Here, the universal prohibition against incest is assumed to be an inviolable mediating truth, which Lot's daughters abrogated out of their natural desires for children. Without going into the details of his analysis, it is clear that the question of motives assumes a prominent place in the argument at this point:

For an account of justice not only considers what was done but also why it was done, so that it may examine deeds from their causes with a balanced equity.²⁸

Contra Faustum XXII, 43.

In these chapters we are no longer dealing simply with objective acts in which there is either a just relation of affections and their objects or not. The objective acts of Lot and his daughters are admittedly wrong; the question concerns motives that do not have a simple objective expression. In posing a question such as "why did Lot get drunk?" Augustine is again beyond the justice of the whole of nature.

Chapter 45. After his speculations about the motives of Lot and his daughters Augustine poses the question of why Scripture includes the examples of bad actions without explicitly condemning them. He answers that it is so we can exercise our experiential knowledge (*peritia*) by considering and forming judgements about these cases for ourselves. Here the basis of the speculation about motives is shown. Unlike the justice of the whole of nature where determining what is just is a matter of the objective correlation of affections and their objects, now Augustine is considering matters which need a combination of the understanding of the principles of natural justice and also human experience to unravel. Judgements about justice at this stage of the argument are made by identifying with the persons in question and bringing to bear a trained moral experience.

It is a question at this stage whether these kind of moral judgements could be resolved into the terms of the whole of nature: the preservation of the natural order in the soul by keeping the affections directed to their natural objects. If so, then it is the complexity of the affections which makes it impossible to consider such cases on any other basis than trained experience. It is also possible that something else has entered into the argument: a place for particularities and subjective considerations that could not be

considered in the whole of nature. This question will become more clearly focused as the argument proceeds.

Chapter 46. Augustine now takes up Faustus' charge against Isaac, that he does the same thing as Abraham in trying to pass off his wife Rebekah as his sister to save his life in a foreign kingdom (*Genesis* 26). Augustine says that the same defence will suffice for Isaac that he had used for Abraham. However he goes on to consider the episode for the sake of the "more studious" and it should be noted that he focuses on a part of the story that Faustus had not objected to. Here we can see that Augustine is not simply responding to Faustus, he is developing his own argument and he discusses that part of the story which adds to his argument.

Abimelech, the king, discovers that Rebekah is Isaac's wife when he sees him playing with her in a way that only a husband would. Augustine addresses the reader who wonders at a holy man's condescension in engaging in a "low" activity. Isaac, says Augustine, was making a concession to feminine weakness, a concession which "belongs to human custom" (*ad mores humanitatis pertinet*).

Augustine reproves those who are so severe that they would not admit the concessions to human weakness that custom dictates. As the mediating truth of "sound doctrine" allowed the use of human expedients to preserve one's life, so the mediating truth of human custom provides guidelines about what may be justly permitted in light of human weakness. The truth of custom is the collected human experience of society and so it is the proper basis for making judgements of complex or mixed motives. It is also one of the measures for determining when it is proper to subordinate the "lower" to the "higher" and when human weakness makes it more expedient to make concessions to the "lower".

Augustine's allegorical interpretation of the incident fits this stage of the argument. Isaac accommodating himself to his wife's weakness signifies Christ accommodating himself to his spouse, the Church. Again, the Incarnation is the basis for admitting mediating truth into the determining of justice. Augustine is willing to admit custom as a kind of authority in matters of justice because he thinks that such mediating truth is made legitimate by Christ's mediation.

Chapter 47. The idea of custom gets a further and more explicit treatment in Augustine's response to Faustus's next charge. The charge is that Jacob had four wives (Leah and Rachel and their handmaids - *Genesis* 29-30) who bargained for him out of lust. The last part of this charge is a reference to the story in *Genesis* 30 where Rachel gives Leah a night with Jacob in exchange for some mandrakes Leah had.

Augustine first takes up the matter of the polygamy and his defence is different from the one he made for Abraham's polygamy in *Contra Faustum* XXII, 30. There he defended Abraham because his polygamy was not contrary to the order of nature. Here Augustine defends Jacob because his polygamy was not contrary to custom. Custom permitted polygamy in Jacob's day so it was just; now it forbids it, so it is unjust:

When it was custom it was no crime; now it is a crime
because it is not custom.²⁹ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 47.

Augustine here repeats two parts of the three part scheme of justice: there are sins against nature, sins against custom, and sins against "precepts".³⁰ The latter phrase refers to custom that has been turned into positive law. Polygamy is not contrary to nature as he has already shown. He now points out that there were then no laws against it. Therefore it can be said to be just according to the justice of custom.

When Augustine says that polygamy would be a crime in his own day although it is not contrary to nature, he is making it very clear that for him custom is a legitimate mediation of divine truth that is to be obeyed. By mores or custom Augustine includes such laws of the community that are not based solely on the order of nature or divine command but reflect the community's way of ordering itself. Even though customs change, they are binding on those in society.

Here we have a part of justice that is separate from the order of nature and part of the realm of human subjectivity. Human society determines how it will order itself and that will be a genuine manifestation of the order of justice. It is based on the principle that we saw in *Confessions* III, viii, that the parts exist to fit into the whole. Augustine says that if society's customs and laws are disregarded, "that society" is injured "for which the propagation of children is necessary":

Whoever despises [the current custom and law against polygamy] even if he only uses several wives for the sake of procreation, nevertheless sins because he violates that society for which the propagation of children is necessary.³¹
Contra Faustum XXII, 47.

This statement is very interesting because it implies that the whole of the custom of human society is more important than propagation, which is part of the order of nature.

In our age we tend to have naturalistic assumptions and it would seem to us that the justice of the natural order was more fundamental than the justice of human custom. However it seems that Augustine is saying something different here. The justice by which human society determines how it is ordered with respect to institutions like marriage seems to be given a greater importance than the natural justice that belongs to sex and procreation. The natural process of procreation has human society as its end.

The justice of the order of nature might seem more fundamental because it has abstracted from it the changing factors of contingent historical developments, individual differences, motivations, etc. that make up the human world. Thus the justice of the order of nature seems to have a universality that the human world does not. However Augustine's argument seems to be moving in the opposite direction. The more of these changing, human, subjective factors that are taken into account, the higher the kind of justice that is involved. This direction is reflected in Augustine's statement that human society is the end for which the propagation of children is necessary; the movement is away from what is merely natural and towards human custom and society.³²

Now perhaps we can begin to say something about the question that we raised in connection with chapter 45: whether the mediating truth of custom adds something to the argument or whether it simply enables us to deal with questions that are too complex to judge clearly in the context of the whole of nature. It seems that Augustine does think that the mediating truths he is introducing to the argument are changing its character in a fundamental way. When he says that the propagation of mankind is for the sake of society, he seems to see in society a whole that is more than the sum of its natural parts. Society is a whole made up of customs and laws which determine questions of justice that are too complex to deal with according to the order of nature but it is not just an artificial construction created by this necessity over a more substantial "natural" framework. It is a whole in its own right and the human subjective and particular matters that make it less "objective" do not hinder it from being a more complete and substantial whole than the whole of nature.

How this can be is not clear yet but we can see that the change in the character of the argument changes the end toward which it is moving.

The end of the argument is to contemplate the justice of the eternal law. In moving towards this end the including of the contingent realm of human custom, experience, and human subjectivity is thought to contribute to the content of that eternal law. The justice of the eternal law will be universal but not merely natural. It will include faith and the authority of revealed doctrine, so that questions like the one about whether Abraham ought to have trusted in God or used natural means to preserve his life can be answered in a universal way.

We have said that Augustine's argument runs contrary to a modern naturalistic attitude. However, someone might truly object that Augustine is not writing against modern naturalism, he is writing against Manicheism. It may be sufficient for our purposes to note that just as a naturalistic attitude resolves human society into natural principles that are thought to be more fundamental, the Manichees resolve human society into spiritual principles that are thought to be more fundamental. In neither case is human society and custom thought to be upheld by a universal order. In the case of Manicheism it is easy enough to see that Manichean doctrine would, if adopted, leave nothing left of traditional society. Manicheism, as Augustine says, would create a society in which eating a fig would be a capital crime.

Chapter 48. Augustine has been defending Jacob against Faustus' criticism of his polygamy on the grounds of the authority of custom. He goes on to defend Jacob against the charge that in his relations with his wives he was motivated by lust. In making this defence Augustine introduces another mediating truth with a different character, the

mediation of law. It is different than custom because it possesses a kind of absoluteness that custom does not have. Laws have the character of making situations just in a certain sense whether the people under them have good will or not.

In chapter 48 Augustine says that the charge of lustfulness against Jacob and the other patriarchs with more than one wife arises because the Manichees do not understand that the patriarchs possessed a temperance which was fully obedient to the law. In them, says Augustine:

... the soul ruling the flesh is so remarkable for the power of its temperance that it does not permit the movement of carnal pleasure, placed in the nature of mortals for the purpose of procreation, to exceed the given laws.³³

Contra Faustum XXII, 48.

The law that Augustine is referring to, as becomes clear in chapter 49, is the law of 1 Corinthians 7 in which husband and wife have power over each other's bodies and owe each other the "marital debt" of sexual relations, which Augustine takes as applying universally. This law prescribes sexual relations, so it is impossible to tell whether those who obey it are acting out of obedience or out of lust.

In this, says Augustine, it is like the truth of the Gospel, which can be preached by people of good will or bad. However, the character of the Gospel is such that it can bring others to eternal life whatever the motives of those who preach it. Similarly the law governing marriage brings it about that children come into the world which is a good, whatever the motives behind their generation. With both the Gospel and the law governing marriage there is a mediating truth that is able to make good or bad affections come to the same good end.

In this both of these mediating truths are different than custom. Custom is obeyed because it is assumed by those for whom it is an authority. Custom is not far enough removed from the affections to bring good and bad wills together towards a common good end. The law and the Gospel are both wholes that are capable of remaining themselves despite the individual human wills that are opposed to them.

Chapter 49. Augustine argues that the arrangement between Leah and Rachel, that Jacob spend the night with Leah, demonstrates that the marital arrangements of Jacob and his wives were according to law and not passion. Rachel and Leah could not have made such a bargain, and Jacob would not have honoured it if the law governing marriage had not been honoured by them all, the marital “rights” would not have been secure enough to be binding:

The order was all the stronger because there was no passion;
and the rights of conjugal authority were more securely
preserved inasmuch as there the lawlessness of carnal desire
was avoided.³⁴ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 49.

Chapter 50. Augustine goes on to argue that Jacob's acceptance of the arrangement of his wives shows that he was not only under the law governing marriage, his will was in accord with the intention of the law. We saw that Augustine sees in law a mediation of the truth which is able to hold together both good and bad wills in one common purpose. The mind and will of Jacob are so much in harmony with the law that the possibility is opened up that he or a person like him will begin to grasp the purpose of the law in a contemplative way. This possibility opens up the next stage of the argument.

Chapter 52. Augustine now gives a series of allegorical interpretations of the story of Jacob, Leah, Rachel, and the two handmaids of Leah and Rachel. The first of these marks the new stage the argument has reached. It concerns Leah and Rachel, whose names are

said to mean "labour" and "the principle made visible" or "the Word from which the principle is seen". From these etymologies and from Leah's poor sight and Rachel's beauty Augustine takes Leah to represent the active life and Rachel the contemplative life. Then Augustine goes on to interpret the story of Jacob's marriage to Leah and Rachel. In the story Jacob works seven years in order to marry Rachel but he is tricked into marrying Leah instead. Then he has to work another seven years for Rachel. The fact that Jacob works for Rachel and not Leah means that the life of justice or the active life is lived not for its own sake but for the sake of contemplation. The first seven years of service represent the seven commandments having to do with the love of one's neighbour. When these are obeyed as much as possible one finds that rather than the delights of contemplation the result is the labour of enduring temptation, then another seven years must be served. These represent the seven Beatitudes.

In this allegorical scheme the end which the Christian is following is the hope of the eternal contemplation of God, represented by Rachel. The seven years of service, representing the seven commandments concerned with the love of one's neighbour correspond to the stage of the mediation of the law that we saw in the last section, chapters 48 - 50. However, the law as it is set externally over against the mind and affections does not lead to the delight of contemplation, but to the labour of fighting temptation. It is only when the mind and affections are brought into harmony with the law that the way to contemplation is opened. That bringing of the mind and affections into harmony with the law is what Augustine thinks is signified by the seven Beatitudes. These are concerned with the struggle of the heart to will what is intended by the law, as Jacob willed what the law of marriage intended in chapter 50.³⁵

The difference between the mediation of law as it appears here and as it appeared in the previous stage of the argument (chapters 48 - 50) is that here the interest is in the moral struggle to obey the law as that struggle prepares one for contemplation. To follow the seven commandments and the seven Beatitudes is to serve justice and justice is pursued for the sake of contemplation:

No one turns under the grace of the remission of sins to serve justice, unless so that he may quietly live in the Word from which the Principle is seen, which is God.³⁶
Contra Faustum XXII, 52.

We saw that the possibility of a contemplative life emerged when the mind and the affections were in harmony with law, which was able to unite good wills and bad to a common end. This ability of law to remain itself, independent of personal motives provides a starting point for the one whose mind and affections are in harmony with it, to the contemplation of intelligible realities that also remain themselves, independent of personal passions.

Furthermore, the introduction of the possibility of contemplation means that there are now both an active and a contemplative life which need to be brought into relation with each other. Augustine says that the active life of serving justice is for the sake of the contemplative life. However the active life comes first in the proper progression of human life:

But in the proper educating of man the labour of doing those things which are just comes before the pleasure of understanding those things which are true.³⁷
Contra Faustum XXII, 52.

Chapter 53. Augustine finds the proper idea of the relation of the active and contemplative lives summed up in a verse from *Ecclesiasticus* (*Ecclus.* 1:33): "You have desired wisdom; keep the commandments and the Lord will give it to you." Of this verse, he says:

... the commandments are those having to do with justice; but the justice which is from faith is occupied with the uncertainties of temptations, so that piously believing what it does not yet understand, the reward of understanding may follow.³⁸
Contra Faustum XXII, 53.

The active life is lived by faith, amidst the uncertain knowledge of the realm of temptations and passions. "By faith" here means that the individual whose goal is contemplation lives amid the passions and temptations of the active life, holding to the goal of contemplation even while that cannot be grasped by the mind. "The reward of understanding" comes when the virtues formed through the "labour of doing those things which are just" enable the soul to contemplate the unchanging truth.

We saw back in chapter 27 that the natural order in man called for the contemplative reason to rule the soul. Since its capacity had been impaired, the soul was governed by faith, grasping by faith the knowledge that the contemplative reason would know directly if it was able to, and ruling itself on the basis of this knowledge. The rule of faith was accompanied by the hope of the restoration of the contemplative reason.

Now we see that justice is still concerned with the rule of the contemplative reason and still concerned with the hope of the restoration of that reason, but now it is more specifically concerned with the role of the active life lived by faith, amidst the "uncertainties of temptations", in the restoration of contemplative reason. Justice here is the ruling order which governs the active life. Its purpose is to lead us towards contemplation by the formation of virtue. It is served by obeying the commandments, which are believed by faith. These commandments are the ones revealed in Scripture and, by extension, all forms of mediating truth.

It is necessary that those who desire contemplative wisdom should first undergo the preparation of serving justice, just as Jacob had to marry Leah before he could marry

Rachel:

Therefore with those who burn with a great love of seeing the truth, their desire is not to be condemned, but it is to be recalled to order, so that it may begin with faith and struggle to come by good ways to where it tends. For in that with which it is occupied there is laborious virtue and in that which it seeks, luminous wisdom.³⁹

Contra Faustum XXII, 53.

There are two phrases which bear linguistic comment here. It is probably no accident that the word translated "burn" here (*flagrant*) is connected by its root with the word *flagitium* which we saw in *Confessions* III, viii. Not that Augustine is suggesting that the desire to see the truth is a corruption, but this "burning" unless it is recalled to the right "order" may become sinful. Secondly, the phrase we have translated "good ways" (*bonis moribus*) has that word which is also translated either "customs" or "habits". Here it refers to the "ways" or "practices" that accompany the correct "order", the life of virtuous and laborious action but perhaps also to the customs which mediate the divine truth and the habits which custom forms that prepare the soul for the contemplative life.

At this point in the argument we see the same concern for the proper "order" of life that we saw in chapter 36. In that chapter, "sound doctrine" had said that when human means were available one was not to tempt God by resorting to faith. The concern was to avoid inordinately exercising the higher faculties of the soul when the lower faculties were called upon by the immediate situation. This was to avoid "tempting God". Now the lower place in the "order" is the "laborious" work of justice, and it is to be undertaken in order to prepare the soul through virtue for contemplation.⁴⁰

Justice according to this section of the argument is both a preparation for contemplation and a punishment for the sensible orientation of the soul. Augustine says that "laborious justice" cannot be avoided in this life:

... in this life both beautiful contemplation and laborious justice will be present. However keenly and truly the unchanging good is seen by mortals, the body, which is corrupted, still weighs down the soul and the earthly tabernacle still presses down on the mind thinking of many things. Therefore one thing is to be sought but for its sake many things are to be borne.⁴¹

Contra Faustum XXII, 53.

The "corruption of the body" brings it about that the mind will always be "weighed down" and forced to occupy itself with the many concerns of the active life, rather than with the one end of contemplation, the unchanging good. Thus the active life of doing justice is in a sense a "punishment" for the "corruption of the body". If the body were not "corrupt" it would not be forced to occupy itself with the realm of passions and temptations that justice is concerned with.

Chapter 54. However, justice is also a preparation for contemplation and the argument moves on to consider how this is. Firstly, Augustine reminds us that Rachel and Leah are both children of Laban, who according to the allegory represents the "remission of sins". The argument continues beyond the impasse of the opposition of action and contemplation caused by the "corruption of the body" through the grace of the "remission of sins" because the lustful attachment to the sensible world that "weighs down" the mind and forces it to be occupied with the active life is forgiven. The fruits of the active life can begin to be seen. Those who live the active Christian life preach the gospel, the message of Christ's humanity, which can be understood by all. Although the active life is not loved for itself, it is loved for these fruits.

Moreover, the benefits that contemplation receives from the lower active order are now coming into view. In itself the contemplative life is "barren" (as Rachel in the Scriptures is barren) because it only seeks the leisure for contemplation:

Desiring that leisure in which the pursuit of contemplation begins to burn bright, [the contemplative life] is not moderated by the infirmity of men, who want to be helped in various trials...⁴²

Contra Faustum XXII, 54.

However, the contemplative life also burns with the love of bringing others to contemplation (*procreandi caritate inardescit*) and this gives it a reason for being in a relation to the active life in which other people are helped. A further reason is the need that contemplation has for material images and illustrations in order to express to others the truths that it sees.

Thus the argument is not only aiming to show how justice and the just life is a preparation for contemplation. It is at the same time moving beyond the opposition of these two by showing how contemplation draws on the lower things of the active life to aid it. The just life is a kind of purgation of the soul through virtue but it also directs the individual beyond contemplation considered as an end in the simple way of chapter 53. The grace of the "remission of sins" thus restores the active life of justice to a greater status than simply the purgation of the soul for contemplation. This grace brings into the argument a new whole which encompasses both the active and the contemplative life. This new whole is seen in the new motivation for the contemplative life to bring itself into relation to the active life. Augustine calls this the "charity of procreating" (*procreandi caritate*).

It would seem that a new whole is being introduced in chapters 52 - 56 in which active and contemplative life both are held together in an ongoing life of charity. This is in

accord with the idea of justice set out at the beginning of the argument (chapter 27) where our hope was to be like the angels, having both action and contemplation in obedience to the will of God. As charity moves the argument forward the alternation of action and contemplation bring new elements into it which at first did not seem to belong to action or contemplation.

Chapter 55. In the previous chapter we saw the need of contemplation for elements belonging to the active life. Now Augustine brings out the need of the active Christian life for things which do not at first seem to belong to it. We already saw in chapter 48 how the gospel is a mediating truth which can bring about spiritual rebirth whatever the motives of those who preach it. Here we see that the preaching of those who do not themselves obey the law, nevertheless plays a part in the labours of the active Christian life. The active life is properly undertaken in a just spirit so it is hard to see at first how it can find a place for the preaching of the unjust. However the desire of bringing new people to believe the Gospel forces those pursuing the active life to recognize their contribution.

Chapter 56. The argument goes on to consider the need of the contemplative life to gain a good reputation for itself among the common people, so that it will be respected by them. Those involved in the active life already possess this reputation because of their just deeds.

Chapter 57. However it would be unjust (*inustum*) for lovers of the contemplative life to get the reward of public approval and good reputation without taking part in the labour of helping to govern the Church and dispensing the mysteries of the faith. Since those who love the contemplative life are compelled to use worldly repute to gain approval for it by their desire to share it with others (moved by charity, Augustine says in chapter 54), justice requires that they earn this reputation by their own involvement in the affairs of the Church.

Chapter 58. Thus, says Augustine, everywhere men are leaving secular pursuits in order to pursue the life of contemplation and being intercepted and drawn into the work of governing the Church and administering the mysteries of the faith. Obviously he partly has in mind his own experience and that of his friends.⁴³ Their chief desire, he says, is that the contemplative life should have a good repute among men. Sometimes, by the grace of God, they have a partial apprehension of the truth that the contemplative life seeks:

[Rachel] in the course of time gives birth herself, through the surpassing mercy of God, but only at length, for it is very rare that "in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God", and whatever is piously and wisely said about the matter, is grasped without any image of carnal thought, beneficially though only in part.⁴⁴
Contra Faustum XXII, 58.

Thus the argument has led to the point where we have the people who aspire to the contemplative life taking positions of responsibility in the church in order to win a good reputation for it among the common people. These occasionally grasp something of the truth that "in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God", which is evidently the high point of contemplation as it is understood here. At this point the claims of the active and contemplative life have not been reconciled in principle. They are only reconciled externally in relation to the authority and the needs of the Church.

However, we have already seen that there is a movement in the argument that leads to a further reconciliation of action and contemplation. This movement can be seen in the examples of those who desire to pursue the contemplative life, yet out of charity, the desire to lead others to contemplation, play an active role in the church. Under the impulse of charity the desire for contemplation is led back to the life of justice and so the idea of justice continues to develop.

In order to move to a whole of justice in which the claims of action and contemplation are reconciled in a less external way than in relation to the authority and needs of the Church, the alternating pattern of action and contemplation must be motivated from within. Action and contemplation must proceed from the heart; that is, from the inward knowledge of God's will and from the inward love of the individual in harmony with God's will. A beginning towards this is made when Augustine begins to speak of the "charity of begetting" (*procreandi caritate*) which moves the contemplative to seek a good reputation among the common people. However this charity, in which action and contemplation are reconciled must belong to a whole, as the desire for contemplation belonged to a whole. The new whole is what we called "the whole of God's rule" when we met it in *Confessions* III, viii. In *Contra Faustum* XXII, 27 it is called the eternal law.

The Whole of the Eternal Law

The movement to a whole in which action and contemplation are reconciled and proceed "from the heart" requires that the argument treat a kind of motivation which proceeds from a unity beyond the conflicting passions of the realm of justice in chapter 52. Augustine introduces this idea firstly by bringing all the passions on the stage, so to speak, when he shows how Scripture is a *speculum fidele* (ch. 60) showing both the good and bad in people. Then he shows how Scripture depicts both the bad deeds of good men and the good deeds of bad men (ch. 65). This prepares the way for a treatment of the source of motivation which is beyond the individual passions; that which makes good men good even when they do bad things (ch. 66ff.). Now let us consider the argument in detail.

Chapter 60. Augustine takes up the argument by making the distinction between such characters as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, whom Scripture commends as just men, and Lot and Judah. Some of Lot's and Judah's deeds are unjust and they are not said to be otherwise by Scripture. Indeed Scripture is to be praised as a *speculum fidele* - a "faithful mirror", which records both the virtues and the vices of men faithfully. This point seems to be a continuation of the movement of chapters 56 and 57 where we said that things were being brought into the scope of the active and contemplative lives that did not at first seem to belong to them; for instance, a good reputation is necessary to the contemplative life and the active life must take into account those who preach the gospel from bad motives. Here we continue to widen the scope of what is contained in justice as the Scriptures bring before us the examples of both good and evil. Augustine in depicting the Scriptures as a "faithful mirror" is saying that the Scriptures reflect a greater idea of justice by showing injustice as well as justice.⁴⁵

Chapter 61. A suggestion of how this can be so is contained in an image Augustine gives at the beginning of chapter 61:

Do someone's distorted limbs corrupt the light which shows
all things?⁴⁶ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 61.

Physical light is not corrupted by the ugliness it reveals, but Augustine is alluding here to the light of truth which is not corrupted by the injustice it reveals. The Word, the light of the mind, has the property of not being corrupted by what is lower than it and even opposed to it, because the Word, being "without change or shadow of motion", is not affected by what it illuminates. Similarly, it is a higher justice which more fully contains and reveals injustice, and thus the justice that informs the Scriptures causes them to be a *speculum fidele* of bad deeds as well as good.

The rest of chapter 61 is a consideration of the degrees of injustice in the actions of Tamar and Judah in *Genesis* 38. The story is that Judah gave Tamar as a wife to the first of his three sons, Er. Er was slain by the Lord for his wickedness and Judah gave Tamar to his second son Onan so that Onan would beget sons by her and establish the line of Er. Onan refused to do this and was slain by God. Judah then ought to have given Tamar to his third son Shelah but he delayed for fear that he would die too. Then Tamar, seeing that she was not being given to Shelah, disguised herself as a prostitute and enticed Judah himself to lie with her. When it became known that she was pregnant and Judah was going to kill her, she revealed that Judah was the father, showing three tokens he had given her as a promise of payment. Judah then confessed that Tamar was in the right because he had neglected his duty to see that she had children.

Faustus criticizes Judah for his fornication with a prostitute. Augustine agrees that this was a shameful act. However he says that Scripture does not approve of the act, but is rather acting as a "faithful mirror" in relating it. Augustine says that two principles of justice are broken by prostitution. First, sexual intercourse takes place without having as its purpose the procreation of children. Second, intercourse does not take place within "socially instituted marriage" (*socialiter ordinato conubio*) and the "bond of peace" (*vinculum pacis*) is broken. These two principles correspond to the order of nature and the order of custom respectively.

In this episode Judah is guilty of a greater injustice than Tamar, as he himself admits, because in lying with a prostitute (as he thinks) he breaks both of these principles. Tamar was not guilty of breaking the first, since her subterfuge was carried out for the sake of children. However the breaking of the second principle is even more serious than the breaking of the first:

... [Tamar] is found guilty because she did not preserve the social institution for having children, according to that eternal law of justice which forbids the disturbance of the natural order, not so much of the body, but especially and principally of the mind.⁴⁷

Contra Faustum XXII, 61.

Two points invite consideration in this passage. First, the order of society and "social institution", the second of our principles, is identified as that order which pertains to the mind; the first principle, the natural order pertains to the body. Tamar sins in breaking the order of "socially instituted marriage" because, as Augustine says in *Confessions* III, viii, "every part is bad which does not agree with its whole". Human society acts as a mediation of the soul towards God in lifting the mind up from the whole of nature towards the whole that it really belongs to. A very simple form of the way this works can be seen in the first book of the *Confessions* when Augustine describes how the learning of language enabled him to enter into human society (*Confessions* I, viii ff.). By entering into human society, he enters into a realm which does not have in it the same abstract separation of subject and object that belongs to the physical sensory world. In the realm of human society and custom, the child takes the first step towards a rational whole in which this separation is overcome. For instance, when a child first owns something, that thing is no longer simply a sensible object, but a possession. The idea of ownership presupposes a unity that is prior to the sensible separation between the owner and the thing owned, and this rational unity is a mediation towards the rational unity in God.

Second, this order of society and custom is said in the passage quoted above to be part of the "natural order". We have seen how Augustine divided justice into the whole of nature, the whole of custom, and the whole of God's command. However, we see here and we will see again that all three wholes are part of the "natural order" in that they are all created and ruled by God.

Thus the passage is saying that when Tamar does not "preserve the social institution for having children" she is breaking an order which approximates more nearly to the divine law, in which the separation between the individual and the order is overcome, than the order of nature does, to which physical sex belongs. She is transgressing the rational unity of society that belongs to the mind rather than the natural unity of bodily desires and their objects. Therefore the sin of breaking the marriage order is a greater one than the sin of intercourse which is not for the purpose of procreation.

Chapter 62. In chapter 62 Augustine shows that Scripture does not necessarily approve of acts it records just because it does not explicitly condemn them.

Chapter 63. In chapter 63 Augustine says that Judah's crime is related so that when Jacob gives honour to Judah in the passage at the end of the book of Genesis (*Genesis* 49) where Jacob prophesies over his sons, we will understand that it is Christ that Jacob is looking forward to. The relating of Judah's crime will tell us that it cannot be Judah himself that is referred to.

Chapter 64. In chapter 64 Augustine discusses the meaning of the presence of Judah, Tamar and Perez and Zerah, the sons of Tamar, in the genealogy of Christ in the Gospel of Matthew. He says that it shows that Christ was pleased to be born of both good and bad as his ancestors. The theme of a goodness that is able to remain itself in the midst of badness continues to be addressed. The Incarnation itself is the primary example of this:

Preserving always the proofs of God and man, he did not disdain good and bad ancestors as befit his humanity, and he choose to be born of a virgin as befit the miracle of his divinity.⁴⁸ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 64.

The purity of Christ's divinity is shown by the Virgin Birth, the condescension of his humanity to dwell among good and evil is shown by his ancestry being a mixture of good and bad people.

Chapter 65. This theme is taken a step further when Augustine says that Scripture not only shows good and bad men, it also shows the virtues of bad men and the vices of good men.

Chapter 66. The mixture of good and bad in individuals can be seen clearly in the figure of David. Faustus objects to the story in which David seduced Bathsheba and then had her husband killed (2 *Samuel* 11). Augustine cites many examples from Scripture to show that David was a very just man despite his crime. This mixture of good and bad in an individual causes us to look beyond individual acts to find justice or injustice and it is with this "beyond" - what it is that lies behind the individual acts - that Augustine closes the chapter, with the "secrets of the heart" (*occulta cordis*) known by God. The new element that is being introduced at this point in the argument will become clearer in the next few chapters.

Chapter 67. Augustine says that the reason David was pardoned when he confessed his crimes with Bathsheba and her husband, whereas Saul, when he confessed, was not pardoned (1 *Samuel* 15:24) was this secret judgement of God on the heart. This judgement of God on the heart is a new dimension of justice. The lesson we learn from this new kind of justice, which does not operate merely in relation to deeds, but in relation to the heart, is that "the Kingdom of God is within us" and that we must worship God from our inwardness:

What do we learn from these examples unless that the Kingdom of God is within us and we must worship God

from our inwardness so that the mouth may speak out of the abundance of the heart...⁴⁹ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 67.

Here we get a better idea of what the "inwardness" (*intima nostra*) of the heart is. It is that "abundance" out of which the words and acts of a person flow. Only God can make judgements on this inward source of our acts. This is not the same thing as the motives we considered in connection with Lot and his daughters in chapters 42 - 44. Those were motives which could be discerned by a sympathetic reading of the passions. Here we are dealing with a source of actions which is not discernable except by God.

Chapter 68. The meaning of this inward judgement on the source of acts and words is carried further in chapter 68. Here the example is Peter. His sins, of denying Christ, of opposing Christ's prediction of his Passion (*Matthew* 16:21-23), and so on, are mentioned and Augustine says that many, though they have never committed any of these sins will not be found equal to Peter. This is because there is "such a difference between what is itself so displeasing that it must be rooted out, and the fruitful and plentiful harvest which may with great fertility come after it". The individual sins of Peter are not as important as his "fruitful" heart:

... for also to farmers, the fields are more pleasing which when they are cleared even of great thistles, yield a hundred-fold, than those which never had any thistles but scarcely bear thirty-fold.⁵⁰

Contra Faustum XXII, 68.

The heart, as well as being the source of sincere and insincere acts, also has as one of its criteria the capacity or potential for producing good acts. Figures such as David or Peter are judged according to their capacity or potentiality. In his reference to the "fields" which produce a hundred-fold and those which bear thirty-fold, Augustine suggests that he finds this idea of an inward potentiality of fruitfulness in the Parable of the Talents (*Matthew* 25:14-30).

Thus at this point in the argument we have before us the idea of a source of motivation which is a unity that is before the individual passions that lead to individual acts. It is both a disposition which is more permanent than individual passions and is also a potency or potential for individual passions and acts.

Chapter 69. In chapter 69 Augustine turns to the example of Moses. The theme of an inward potential is continued, and it is linked to the doctrine of creation. The judgement of Scripture about Moses is to be accepted on the grounds that it is the judgement of God by whom Moses was created:

... Moses, servant of the living God, the true God, the most high God, maker of heaven and earth, not of another substance, but out of nothing, not pressed by necessity but by the outpouring of goodness, not through the suffering of his members, but through the potency of his word...⁵¹

Contra Faustum XXII, 69.

It is not an accident that the attributes of God as creator that are mentioned here, the "outpouring of goodness" (*adfluente bonitate*) and the "potency of his word" (*sui verbi potentiam*) correspond to those attributes of man with which the level of justice we are discussing deals. That "inward potentiality of fruitfulness" that we saw in David and Peter and we now see in Moses, is the image in man of the "potency of the Word" by which all things were created. It is that inward source and potentiality in the created being which corresponds to the creative potency of God.

Chapter 70. In chapter 70 Augustine addresses the question of the slaying of the Egyptian by Moses. The story is that the young Moses saw an Egyptian beating one of the Hebrews and he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. Augustine does not defend the action. He says Moses did not have the institutional authority (*ordinatam potestatem*) to do such a thing; the act was contrary to the order of custom and law. However, Augustine says,

souls with a great capacity for virtue (*animae virtutis capaces*) often show vices which indicate a disposition for virtue that has not yet been sufficiently cultivated. Augustine uses another agricultural metaphor to illustrate this point: some souls are like uncultivated land that produces a great crop of weeds, or wild vines, or wild olive trees, and is therefore judged suitable for producing crops, or cultivated grape vines, or cultivated olives. This image differs from the previous ones in that it refers to potentialities for different individual virtues in different souls. The vices here are indications of the virtues to which the soul is inclined:

But souls with a capacity and fruitfulness for virtue often first show vices by which they indicate to which virtue they are most inclined if they are cultivated by precepts.⁵²
Contra Faustum XXII, 70.

Augustine compares Moses to Saul, whose zealous persecution of the Church showed his great potential as a servant of Christ, and with Peter who showed his zeal for the Lord in a rash way by cutting off the High Priest's servant's ear. Peter and Moses both acted out of a misplaced zeal:

Both exceeded the rule of justice not out of a detestable cruelty but out of a correctable impetuosity; both sinned out of hatred of another's wickedness, out of love, though carnal, one for a brother, the other for the Lord..⁵³
Contra Faustum XXII, 70.

All these men showed that they had "great hearts" which only needed cultivating.

Chapter 71. In chapter 71 Augustine considers the incident of the "spoiling of the Egyptians". In this story the Hebrews borrowed silver and gold articles from their Egyptian neighbours and took them with them when they left Egypt (*Exodus* 11).

Augustine will say that this act would have been theft if God had not commanded it, but because God had ordered it and "knows what each ought to do or suffer", it was just:

For God had ordered it, who knows not only according to deeds, but also according to the heart of man, what it is that each should suffer and at the hands of whom.⁵⁴

Contra Faustum XXII, 71.

We can notice two points here: first, we are now dealing with the whole of justice according to God's command, the third form we considered in *Confessions* III, viii, and second, this order is based on God's knowledge of the human heart, the knowledge we saw established in the previous step of the argument.

God's command is able to order things that are contrary to human justice because he judges according to a deeper justice; he judges "according to the heart". Therefore he knows "what each should suffer and at the hands of whom". That is to say he knows the tendencies and potentialities of the souls whose courses he directs, and he can "cultivate" them by what he orders. Thus Augustine suggests that it was appropriate for the Hebrews, a people who were still carnal (*carnalis*) to take the riches they stole, and appropriate for the Egyptians, because of their idolatry, to be punished in this way. It was appropriate to let the Hebrews take the riches because they had been treated unjustly and this act suited their degree of attachment to material possessions. The command was just and to be obeyed because God, knowing the heart, knew exactly how it would affect all of the natures concerned.

In this idea of justice the externality that we spoke of in the justice of custom is not present. In the allegory of Rachel and Leah we saw that the relation between the contemplative and active life was determined by human custom and in particular by the human authority of the Church. Those who took up the task of governing the Church rather than devoting themselves to the contemplative life did so because of the needs of the Church and the need of the contemplative life to have a good reputation in the world, rather than because of any universal justice governing the disposition of their own souls.

However in this example of the spoiling of the Egyptians, we see something like a relation between active and contemplative life that is precisely determined according to a universal justice. Ultimately the Hebrews ought to be a people not attached to worldly wealth, but God, in allowing them to steal from the Egyptians, shows himself as ruling them according to a justice which can judge what is the proper degree of attachment to possessions at that particular stage of their development. Thus Augustine says in chapter 72 that God gives precepts according to people's differing abilities to bear them:

[God] knows how to coerce the bad with punishments and to educate the obedient, to give stronger precepts to the healthier and to ordain certain medicinal stages for the weaker.⁵⁵ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 72.

The Hebrews are allowed to steal as a "medicinal stage" towards detachment from the world. In such an idea of justice the relation between active and contemplative life is in principle resolved; the proper prescription is known by God who knows the proper "medicinal stages" towards the goal of contemplation.

We can see how far we have moved from the justice of the order of nature. That was a hierarchy of lower and higher goods against which the relation of active and contemplative lives could not be resolved. From the point of view of nature one would say that the higher goods were to be pursued at the expense of the lower goods. The order of human custom provided a mediating truth which gave a more complex and human resolution to the question of how the various goods were to be pursued. Now we can see what that mediating truth was a mediation of, namely the justice of God's command where He commands and permits according to His knowledge of the natures and tendencies of individual and differing souls.

Chapter 72. In chapter 72 Augustine addresses the question of whether God would ever give a command such as the command to steal from the Egyptians. Augustine gives an even more extreme Scriptural example of God permitting an apparently criminal passion to act: Christ permitting the wicked desire of the legion of demons to enter into the herd of pigs (*Matthew* 8:31-32). As with the spoiling of the Egyptians this is a command of God that contravenes human justice since it involves the destruction of human property. Moreover, here there is no question of "medicinal stages"; the demons are damned already.

What good can there be in allowing the evil request of a being that is going to be eternally punished? The being is not improved by it. Nevertheless God allowed the request of the demons and so He may well have allowed the desires of the Hebrews in permitting the spoiling of the Egyptians:

If the cruel and wicked desire of spirits damned and destined for eternal fire was allowed that to which it inclined by the Creator and Orderer of all natures, according to his mysterious but always just governance, why is it absurd that the Egyptians should have deserved to be robbed by the Hebrews, men who were unjust oppressors by free men, to whom they were debtors for hard and unjust labours, of earthly things which they were using for sacreligious rites unjustly against the Creator?⁵⁶ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 72.

In this extreme example of the request of the demons being granted we may see something further of the character of the inward source of acts in a rational creature. It seems that God, "the Creator and Orderer of all natures" allows the evil request simply because the demons are natures; that is, the source of the desire gives some value to the desire apart from its own merit, the value of issuing from a created nature. The created nature has a value even if the creature has perverted itself to evil, and this is recognized in God's justice.

Chapter 73. What has emerged in the argument is the idea of an inward source of actions, such that the justice which governs it is not only deeper than the justice which governs

actions, it is also deeper than the individual desires that issue from that source. Thus the desires that issue from the nature of demons have some value simply because they issue from created natures. The idea of justice here is moving beyond the concern for this or that act or desire to the nature itself, the source of desires and acts. Justice here is not attachment to this or that end but obedience, and injustice is disobedience. Thus Augustine starts chapter 73 by saying that the eternal law places some deeds in a "middle place" (*media quodam loco*) so that if they are done with a "usurping audacity" they are bad and if they are done from obedience they are good.

The introduction of obedience and disobedience to God as the criteria for justice, exemplified by the story of God commanding Abraham to sacrifice Isaac (*Genesis 72*), marks a new departure in the argument. We can see this when Augustine makes a summary of the factors that have to be taken into account in considering the justice of something: the deed, the agent, and the authority:

So great in the natural order is the importance of what is done by whom, and under whom each acts.⁵⁷
Contra Faustum XXII, 73.

The authority (*sub quo*) under whom one acts is what is new here. "What is done" was the form the consideration of justice took at the very beginning of the argument in the justice of the natural order. The movement to consider "by whom", the subjective human aspect, reached its culmination in the consideration of the natures that are the source of deeds and desires, the inwardness or the heart. Now the relation of these natures to their Source is brought into the argument, as their obedience or disobedience to God. When the independence of the inward nature from the deeds and desires that issue from it is revealed, then the dependence of this nature upon God is introduced.

Chapter 74. In chapter 74 Augustine introduces the subject of the wars of the Israelites against the Canaanites. Faustus finds it impossible that these should have been ordered by God; this was one of the objections against Catholic Christianity that the Manichees had raised which led Augustine to become a Manichee (*Confessions* III, vii). However, the Augustine of the *Contra Faustum* has little difficulty with the wars of the Old Testament. Those who object to the deaths brought about by these wars are only being timid, not religious:

To object to [these deaths] belongs to the timid and not the religious.⁵⁸ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 79

Those who died in these wars were going to die soon anyway. The real evils in war are violent and rebellious passions and lusts, but it is to punish these that wars are usually waged:

The desire of harming, cruelty of revenge, the restless and implacable soul, the passion of rebellion, the lust of ruling and similar desires, these are the things which in war are justly blamed and it is often to justly punish these things against a violent resistance that wars are undertaken by the good, by the order of God or some other legitimate authority...⁵⁹ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 74.

Both Augustine's relative indifference to the death and suffering of war and his idea of the proper role of war as crushing the rebellious passions fit the stage of the argument we are at. We have seen that the idea of justice which belongs to created natures is concerned with what lies beyond the world of actions. It is concerned rather with the inward obedience and disobedience of the heart. The disobedience which primarily constitutes injustice at this level is precisely a matter of those passions which Augustine says that war is undertaken to subdue. The passions he lists here belong to the "lust of ruling" (*libido principandi*) which we saw was the third division of the sources of injustice in *Confessions* III, viii. When the full nature of man is brought on the stage so to speak, then justice is a matter of whether man will attempt to rule or be ruled by God.

Chapter 75. It is just for wars to be undertaken by princes because nature gives them that authority:

However the natural order, adapted to the peace of mankind demands this, that the decision-making authority should belong to the prince to undertake war, and that the soldiers owe their service of carrying out military orders to the common peace and well-being.⁶⁰

Contra Faustum XXII, 75

The authority of princes and the necessity of obedience to them seems to be introduced partly because it is the social reflection of the principle of the heart's obedience to God. As justice in the heart now consists of obedience or disobedience to God so justice in society consists of obedience or disobedience to the prince.

Moreover the prince's duties call him to subdue the "lust of ruling". War has the purpose of crushing the lust of ruling in the proud:

... to terrify, or to crush, or to subjugate the pride of mortals...⁶¹

Contra Faustum XXII, 75.

Its effects on the saints however, are rather to perfect them:

... to exercise their patience, to humble their souls and to bear fatherly discipline, [war] helps them.⁶²

Contra Faustum XXII, 75.

Thus war accomplishes the end of justice for both the proud and the saints. In each case the kind of justice that is at issue is the inward justice of the heart. The preservation of physical life is only of secondary importance beside this justice.

It also belongs to this level of the argument that God is the orderer of the course of worldly events and places princes in their positions of authority over the Church. Princes can be seen as a reflection of the sovereignty of God because they are given their positions of authority by him:

Neither does anyone have any power [over the saints] unless it is given to him from above. For there is no power unless from God, either ordering or permitting.⁶³

Contra Faustum XXII, 75.

This of course does not mean that everything princes do is right. However at this point in the argument God can be held to be the orderer of political regimes, and yet allow unjust rule without his own justice being compromised, because justice is now seen to be primarily at the level of the heart, which is beyond reach of worldly events.

Chapter 76. In chapter 76 Augustine considers the difficulty that Christ's commandment to "turn the other cheek" causes for the concept of the just war that he has developed. Augustine refers to this commandment as a "preparation in the heart" and says that the virtue it aims at belonged also to the Old Testament saints who fought wars:

... let them understand that this preparation is not in the body but in the heart; for there is the holy chamber of virtue, which dwelt in those our ancient and just fathers as well.⁶⁴

Contra Faustum XXII, 76.

The "holy chamber of virtue" that is in the heart is the inward source of acts which we have been discussing, and the "preparation" of "turning the other cheek" is the purging of the heart from its preoccupation with worldly ends so that it comes to be dedicated wholly to obeying God's will. When it is so dedicated, then it will obey God's will either fighting or turning the other cheek, and either act will be equally just. The Old Testament saints exhibited the same virtue of obedience in their wars as did the New Testament martyrs in their martyrdoms.

The reason for the difference of God's commandments in Old and New Testament times was the dispensational ordering of things that required that the people of God be shown first that God is the source of worldly goods, by his leading them to victories in battle. Later they were shown by the examples of the martyrs that worldly goods were to

be despised in favour of the eternal rewards of adherence to God's will. But these dispensational differences do not change the fact that worldly goods and worldly suffering both have a neutral significance. The saints of all ages are indifferent to them and only seek to be obedient. Furthermore there are many examples of righteous suffering in the Old Testament, and Augustine's own day has seen the examples of victorious Christian emperors.

Chapter 77. In this last example, the example of victorious Christian emperors such as Constantine, we see that Christians since the New Testament who obey God from the heart may be called to obey him by fighting as well as by suffering. The "preparation in the heart" that comes from denying worldly ends, which is seen in turning the other cheek, is something that is directed by the commandments of God, which may order one thing at one time and another thing at another. Augustine cites the example of Christ changing the commandment to "carry neither scrip, nor purse, nor shoes" and telling them now to take these things and a sword as well (*Luke 22:35-38*). It seems that Augustine interprets this passage to mean that where earlier in the gospel Christ had ordered the disciples to despise worldly goods, now he is telling them to take them and use them for God's purposes. Similarly the commandment to turn the other cheek may be given at one time in order to purge Christ's followers from worldly attachments, but at another time Christ's followers may be required to fight, as the example of the Christian emperors shows.

Chapter 78. In chapter 78 what has been reached so far is given a full expression. The objections of the Manichees against the wars of the Old Testament show that they are not able to understand the justice that operates at this level:

Not to believe that a good and just God can order such things belongs to a man who, to say the least, is not able to understand that for God's providence, running through all

things high and low, there is nothing new which comes about, nor does anything pass away but each thing according to its own order of nature or of merit gives way or comes to its place, or remains; but for men a right will is joined to the divine law, but an inordinate desire is coerced by the order of the divine law so that a good person does not will anything other than is ordained, nor is a bad person able to do anything other than is permitted, so that he cannot do with impunity what he wills unjustly.⁶⁵

Contra Faustum XXII, 78.

We must consider this loaded sentence in detail. Firstly, Augustine says that the divine providence runs through all things and in it nothing either unexpectedly comes about, nor is anything lost. The deaths that occur in wars do not fall outside of providence; all happens according its own proper order, whether that be the order of nature, or the order of merit, of desert, or deserving. According to the argument there are only these two elements of nature and desert in God's just ordering of the world. All things are created by God with their own natures and they exist and continue to be according to those natures within the divine plan. This includes men. Men insofar as they obey the divine will simply develop and fulfill their own natures within the "order of natures". This is not the "order of natures" in our original sense but in the new sense that goes with the teaching of this last part of the argument about "created natures": the inward sources of man's actions with its individual dispositions.

Obedience to the divine will *is* fulfilling one's nature because the divine will that is obeyed and the divine will that created are the same and have the same purpose. If a man continuously obeyed the divine will he would act in continuity with the will that made him; a will that made him with a certain nature because of the purpose it had for him. Man is created to do certain things and when he does them he fulfills his own nature which was created for that purpose, with dispositions suited to it.

Insofar as men depart from their own natures by sinning, then they are governed by the order of deserving. This order is the way God's justice deals with what does not act according to its own nature, as with men and the fallen angels. These get what they deserve in accordance with justice, which is simply that they distort their nature: as we read in the *Confessions*, "they act impiously in their own souls, and iniquity gives itself the lie".⁶⁶ Thus the idea of justice here is one in which there is the whole world of created beings, each operating according to its own nature, and obeying the divine law of providence. There is also sin or injustice which is the only departure from that order. It is contained as well in the divine law by being dealt with according to what it deserves.

This account of justice is repeated in *Contra Faustum XXVI*. There we read that God as the Creator of all nature does nothing that is contrary to nature. Man acts contrary to nature only when he sins and then by punishment he is brought back within the order of nature again because the natural order requires that sin should either not be committed or else it should not go unpunished. In either case the natural order is preserved by God. We can see that this account in *Contra Faustum XXVI* is identical to the one we have been considering.⁶⁷

These two orders, of natures and of deserving are, so to speak, the way justice looks to God. From the human point of view justice is a matter of "a right will which is joined to the divine law" and "an inordinate desire which is coerced by the order of the divine law". The right will is that which is obedient to and joined with the divine law which created it and fulfills its own nature by following the divine purpose for it. It should be noted that according to the argument as we have seen it developing, this right will is not simply the will to do this or that action. It is the relationship of obedience that the inward

nature has to its creator, a relationship which is ultimately invisible, both to the individual himself and to others, but from which actions proceed.

When the human will is joined to the divine will, obedience to God and its own desire are the same because its own nature is fulfilled as it obeys: "a good person does not will anything other than is ordained".

When the human will departs from the divine will, it is "coerced by the order of the divine law". The sense of this "coercion" is given:

... nor is a bad person able to do anything other than is permitted, so that he cannot do with impunity what he wills unjustly.⁶⁸ *Contra Faustum XXII, 78*

The punishment of the unjust man is the departure from his own nature which he wills.

The divine law allows rational natures to depart from its rule, as Christ allowed the demons to enter the herd of pigs. At the same time such departures are always punished, either in this world or eternally.

In wars, although human weakness is horrified by them, the only thing that is really to be feared is the sinful departure from the divine law. Everything else is either the "tribute of nature or the desert of sins" (*tributa naturarum vel merita culparum*). That is, everything else, the death and suffering of wars, is either the proper operation of natures, or the just punishment of sins. For the saints, wars are opportunities to fulfill their natures by exercising their obedience to God; for the unjust, the sufferings of war are a just punishment for their sins.

The will is inordinate or disordered when man loves as ends things that ought to be means and treats as means things that ought to be ends:

But a man is evil when he loves things for their own sake which ought to be taken up for the sake of another, and when he seeks things for the sake of another which ought to be loved for their own sake.⁶⁹

Contra Faustum XXII, 78.

On the other hand the justly ordered will only uses things because they are divinely instituted but enjoys God for Himself and his friend in God:

However a man is just, when a man does not seek to use things for the sake of anything but because they were divinely instituted, but enjoys God Himself for his own sake, and his friend in God, for the sake of God.⁷⁰

Contra Faustum XXII, 78.

When Augustine says that some things are not to be loved for "their own sakes" but for the "sake of another" he clearly means that worldly things are to be loved "for the sake of" God. However, this is not to be understood as if we were speaking of the hierarchy of natures as objects of human faculties, and saying that the human faculties were not to have their proper objects. The justice according to the whole of nature, which deals with that level of the faculties of the soul, has been radically transformed by the argument. God is not now seen as the highest good in the hierarchy of natural goods, he is seen as the divine ordering law to which man owes obedience. It is the divine ordering law which ought to be loved for its own sake, and when it is not, one "disturbs in oneself the natural order, which the eternal law orders be preserved".⁷¹

This sheds some light on the *uti - frui* distinction that is made in our second quotation, and is of such importance in Augustine's writings.⁷² The world is to be "used", God is to be "enjoyed". What does this mean? If what we said above is true it does not mean that natural objects are to no longer be objects, but are to be used in some pragmatic sense as means to God as the highest natural good. Rather, created goods are to be "used" because they are "instituted" in the divine law. They are to be loved precisely as the divine law dictates.

How can loving created goods as the divine law dictates be loving them "for the sake of" the divine law? The will must have its starting point in the divine law, as that is present to the contemplative intellect by intuition. Then it must be related to the things of the world in such a way that it never "enjoys them" for their own sake. This does not mean that there is no sensible pleasure involved. It means that the purpose that was derived from the divine law completely determines the soul's relation to the created things. If this purpose, derived from the eternal law completely, determines the soul's relation to created things, then these things will be loved "for the sake of God". The activity of man which takes its starting point from the eternal law, and only relates to created things in accordance with the purpose given in the eternal law, is done for the sake of God and is just.

One could put this in terms of what is "instituted" by any authority. The starting point is the instituting order. Then that order governs one's activity; one does not do any more or less than what is ordered. Finally the fact that one adheres strictly to what is ordered shows that the purpose of one's activity is obedience to the authority. Cause, activity, and end are all to be found in the authority. However, a better picture, and the one Augustine himself gives us at the end of our second quotation, is found in friendship.

The friend is "enjoyed" but "in God" and "for the sake of God". When the will is contained within the limits set by the eternal law (as both cause and purpose) in its activity in the world, this activity has a kind of self-relatedness or substantial completeness to it. In friendship one sees this activity in another person and loves it. One loves one's friend "in God". The love of the friend is a realization that the soul's activity contained in the eternal law is a form of relation to God, the highest good. Activity of this sort is a form of the love of God and thus the love of the friend can be a form of the love of God. The two are

contained in the same self-related, substantial activity. The sharing of two different people in the same complete activity is an intimation of the truth that the same activity is in fact shared with God. The purpose of friendship is to mirror this relation to God; therefore friendship is also "for the sake of God".

If one was to ask what it is in this self-related activity, contained in the divine law, that one loves, perhaps an answer would be that it is the capacity or power of such an activity to contain its relation to created things within the whole of the activity. This capacity or power is the freedom towards the world that we have spoken of as lying in the obedient will. This would seem to be why Augustine moves to a consideration of the will and power. He says:

Whether evil or justice, unless it is in the will, it is not in one's power. Further, if it is not in one's power, no reward or penalty is just...⁷³ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 78.

Just punishment or reward can only properly be administered for acts which are in the power of the agent. Just acts are those which have their starting point in the divine law, which are entirely contained in the divine purpose and have as their end an obedient relation to God. No other acts can have the power to contain their relation to the world within the divine plan, and it is only these acts which can be properly said to be willed and in the power of the agent.

Unjust acts do not have this power to remain free of attachment to created things. How is it that they can justly be punished? Augustine answers that the ignorance of the divine law that causes unjust acts and their lack of power to remain free in relation to the world are a result of God's "hidden order of punishments":

Ignorance and weakness, so that man does not know what he ought to will, or cannot do everything he wishes comes

from the hidden order of punishments and those inscrutable judgements of God in Whom there is no iniquity.⁷⁴
Contra Faustum XXII, 78

That is to say that the ignorance and weakness because of which men have not the power to do just acts are a "hidden punishment" for their having defected from the divine law initially. Men can be justly punished for unjust acts which they cannot help committing because they are responsible for their weakness.

However, all men lack this power because the initial defection from the divine law in Adam was passed on to all men:

... through him sin entered into this world...⁷⁵
Contra Faustum XXII, 78.

The penalty of this initial transgression is that the mind is weighed down by its attachment to created things so that it can no longer intuit the divine law:

... from this penalty the body is corrupted and weighs down the soul and the earthly habitation weighs upon the mind thinking of many things...⁷⁶ *Contra Faustum XXII, 78.*

The only remedy for this situation is the grace that returns man to the proper relation to the eternal law -- *gratia dei per Iesum Christum dominum nostrum* (*Contra Faustum XXII, 78*). This grace must belong to a yet higher order of justice than the one we have been considering since it is able to reorder what, according to the idea of justice we have seen so far, is justly left disordered. Augustine says, in fact, that the justice by which restoring grace is given to some and not to others is inscrutable:

But of what sort is the distribution of God judging and having mercy, why one is like this and another like that, the causes are hidden, though just.⁷⁷ *Contra Faustum XXII, 78.*

We know that it is either the judgement or mercy of God from which grace is either given or not given. We do not know the "measure, number, and weight" by which the giving or withholding of grace takes place.

This final idea of justice, the order in which grace is either given or not given, is the order in virtue of which one can see that everything in creation is comprehended in God's government. As we saw above, in Augustine's universe there are only two divisions: the world of natures developing according to their created nature and purpose, and sin, which is the departure from that order of rebellious rational natures. In this order of grace God either does or does not give power for sinners to be restored to the order of natures. Grace either gives or withholds this power in human acts which enables them to be complete and substantial, proceeding from their idea and being completely determined by their purpose.

If God is the ultimate supplier of the power that enables complete human acts to take place, then He can be said to be the "orderer of sins" so that they do not disturb the "whole of nature":

... so that those things which would not be sins unless they were contrary to nature are so judged and ordered that they are not permitted to disturb or corrupt the nature of the whole and are assigned to their places and conditions.⁷⁸

Contra Faustum XXII, 78.

That is to say that "order of deserving" which is the order of sin, is not allowed to interfere with the order of created and developing natures ("the nature of the whole") because God controls the actions that sinful men are allowed to commit.

Augustine concludes the chapter by returning to the controversial point which gave rise to it. The Israelites' wars against the Canaanites could indeed be ordered by God without God acting unjustly. The grace by which the human will is empowered, and the human will itself, occupy a position which is essentially untouched by human suffering and violence. Victory or defeat, prosperity or suffering can either injure or benefit, and God and the direction of the human will determines which will be the case:

... since through this secret reason of the judgements of God and of the motion of the human will some are corrupted by the same prosperity that others use temperately, and some weaken under adversities that are profitable to others...⁷⁹
Contra Faustum XXII, 78.

Thus all worldly circumstances are providentially determined and none, including wars, cause injustice in themselves.

Now we are able to see how Augustine can regard human custom as a mediation of the Word to humanity. He is not saying that human customs are all just; he knows they are not.⁸⁰ However since God governs the circumstances of the world he can govern which customs ought to appear in which nations in order to benefit the just and punish the unjust. Even wicked customs will not harm anyone who by the unsearchable judgements belonging to the distribution of God's grace and the movement of the human will did not deserve to be harmed. As we read in the *Confessions*, God's justice is like a poet:

... [justice] has at the same time all the things it ordains and varies in no part, and yet everything is not the same at every time, but it distributes and ordains everything appropriately.⁸¹
Confessiones III, vii, 14.

Not only custom but every worldly circumstance can be seen as a mediation of God's truth and justice.

Chapter 79. The consequence of this teaching for the question of the Old Testament wars is that the Old Testament saints served justice by killing sinners and the New Testament saints served it by being killed by them. We learn from the former that earthly benefits, victory and protection, are to be sought from God, and from the latter that earthly suffering comes from Him as well and is to be endured for His sake. The Old Testament figures, such as Moses, inflicted punishments out of love, and with the inward disposition that belongs to turning the other cheek. The temporal punishments they inflicted may have been so that those who were punished would not be lost eternally, just as St. Paul "delivered a

man up to Satan" so that his flesh might be destroyed but his spirit saved on the day of judgement (1 *Cor.* 5:5). This idea of temporal destruction combined with eternal salvation Augustine illustrates with a story about the apostle Thomas from the apocryphal books accepted by the Manichees. Thomas is struck by a servant and curses him, whereby the servant is killed by a lion. But Thomas also procures for him salvation in the next world.⁸² Such was the spirit in which temporal punishments were administered by men like Moses.

Chapter 80. In the last two chapters of this part of the argument Augustine takes up the last two objections Faustus makes against the morality of the Old Testament, which are against the behaviour of the prophet Hosea in marrying a prostitute and against king Solomon. In these two cases, Augustine finds instances in which God's grace and the direction of the will are seen to be primary in the course of a person's life. Hosea's wife, according to Augustine, has repented of her sins when Hosea marries her (although that is not evident from the Biblical story: see *Hosea* 1). A woman's repentance of her past life and changing of her ways shows the power of grace and the conversion of the will, and the prophet's acceptance that her sins are forgiven and willingness to marry her shows that he correctly regards the inner reality as the important one.

Chapter 81. In the case of Solomon, the course of his life shows the opposite movement. Solomon's many wives, unlike the wives of the patriarchs, are reprov'd by Scripture itself, which shows his inordinate love of women as the cause of his being led into idolatry. The direction of his will leads Solomon from a virtuous beginning to a bad end. In both of these cases it is the inward direction of the will that is primary and not worldly circumstances. Hosea's wife, from a bad set of worldly circumstances, has a good ending, and Solomon, from a favourable set of circumstances, ends badly. Beyond this it is the presence or absence of grace that ultimately determines the course of a life.

Chapter 82. In chapter 82 we begin a new part of the argument, clearly marked as such by Augustine. He announces that he will now reconsider the Old Testament incidents and characters singled out by Faustus, giving their allegorical significance. We have already seen quite a bit of allegory but this section of allegorical interpretation marks the introduction of a new subject matter that constitutes the final stage of the argument. First he reconsiders Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Allegorically the significance of the patriarchs lies in their children, both slaves and free children, born of slave mothers and free mothers. These are a type of the church. In the church the "spiritually free", the true believers, such as Hosea's wife in chapter 80, have both free children and slave children; that is, they spiritually beget other true believers, and also nominal believers. This is symbolized by the free wives of the patriarchs having both free children and slave children. However the "spiritually enslaved" in the church, those who are not really in a state of grace, like Solomon, also have both free children and slave children; that is, their teaching converts some although they are not themselves converted. This is symbolized by the slave wives of the patriarchs having both slave children and free children.

In the Church, there are both those who have been saved by grace and whose wills are obedient to God and those who are disobedient. The teaching is thus far the same as that of chapter 78, as the reference to God who is "the God of the universal creature" indicates.⁸³ There is still the whole order of created things fulfilling their natures and the order of sin in which rational creatures act contrary to their natures. However Augustine is pointing to an order in the Church which is a unity that encompasses both these orders. Both the slave and the free, the disobedient and the obedient, bear free children and are thus part of the Church. Those in the Church should preserve "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"; the spiritual unity which encompasses both the obedient and the

disobedient in the Church. This unity depends on what had been reached in chapter 78 because if the actions of the disobedient were not circumscribed and controlled by God, they could not be seen as part of the larger unity of the Church.⁸⁴

It is not an accident that in chapter 82 we are dealing with the "people of God" and not individuals. Somehow individuality has been transcended in this new allegorical exposition and we are dealing with the movement of God's providential activity as a whole. What is the nature of this development?

The argument that culminated in chapter 78 was a treatment of justice whose function was partly to "justify the ways of God to man" in response to Faustus's criticisms. The question posed in that chapter, for instance, of whether God's giving or withholding of grace was just, arises because the Scriptural teaching about God's justice is measured against the individual's own sense of justice. One asks, "is this Scriptural account of justice just according to my own idea of justice?" Up till now Augustine has been trying at each stage of the argument to address this question. The account in chapter 78 of the order of natures, each fulfilling their nature in obedience to God, and the order of sin, where disobedient rational creatures acting contrary to their own natures are not allowed to disturb the order of creation, should satisfy, as far as Augustine is able, the measure that the individual brings to it.

From chapter 82 on, Augustine is no longer trying to "justify the ways of God to man". Assuming that that has been done, he now looks at a level of justice which in its nature can only be looked at by those who will not measure it. The grace by which some come to obedience to God, and some do not cannot be investigated; it is "hidden". It can however be observed in Scripture. Augustine now asks us to go beyond questioning

divine justice and to simply look at the reality, as revealed in the Scriptures. What he sees there is that there is a unity in the Church which is beyond the justice or injustice of the individuals that make it up. There are the "spiritually free" and the "spiritually enslaved", but they are both part of a larger movement of grace. What is the nature of this movement? This we can expect to see unfolded as the argument of this final section of Book XXII proceeds.

Chapter 83. In chapter 83, Augustine sheds light on his view of allegory and the proper way of interpreting it. For the purposes of allegory bad acts can symbolize good things just as well as good acts. Just as Caiaphas prophesied Christ's atoning death when he said "it is expedient that one man die for the people" (*John* 11:50), although that was not his intention, so good deeds and bad indifferently are prophetic of the Church. The wills of the individuals involved are completely within the divine purpose so that the disobedient will may serve to exhibit allegorical truths as much as the obedient will. However it is the "prophetic narrator" who arranges the good and bad acts so as to bring out their significance:

Indeed the prophetic narrator collected these deeds of men with the Holy Spirit inspiring the arrangement, and the placing has significance in the foretelling of the things he intended to prophecy.⁸⁵ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 83.

We can see from this passage that Augustine thought whole narrative sequences were prophetic as well as individual acts. The Holy Spirit inspired the arrangement of the narrative in order to create just the sort of continuous arguments that Augustine has been finding in the Scriptures. He recognizes as well the role of the "prophetic narrator" in composing the sequence. The interpreter, such as Augustine himself, seeks the inspiration of the same Spirit when he interprets the individual parts and the arrangement of the narrative in the Scriptures.

Chapter 84. Augustine continues with the interpretation of the story of Tamar and Judah. The story is now taken as an allegory of the kingdom of Judah. Tamar's first two husbands, Er and Onan, signify those kings of Judah who "did harm" (*nocentium*) and those who "did no good" (*praestare nolentium*) respectively. The death of these two figures signifies that the kingdom was taken from such kings. Judah's third son Shelah, who did not become Tamar's husband, signifies that the sons of Judah were cast out from the kingship until Christ came to fulfill the prophecy that a king would come from the descendants of Judah. We will save our discussion of this allegory until we have brought in the details of chapter 85.

Chapter 85. The coming of Judah to shear his sheep at Thamna where, in the story, he met Tamar, signifies Christ coming to the lost sheep of Israel. Judah is accompanied by an Adullamite shepherd who symbolizes John the Baptist, because "Adullamite" means "testimony in water" and refers to the baptism that John brought.

In these two chapters we are looking at the operation of the divine law of justice as it appears in the Scriptures. First we have before us the two kinds of unjust kings of Judah, those who do harm and those who do no good, symbolized by Er and Onan. We are no longer considering them from the point of view of whether the judgements expressed in Scripture about them are just or not. Rather we are accepting the teaching of Scripture about them and seeking to see how the divine law is revealed in the falling away from it that is present in these unjust kings.

One might ask of both accounts what their purpose is; how the discussion of injustice is of use in attaining to justice.⁶ Chapter 83 seems to indicate that at this level of

considering the nature of justice, bad examples are of as much use as good examples. The reason for this is that at this point in the argument we are interested in God's judgements not to see if we think they are just, or even with an interest in our own salvation, but simply because God makes them. Our interest is simply the interest in sharing His point of view as much as we are able; the point of view of the divine law. It is not an interest in justice as an object of consideration so much as an interest in justice because God has ordained it. From this point of view God's negative judgements are of equal interest to his positive ones.

As we attempt to follow the course of the argument from this point of view, the next step is the casting out of these unjust kings and the coming of Christ with the "testimony of water" of John the Baptist. The same divine law that makes judgement on the kings of Judah brings the regenerating grace of Christ, which drives out sin. This coming of grace is sacramentally represented by baptism. The sacrament of baptism represents the movement of grace that drives out sin and acts as a testimony to the grace. Baptism would not mean anything if it did not signify a spiritual movement that God was the source of, and that God could be expected to continue. The movement of grace is not primarily considered out of an interest in one's individual end but rather simply because it is the movement of the eternal law. Its character of being beyond the subjective measure of the individual is thus fittingly represented by an "objective" sacrament.

Chapter 86. In chapter 86 further details of the story from *Genesis* 38 are interpreted. Tamar changing her dress to don the attire of a prostitute signifies the changing that occurs after regeneration. The name Judah means "confession" which is also the fruit of grace. However, the outline of the whole movement of grace is symbolized by the tokens that Judah gives to Tamar instead of payment. The tokens in the story are a signet ring, a

bracelet, and a staff. These represent the penitent being "sealed in their calling, adorned in their justification, and raised in their glorification".⁸⁷ Augustine draws this interpretation from Romans 8:30 : "for whom He predestinated, them He also called, and whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified, them He also glorified".⁸⁸ Here we see the full operation of God's providential activity. Predestination is the aspect of the priority of God's will, first in creating and then in restoring fallen nature. "Calling" is symbolized by baptism which shows God's will as it reaches into the world. Justification is the movement of grace in making man just by restoring his nature and returning him to his end. Glorification is the goal of the movement; restoring the complete relation between God and man.

We can see here in the operation of grace the same structure that we saw in human activity in chapter 78. There human activity started with an intuition of God's will in the divine law. Then the activity was carried out in the world with its worldly relations contained within the whole of the activity as that was seen in the divine law. The end of the activity was obedience to the divine law. Finally it was seen that the completeness or self-relation of the activity was also a relation to God. These moments correspond to the moments of predestination, calling, justification, and glorification. Predestination is the initiating divine purpose. Calling is the reaching out to the world. Justification is making man to have his end in God. Glorification is concerned with the total relation to God. The elect who are "sealed in their calling, adorned in their justification, and raised in their glorification" are fully encompassed by this movement of grace. We are looking at the same thing here as in chapter 78, but from the side of God rather than from the side of man.

Chapter 87. In chapter 87 we continue to look at the divine law through an interpretation of the story of David and Bathsheba (2 *Samuel* 11). The story of David and Bathsheba represents Christ seeing the Church cleansing herself from the pollution of the world (Bathsheba bathing on the roof), then putting to death the devil (David having Bathsheba's husband Uriah killed), and joining the Church to himself (David marrying Bathsheba). According to Augustine, Bathsheba means "well of satisfaction" and this signifies that the participation in the Holy Spirit that results from repentance is that the Church becomes a "well of living water". It is a "well of living water" because it is related to God through its activity as a whole. This is the form of its participation in God as the "life of lives", the source of life, as we read in *Confessions* III, vi, 10. In this complete self-related activity there is, so to speak, no room or point of access for the devil, so Christ is said to have put the devil to death, and to have joined the Church to himself.

Chapter 88. Augustine is doubtful about the meaning of the story of Solomon. He concludes that the good and bad elements in Solomon represent the just and the unjust, the wheat and tares that are still in the Church. In its place in the argument this may be a rejection of the idea of a perfect Church in this world which might be thought to be the consequence of the argument of chapter 87.

Chapter 89. The prophetic marriage of Hosea to a prostitute and his children, are explained in the Scriptures themselves (*Romans* 9, 23-26, and 1 *Peter* 2:9-10) as referring to the calling of the Gentile nations as the new spiritual Israel. The complete divine activity which we saw in chapter 86, with its source in the divine foreknowledge, going out into the world, returning to itself, with the whole activity constituting a form of divine self-relation, is seen in God's activity in the conversion of the Gentile nations.

Chapter 90. The allegorical interpretation continues by looking at the figure of Moses. Moses' burying of the slain Egyptian in the sand tells us that the devil is still hidden in those who "build their house upon the sand" by not doing what Christ commands. This seems to be a warning similar to the one in chapter 88 against a possible misinterpretation of the implications of the argument. It is possible to fall outside of the divine activity of conversion by not continuing in the activity dictated by the divine law and commanded by Christ.

Chapter 91. This chapter treats the allegorical significance of the spoiling of the Egyptians. Augustine considers two possibilities: either the Egyptian riches signify the kinds of pagan learning which may be profitably used by the Church, or it signifies the gentiles themselves who are brought into the Church. In either case it is a matter of the conversion of the gentile world which comes from the divine activity we have been discussing. In view of the course of the argument at this point, perhaps Augustine intends both interpretations to be applicable here. Augustine explains at *Confessions* XII, xxxi, 42 that it is possible for more than one interpretation of a passage to be correct,⁸⁹ and both interpretations of the spoiling of the Egyptians fit the extended allegorical argument.

Chapter 92. If chapter 91 was about the intellectual conversion of paganism,⁹⁰ chapter 92 is about its moral conversion. The allegorical meaning of the wars against the heathen is the war against the vices that led them to idolatry. If the paradigmatic image for this section of the argument is the conversion of the gentile nations into the new Israel, then both the intellectual and moral conversions alluded to here must have the character, more of transformations of paganism than negations of it. The activity of repentance was more of a moral negation; here the vices are to be transformed into virtues.

Chapter 93. This transforming activity is symbolized by the episode in which Moses grinds up the golden calf which the people of Israel have made, mixes it with water and forces the Israelites to drink the mixture (*Exodus 32*). Pagan society is "swallowed up", so to speak, by the Church instead of swallowing it up, and this indicates the activity of conversion and transformation that is going on.

This activity of conversion is understood in terms of the activity of contemplative thought. In contemplation the mind brings itself and its content to try to grasp the Word, but in the end it is transformed by the Word instead. When Augustine describes this activity in *Confessions VII* in relation to the Platonic vision of truth he uses an image which captures exactly the sense of the image of drinking the ground-up golden calf:

I am the food of grown-ups. Grow and feed on Me. You will not change Me into yourself, as with fleshly food, but you will be changed into Me.⁹¹ *Confessiones VII, x, 16.*

Just as the mind and what it brings is transformed into the likeness of God in contemplation, so pagan society is transformed into the Church through the divine activity of conversion. This is what is signified by the episode of the golden calf.

Chapter 94. Augustine sums up this theme of conversion in chapter 94, when he says that the whole purpose of Scripture is to set forth Christ; his Head which is in heaven, and his body which is on earth:

Therefore all these things sound forth Christ; the whole intention of the writers of Sacred Scripture brings forth that Head which is already ascended into heaven, and this his body which labours on earth till the end...⁹²
Contra Faustum XXII, 94.

The subject of the Scriptures is Christ, whose activity is the conversion of the nations into his body, as the golden calf was swallowed up by the people of Israel. The activity is the conversion of the world into relation to Christ the Head. The conversion of pagan thought

symbolized by the spoiling of the Egyptians is as much a part of this activity as individual conversions.

Allegorical interpretation itself is an activity of conversion. It takes evil actions and characters and makes them part of a good purpose, the revealing of divine truth. All of Scripture speaks of Christ except those passages which serve to connect the argument, which are like the framework of a harp, enabling the strings to sound their notes. This last point has relevance for Augustine's argument because it shows how most of the points he raises contribute to an overall argument, but some may just serve to connect the other points. It also adds something further to the argument, because it shows something about the nature of the activity of conversion. Even what in itself does not belong to the revealing of allegorical truth, the connecting passages in Scripture, still become part of the overall activity. This shows that in Scripture, the ultimate location of the activity of the revelation of truth is in the activity itself, and not in the individual parts of Scripture. The activity is a whole in which even non-revelatory parts have their place.

Chapter 95. In chapter 95 Augustine discusses the nature of allegory further. He says that if heretics want to dispute his allegorical interpretations, he will not argue with them. It would be like arguing with those who say: "it does not taste to me like what you say it tastes to you." (*non sapit palato meo, quod sapere dicis tuo*). As long as they accept that Scripture has either a moral or an allegorical meaning, it does not matter if interpretations differ. What does Augustine mean here?

He mentions three levels on which the Manichees or others might differ from him:

... if the Manichees or any others are displeased by our understanding [intellectus] or our reasoning [ratio] or our

opinion [opinio] concerning these figures of deeds...⁹³
Contra Faustum XXII, 95

Of these three levels, allegorical interpretation is at the level of *intellectus*, or rational intuition. This is a direct intuition of the whole meaning of something. Unlike *ratio*, in which there is a discursive aspect by which the interpretation may be objectified with reference to the principles of reason or to Scriptural principles there is no discursive distance of the mind from its immediate perception with *intellectus*. Therefore disagreeing about an allegorical interpretation is like disagreeing about a taste.

The allegorical truth of Scripture is like a kind of first principle of Scriptural exegesis and as R. D. Crouse remarks in his paper "St. Augustine's *De Trinitate* : Philosophical method", it is impossible to demonstrate a first principle:

It is axiomatic that one cannot demonstrate a first principle by reference to anything prior to it, one can only demonstrate it by showing that it is necessarily presupposed by everything subsequent to it.⁹⁴

Allegorical interpretation is like a first principle because it is beyond the capacity of discursive thought to render it objective. It is not simply subjective however. It must agree with the rule of faith and with human reason (*ratio*). Like a first principle it is demonstrated or objectified by what is logically posterior to it. However unlike a first principle an allegorical interpretation is linked to the contingent matter of whether the meaning fits the text; there is no point in disputing about this question which cannot be demonstrated at all.⁹⁵

Chapter 96. In chapter 96 Augustine says that Scripture includes cases where good men have fallen into sin and bad men have repented so that the just may be preserved from a proud self-sufficiency and the wicked from despair:

... so that the just should not be lifted up in pride through their security and the wicked should not be hardened against their cure through despair...⁹⁶ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 96.

These two vices of pride and despair and their opposite, the pious humility which Augustine says is the way back to God in *Confessions* III, viii, belong to the will at the point of its relation to God which corresponds to the intellect's intuition. Pride and despair, though superficially they seem different are both a rejection of the divine activity of conversion; pride because it does not think it needs it and despair because it does not think it can deserve it. They are the unjust form of that complete and self-related activity of the human being that we saw was the most complete relation to God. Pride and despair and their virtuous opposite belong to justice in nearly its most profound and fundamental form.

Chapter 97. In chapter 97 Augustine says that examples in Scripture like David's penitence are medicine for those who might proudly disregard the need for penitence or despair of obtaining forgiveness. Those who sin because of these examples of unjust deeds are guilty of misusing to their own harm what was meant for their salvation:

Is not he the more severely to be condemned who wishes to misuse what is written to heal and free him in order to wound and kill himself?⁹⁷ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 97.

As we said above, injustice at this level is rejecting the means provided for salvation, the divine activity of conversion.

Chapter 98. As the argument has progressed it has shown more and more how things that are apparently removed from the divine activity are really encompassed within it. From the perspective of the order of nature, custom seemed to fall outside the universality of the divine, but it was seen to belong to it. The negative examples from Scripture were seen to belong to the consideration of justice if viewed from the correct perspective. These are only two instances of what is the whole tendency of the argument. The reason is that the

argument moves towards uncovering the activity of conversion that has appeared explicitly in the last few chapters. In chapter 98, the last chapter in Book XXII, Augustine shows that the divine activity is revealed even in what appears to be the thing furthest removed from the divine truth, namely the fantastic mythology of the Manichees.

Augustine argues in chapter 98 that even if the various figures of the Old Testament were unjust in the way that Faustus claims, they were still more just than the Manichean god according to what the Manichees themselves say about him. Augustine shows that the charges Faustus makes against the figures of the Old Testament, sexual impurity, cruelty and injustice, can be applied even more strongly to the Manichean god. More surprisingly, the characteristics and actions attributed to the Manichean god correspond to the various moments of the divine activity as Augustine has discussed them. The Manichean myths can be read as a kind of allegory of the true divine activity. This allegorical adumbration present in the Manichean myths shows that even in their irrational and fantastic mythology, the Manichees cannot help reflecting the true nature of things. In *Contra Faustum* XXII, as well as in the *Confessions*, "iniquity gives itself the lie".

There are three charges that Augustine makes against the Manichean god in the discussion. They are: i) impurity (in the CSEL text p. 703, 1.24 - p. 705, 1.24), ii) cruelty and weakness (p. 705, 1.25 - p. 706, 1.13), and iii) injustice (p. 706, 1.13 - p. 706 1.28). The charge of impurity is that the Manichean god, by being present within all life and in human souls as particles of divine light, is implicated in all the carnality and sin that occurs, including incest, prostitution, and all the range of sins of which Faustus accuses the figures of the Old Testament. Since the particles of light are supposed to be the substance of God Himself, this impurity is worse than the impurity of any human figure.

The charge of weakness and cruelty is that the Manichean god had to allow his members to undergo the pollution of involvement in the world through his inability to conquer the forces of darkness in any other way. Letting his members be imprisoned in the world was a cruel act. The charge of injustice is that the Manichean god will, according to the Manichean mythology, punish those of his members that are corrupted by the forces of darkness by leaving them in the darkness forever and yet their corruption must have been involuntary. If their corruption was voluntary then they could not have been really part of God's substance, but if it was involuntary then the Manichean god is unjust for punishing them.

These three charges correspond to the moments of the divine activity as we saw it in chapter 86. The involvement of the Manichean god in every kind of worldly corruption is a kind of reflection of the truth that in the divine law every created being and activity is comprehended and fore-known. The sending out of the particles of light into the world is an image of the divine calling to man in the world, and the way that man's activity in the world is contained in God's activity. The condemning of the corrupted particles of light corresponds to the activity of God in restoring man to justice by making him obedient to God. This is a matter of restoring his will so that it can freely obey God, and it is free will that Augustine points to as being missing at this point in the Manichean myths.

After making these three charges and, in our view, pointing to these three correspondences, Augustine comments that the Manichees may plead necessity on behalf of their god:

But for an excuse the necessity of their god is brought forward.⁹⁸ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 98.

The Manichean god allowed this impurity, cruelty and injustice, because necessity forced him to. A god who is governed by necessity, Augustine says, is worshipped only by those who will not worship the true God:

They worship such a god who are unwilling to worship
God.⁹⁹ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 98.

In these comments is indicated a further correspondence between the Manichean myths and the divine activity. The final moment of the activity of conversion was glorification, the restoring of the complete human activity to a right relation to the divine activity. This relation is a complete relation of freedom and life. The opposite to this proper relation is a relation of necessity, which is also in its way a complete relation.

Thus even in the Manichean myth of the descent and return of the particles of light, the elements of the myth form an adumbration of the complete relation to God. This complete relation to God involves the realization that the whole of the practical and theoretical life is a good because it is a reflection of and a relation to the divine life. Justice here is not saying "I must act justly because that is right", but rather "I want to act justly because that is life". This is a realization of the "true worship" that those whose god is constrained by necessity do not do, according to Augustine. They do not see that God's just rule is unconstrainedly good. Yet the unconstrained goodness of God's rule is seen in the fact that the truth of His activity is present as a kind of distant intuition even in the false myths of the Manichees.

Before we conclude this account of the argument of *Contra Faustum* XXII we will consider briefly what Augustine's Manichean opponents might have been expected to make of it. Did Augustine expect that a Manichee or someone sympathetic to Manicheism would

be convinced by this lengthy and to a considerable extent implicit argument? What was his dialectical purpose in writing it?

First of all, the question that Augustine is trying to answer - "what is sin?" - is one that is common to both Augustine and his opponents. The objections that Faustus raises against the Old Testament in chapter 5 presuppose an interest in the nature of sin and justice. Furthermore, although the Manichean teaching about these subjects was very different from Augustine's (see, for instance, the Manichean teaching of the three seals, the prohibitions of intercourse, lying, and killing - Introduction, p. 7), if we look at the *form* of the Manichean teaching we find that Augustine's view and the Manichean view contain the same elements, and we would suggest that this similarity in *form* is the basis for Augustine's dialectical appeal to the Manichees.

Augustine's argument in *Contra Faustum* XXII may be said to have three elements. One is the appeal to a given truth, whether to nature, Scripture, custom, or whatever. The various mediating wholes that we have described are meant to be moral truths that the reader will at least understand, even if they are not immediately accepted. These truths are meant to be givens - starting points rather than conclusions.

The second element of Augustine's argument is the contemplative truth which is his goal. This contemplative element is present in two ways. One is the various references to the contemplative end, such as the reference to the soul and the Word in chapter 38, the discussion of contemplation in chapters 52-58, and the discussion of justice as the divine law in chapter 78. The other is the continual presence of allegorical interpretation. Allegorical interpretation is a form of contemplation insofar as it transcends the literal meaning of Scripture. The third element of Augustine's argument is the diverse rational

content that is revealed through the course of the argument - the structure of nature, custom, and divine law, and the whole range of specific issues which are addressed within these divisions.

If we consider the Manichean teachings about justice we can find the same elements present. The esoteric doctrines of Manicheism, the teachings about light and darkness, represent a kind of contemplative goal to which the teaching points. There is also a body of content covered by the teaching which determines, for instance, what the attitude of the believer should be towards truth and falsehood, sex, and the order of creation, within the divisions of the three seals. There are also "given truths" from which the Manichean argument proceeds. These are the moral truths that are assumed by the Manichees when they criticize the Scriptures as, for instance Faustus assumes certain truths when he criticizes the characters of the Old Testament. They are ideas such as the sinfulness of uncontrolled appetite, and violence against others.

Now Augustine cannot simply disprove the Manichean idea of justice for the reason that we discussed in our Introduction (p. 31-35) - it is impossible to disprove a truth that claims to be obtained by a private revelation. Augustine can never finally show that justice is not at bottom the struggle of light and darkness. Nor can he render his own account impervious to Manichean criticism by proving, for instance, that the conquest of Canaan was a response to God's command and not the result of a lust for violence. However, he can show that his account of justice has the form of the Manichean account but is more complete, and this is what he does.

Thus when Augustine presents his "given truths" from nature, custom, and Scripture, there are none of these "truths" that could not be challenged by the Manichees.

The Manichees would deny that there was a good natural purpose of sex - procreation. They would deny that God gave husband and wife power over each other's bodies for this purpose and that God would command men to kill. However they would have to accept the form of the appeal that Augustine makes in each of these cases - the appeal to a truth that is "given" - in a way that a Sceptic, for instance, would not.

Similarly, when Augustine makes reference to the contemplative element in his argument, the form of the appeal is something to which the Manichees should respond. His references to the contemplation of the Word carry the sense of the transcendent that is present in the Manichean desire for *gnosis*. Furthermore, Augustine's allegorical images, with their freedom from all historical objectivity, have in them that element of complete subjective freedom which is present in a different way in the Manichean myths. Augustine is possibly pointing to some such relation between allegorical images and the Manichean myths in chapter 98 when he interprets the Manichean myths as a kind of allegory of Christian truth.

Finally, the diverse content treated within Augustine's idea of justice corresponds to the content of the Manichean teaching. Here Augustine's intent may well be to show by implication that his idea of justice includes a much more complete range of content than that of the Manichean account. Augustine deals with nature, with Scriptural revelation, with human custom, with human motive, with character and its grounding in created nature, with contemplation and its relation to action, with God's will and its relation to human will. He may well expect his readers to think the Manichean account, with its complete lack of any teaching about human society, its preoccupation with cosmology, and its scruples about fruit and vegetables, is impoverished by comparison.

However, this contrast of content would not form a complete argument if the other two elements were not present. A Manichee could never be won over to an argument which did not offer contemplation, because the desire for contemplation is the foundation of Manicheism (see Introduction, p.14). What is perhaps more difficult to grasp is that a Manichee could never be won over by an argument which did not make an appeal to “given truth”. As a religion of revelation, as a missionary religion with a gospel, as a religion which argued for its truth, Manicheism assumed with catholic Christianity that the truth was present in the world. Augustine’s “given truths” differed from those of the Manichees in that they were meant to be grasped by a faith which led one to the whole of justice in the development of a just life, rather than being immediately obvious “givens” from which one could make confident moral judgements. Nevertheless, the reference to what is “given” is common to both.

Thus Augustine presented an argument that had a form the Manichees could accept. If he had lacked any one of these elements the Manichees could have used that to dismiss his argument. They could have said, for instance, that his argument was lacking in perception of spiritual reality if the contemplative element was missing. If the “given truths” were not there they could have said that it ignored the common moral truths. With all these elements present though, while such objections could still be raised, the argument is lifted to a dispute about the two ideas of justice as wholes. Since the form of Augustine’s argument has all the elements that the Manichean account has in it, it must be judged by them as a whole and this is the basis of Augustine’s appeal. He believes that if the argument is raised beyond the level of individual criticisms to the level of wholes, his account will emerge as the most complete.

This concludes our discussion of the argument about justice in *Contra Faustum* XXII. In our conclusion we will attempt to draw together the threads of this argument and the one in the *Confessions* in order to draw some conclusions about the idea of justice that Augustine has developed.

Endnotes

Chapter II

1. The *Confessiones* and the *Contra Faustum* are dated at 397 AD and 400 AD respectively. See Introduction p.39. For a description of the *Contra Faustum*, see Introduction p.40-45.
2. *Nec sacramenta legis intellegitis nec facta prophetarum, quia neque sanctitatem neque iustitiam cogitare nostis. Contra Faustum XXII, 6, (595, 22 - 596, 1).*
3. For the following account of Augustine's exegetical principles I am indebted to the unpublished Dalhousie University M.A.thesis of Ross N. Hebb entitled: *Augustine's sensus ad litteram*, 1986
4. See *De Doctrina Christiana* II, 10.
5. Again I would refer the reader to Mr. Hebb's thesis for a thorough account of the literal sense.
6. See *De Doctrina Christiana* II, 10.
7. See *De Vera Religione* 50, 99.
8. See *De Doctrina Christiana* III, 22.
9. *immolare filium iubetur Abraham:iussus hoc fuerit, ut eius oboedientia tali etiam examine probata posteris innotesceret. numquid etiamsi nullo effuso rediretur, minus esset probatus Abraham? aut si iam opus erat perfici sacrificium, etiamne, ut ille aries in vepre adhaerens cornibus adpareret, ad ullum augmentum victinae, pertinebat? sic omnia cum considerantur et quasi superflua necessariis contexta inveniuntur, admonent humanum animum, id est animum rationalem prius aliquid significare, deinde quid significant quaerere. Contra Faustum XII, 38 (365, 7-18)*
10. *Epistula* 55, xi, 21, as quoted in Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, London, Faber and Faber, 1967, p. 263: *Ad ipsum autem ignem amoris nutriendum et flatandum quodammodo, quo tanquam pondere sursum vel introrsum referamur ad requiem, ista omnia pertinent quae nobis figurate insinuantur...Epistula LV, xi, 21 (P.L.33)*
11. For treatments of this subject see the notes in Peter Brown's chapter "*Doctrina Christiana*" in *Augustine of Hippo*, p. 259-269.
12. See *De Doctrina Christiana* III, 2.
13. See *De Doctrina Christiana* II, 14-30.
14. See *Confessiones* XII, xviii, 27; XII, xxvi, 36 and the entire second half of *Confessiones* XII.
15. See Hebb, *Augustine's sensus ad litteram*, Chapter II, part III.

16. *Ergo peccatum est factum vel dictum vel concupitum aliquid contra aeternam legem. lex vero aeterna est ratio divina vel voluntas dei ordinem naturalem conservari iubens, perturbari vetans. Contra Faustum XXII, 27 (621, 12-15).* A helpful account of the doctrine of this passage is that of Eugene TeSelle, "Toward An Augustinian Politics", *Journal of Religious Ethics* 16, Spring 1988, p. 87-108, especially p. 89. See Introduction, p 66. See also the comments of R. Markus in *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970, p. 87-91. We will refer to Markus again in connection with our commentary on *Contra Faustum XXII*, 47. See note 31.
17. The reason for this identification will become clearer as we proceed with our commentary. At this point we may note that the Biblical incidents that Augustine treats in the third section of the argument such as the killing of the Canaanites by Moses are justified by reference to the "divine law" (*Contra Faustum XXII*, 78). These are the incidents that Augustine explains according to the "whole of God's rule" in *Confessiones* III, viii-ix.
18. *in hac enim et imago dei est, qua per fidem ad speciem reformamur. Contra Faustum XXII, 27 (621, 22-23).*
19. *nos vero, quorum corpus mortuum est propter peccatum, antequam vivificet deus et mortalia corpora nostra per inhabitantem spiritum eius in nobis pro modulo infirmitatis nostrae secundum aeternam legem, qua naturalis ordo servatur, iuste vivimus, si vivamus ex fide non ficta, quae per dilectionem operatur, habentes in conscientia bona spem repositam in caelis immortalitatis et incorruptionis et ipsius perficiendae iustitiae usque ad quandam ineffabiliter suavissimam saturitatem... Contra Faustum XXII, 27 (622, 6- 24).*
20. *qua propter hominis actio serviens fidei servienti deo refrenat omnes mortales delectationes et eas coerces ad naturalem modum meliora inferioribus ordinata dilectione praeponens. Contra Faustum XXII, 28 (622, 27-30).*
21. Augustine is very clear that the victim of rape does not lose her chastity, and should not take her own life to avoid rape - see *De Civitate Dei* I, 16-27. Whether she should submit to intercourse with a man who is not her husband to save her husband's life is a more difficult question.
22. See *De Bono Coniugali* XVII, 20.
23. *occulte quippe atque intus in abscondito secreto spiritali anima humana inhaeret verbo dei, ut sint duo in carne una: quod magnum coniugii sacramentum in Christo et in ecclesia commendat apostolus. Contra Faustum XXII, 38 (632, 4-7).*
24. *... regnum terrenum saeculi huius non expertum nec invenit ecclesiam coniugem Christi, id est, quam fideliter illi tamquam principio viro suo subdita cohaereret, nisi cum violare temptavit... Contra Faustum XXII, 38.*
25. There are two alternate readings to *principio*, neither of which make sense. They are natural enough in light of the somewhat unexpected *principio*. R. Stothert, the translator of the *Contra Faustum* in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers series does not translate it.

26. The argument is not further elaborated here. The nature and symbolic import of male and female are treated in *De Trinitate* XII, vii, 9-12. Augustine looks at the relation between males and females in two ways. On the one hand they are equal in that their contemplative minds are both equally the image of God. On the other hand the woman in her *role* as helper to the man *symbolizes* the active mind, as the man in his *role symbolizes* the contemplative mind. Whatever differences in nature Augustine sees between male and female, they do not alter the essential equality of the sexes as the image of God. Two obvious sources for Augustine's teaching on this are the first chapters of *Genesis* and the Pauline Epistles, both of which he quotes in the passage of the *De Trinitate* cited above. The same point that Augustine is making in *Contra Faustum* XXII, 37,38 is made again in *De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia* I, ix, 10, dated at 419 A.D.
27. *nam tunc ille ipse Loth futurae legis videtur gestasse personam, quam quidam ex illa procreati et sub lege positi male intellegendo quodam modo inebriant eaque non legitime utendo infidelitatis opera pariunt bona est enim lex, ait apostolus, si quis eam legitime utatur. Contra Faustum XXII, 41 (634, 25 - 635, 2).*
28. *ratio quippe iustitiae non tantum, quid factum sit, verum etiam, quare factum sit, intuetur, ut ex causis suis facta pendentia libramento aequitatis examinet. Contra Faustum XXII, 43 (635, 19-21).*
29. *quando enim mos erat, crimen non erat; et nunc propterea crimen est, quia mos non est. Contra Faustum XXII, 47 (639, 6-7).*
30. *alia enim sunt peccata contra naturam, alia contra mores, alia contra praecepta. Contra Faustum XXII, 47 (639, 7-8).*
31. *[quae duo] quisquis contempserit, etiamsi tantummodo causa generandi uti possit feminis pluribus, peccat amen et ipsam violat humanam societatem, cui necessaria est propagatio filiorum. Contra Faustum XXII, 47 (639, 15-18).*
32. R. Markus points out in *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine*, p. 87-91, that in Augustine's early writings he says that human law is only to be obeyed insofar as it is the same as the eternal law. Later on in his writings, Augustine does not subordinate human law to the universal so directly. Human law and custom become mediators in their own right as Augustine's thinking develops. As Markus comments, he increasingly thinks of providence operating through nature and through the human will. This increasing role of the human in turn has its effect on what Augustine means by the "eternal law". Markus's comments suggest that in Augustine's early writings it was more like the "order of nature". Later, the eternal law becomes the whole of God's rule as seen in *Contra Faustum* XXII, 78.
33. *... imperator carnis animus tanta temperantiae potestate praepolleat, ut genitalis delectationis motum insitum naturae mortalium ex providentia generandi leges inpositas non permittat excedere. Contra Faustum XXII, 48 (640, 12-16).*
34. *ideo magis ordo erat, quia libido non erat; et tanto firmiter servabentur coniugalis potestatis iura, quanto castius vitabatur carnalis cupiditatis iniuria. Contra Faustum XXII, 49 (642, 15-18).*

35. The Beatitudes are understood in this purgative sense in Augustine's treatise on the Sermon on the Mount, *De Sermone Domini in Monte* III, 10. F.J. Thonnard comments on this teaching about the purgative aspect of the active life in Augustine and its relation to other treatments of the spiritual life in his book *Traité De Vie Spirituelle A L'École De Saint Augustin*, Paris, Editions Bonne Presse, 1959, p. 285-304.
36. *neque enim se quisquam convertit sub gratia remissionis peccatorum servire iustitiae, nisi ut quiete vivat in verbo, ex quo viderur principium, quod est deus. Contra Faustum XXII, 52 (646, 6-8).*
37. *prior est autem in recta hominis eruditione labor operandi, quae iusta sunt, quam voluptas intellegendi, quae vera sunt. Contra Faustum XXII, 52 (647, 15-17).*
38. *... mandata utique ad iustitiam pertinentia; iustitiam autem, quae ex fide est, quae inter temptationum incerta versatur, ut pie credendo, quod nondum intellegit, etiam intelligentiae meritum consequatur. Contra Faustum XXII, 53 (647, 20-23).*
39. *proinde in his qui flagrant ingenti amore perspicuae veritatis, non est improbandum studium, sed ad ordinem revocandum, ut a fide incipiat et bonis moribus nitatur pervenire, quo tendit. in eo quippe, quod versatur, virtus est laboriosa, in eo vero, quod adperit, luminosa sapientia. Contra Faustum XXII, 53 (648, 1-6).*
40. Again the best commentary on this part of the argument is that of F.J. Thonnard, *Traité De Vie Spirituelle A L'École De Saint Augustin*, p. 285-304.
41. *... simul habebitur in hoc saeculo non solum speciosa intelligentia, sed etiam laboriosa iustitia. quam libet enim acute sinceriterque cernatur a mortalibus ncommutabile bonum, adhuc corpus, quod corrumpitur, adgravat animam et deprimit terrena inhabitatio sensum multa cogitantem. ad unum ergo tendendum, sed propter hoc multa ferenda sunt. Contra Faustum XXII, 53 (648, 14-20).*
42. *adfectando quippe otium, quo studia contemplationis ignescunt, non contemperatur infirmitati hominum, qui in variis pressuris sibi desiderant subveniri...Contra Faustum XXII, 54 (649, 14-17).*
43. See Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, p. 138-145.
44. *... [Rachel] aliquando et ipsa praestante misericordia dei per se ipsam parit, vix tandem quidem, quia perrarum est, ut "in principio erat verbum et verbum erat apud deum et deus erat verbum" et quidquid de hac re pie sapienterque dicitur, sine phantasmate carnalis cogitationis et salubriter vel ex parte capiatur. Contra Faustum XXII, 58 (654, 20-26).*
45. The development that this new stage of the argument marks can be seen if we compare the difficulty the Greek Fathers had with the purpose of negative examples in Scripture. For instance Gregory of Nyssa, in his commentary on the Song of Songs, says that the examples of bad men in Scripture (and he cites some of the same examples that Augustine discusses in the *Contra Faustum*) show that Scripture must be interpreted allegorically, because at the literal level these examples

would be of no use. Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, Section J.7, ed. C. McCambley, Brookline, Mass., Hellenic College Press, 1987.

46. *numquid cuiusquam membra distorta depravant lucem, quae cuncta demonstrat? Contra Faustum XXII, 61 (656,16-17).*
47. *... [Thamar] tamen consulta illa aeterna lege iustitiae, quae naturalem ordinem perturbari vetat, non utique tantum modo corporum, sed maxime ac primitus animorum, quia in procreandis filiis ordinatam societatem non custodivit, merito culpabilis invenitur..Contra Faustum XXII, 61 (657, 29 - 658,4).*
48. *documenta quippe dei et hominis ubique conservans parentes et bonos et malos propter convenientiam humanitatis non sprevit, partum autem virginis propter miraculum divinitatis elegit. Contra Faustum XXII, 64 (660, 11-14).*
49. *quid talibus docemur exemplis nisi regnum caelorum intra nos esse et de intimis nostris deum colere nos debere, ut ex abundantia cordis os loquatur. Contra Faustum XXII, 67 (664,5-7).*
50. *...quia et agricolae plus placent agri, qui spinis etiam magnis eradicatis centenum proferunt, quam qui nullas umquam spinas habuerunt et vix ad tricenum perveniunt. Contra Faustum XXII, 68 (665, 11-13).*
51. *...Moysen famulum dei vivi, dei veri, dei summi, fabricatoris caeli et terrae, non de alieno, sed de nihilo, non premente necessitate, sed adfluente bonitate, non per sui membri poenam, sed per sui verbi potentiam... Contra Faustum XXII, 69 (665, 22-26).*
52. *verumtamen animae virtutis cupaces ac fertiles praemittunt saepe vitia, quibus hoc ipsum indicent, cui virtuti sint potissimum adcommodatae, si fuerint praeceptis excultae. Contra Faustum XXII, 70 (666, 22-24).*
53. *uterque enim non detestabili inmanitate, sed emendabili animositate iustitiae regulam excessit, uterque odio improbitatis alienae, sed ille fraterno, iste dominico, licet adhuc carnali, tamen amore peccavit..Contra Faustum XXII, 70 (668, 2-5).*
54. *deus enim iusserat, qui utique novit non solum secundum facta, verum etiam secundum cor hominis, quid unusquisque vel per quem perpeti debeat. Contra Faustum XXII, 71 (668,10-13).*
55. *... [Deus] novit et poenis vel coercere improbos vel erudire subiectos et praecepta validiora dare sanioribus et quosdam medicinales gradus infirmioribus ordinare. Contra Faustum XXII, 72 (670, 19-22).*
56. *porro si spirituum damnatorum et igni aeterno iam destinatorum quamvis saeva et iniqua cupiditas a creatore atque ordinatore omnium naturarum acculto quidem, sed ubique iusto moderamine in id, quo se inclinaverat, relaxata est, quid absurdum est, si Aegyptii ab Hebraeis, homines inique dominantes ab hominibus liberis, quorum etiam mercedis pro eorum tam duris et iniustis laboribus fuerant debitores, rebus terrenis, quibus etiam ritu sacrilego in iniuriam creatoris uebantur, privari meruerunt? Contra Faustum XXII, 72 (670,5-14).*

57. *tantum interest in ordine naturali, quid a quo agatur, et sub quo quisque agat. Contra Faustum XXII, 73 (671 1-2).*
58. *hoc reprehendere timidorum est, non religiosorum. Contra Faustum XXII, 74 (673, 7).*
59. *nocendi cupiditas, ulciscendi crudelitas, impacatus atque implacabilis animus, feritas rebellandi, libido dominandi et si qua similia, haec sunt, quae in bellis iure culpantur, quae plerumque ut etiam iure puniuntur, ut adversus violentiam resistentium sive deo sive aliquo legitimo imperio iubente gerenda ipsa bella suscipiuntur a bonis. Contra Faustum XXII, 74 (672, 8-13).*
60. *ordo tamen ille naturalis mortalium paci adcommodatus hoc poscit, ut suscipiendi belli auctoritas, atque consilium penes principem sit, exequendi autem iussa bellica ministerium milites debeant paci salutique communi. Contra Faustum XXII, 75 (673, 11-15).*
61. *... ad terrendam vel ad obterendam vel ad subiugandam mortalium superbiam... Contra Faustum XXII, 75 (673, 16-17).*
62. *... ad exercendam patientiam et ad humiliandam animam ferendamque paternam disciplinam etiam prodesse invenitur. Contra Faustum XXII, 75 (673, 20-22).*
63. *neque enim habet in eos quisquam ullam potestatem, nisi cui data fuerit desuper. non est enim potestas nisi a deo sive iubente sive sinente. Contra Faustum XXII, 75 (673, 22-24).*
64. *... intellegant hanc praeparationem non esse in corpore, sed in corde; ibi est enim sanctum cubile virtutis, quae in illis quoque antiquis iustis nostris patribus habitavit. Contra Faustum XXII, 76 (674, 11-14).*
65. *... deum iustum et bonum talia iubere non potuisse non credere hominis est, ut mitius loquar, cogitare non valentis divinae providentiae per cuncta summa atque ima tendenti nec novum esse, quod oritur, nec perire, quod moritur, sed in suo singula quaeque ordine sive naturarum sive meritorum vel cedere vel succedere vel manere; hominum autem rectam voluntatem divinae legi coniungi, inordinatam vero cupiditatem divinae legis ordine coherceri, ut nec bonus aliud quam praecipitur velit, nec malus amplius quam permittitur possit, ita sane, ut non impune possit, quod iniuste voluerit. Contra Faustum XXII, 78 (678, 6-16).*
66. See chapter 1, note 75.
67. *Contra Faustum XXVI.*
68. See note 64 above.
69. *fit autem homo iniquus, cum propter se ipsas diligit res propter aliud adsumendas et propter aliud adpetit res propter se ipsas diligendas. Contra Faustum XXII, 78 (678, 21).*

70. *fit autem homo iustus, cum ob aliud non adpetit rebus uti, nisi propter quod divinitus institutae sunt, ipso autem deo frui propter ipsum seque et amico in ipso deo propter eundem ipsum deum. Contra Faustum XXII, 78 (678, 23-26).*
71. *... perturbat in se ordinem naturalem, quem lex aeterna conservari iubet. Contra Faustum XXII, 78 (678,21-22).*
72. For an account of this distinction and its meaning in human relationships, see O. O'Donovan, *The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine*, New Haven & London, Yale University Press, 1980, especially p. 25-29. See also the response of W.R. O'Connor in W.R. O'Connor, "The *UTI/FRUI* Distinction in Augustine's Ethics.", *Augustian Studies* 14, 1983, p.45-62. Both writers conclude that Augustine does not have an "instrumental" view of human relationships. When Augustine writes in this passage that God is to be "enjoyed" for his own sake, and one's friend is to be enjoyed in God he is seeing God not as an object but as the divine law, and friendship as a shared activity within that law, as we say below. Both of the above writers place the question of whether Augustine is advocating "using" people in any real sense in the context of a larger debate about whether Augustine's eudaemonistic ethics are "selfish" in some sense, perhaps because of the incursion of Greek ethical notions into the Biblical idea of *caritas*.
73. *sive autem iniquitas sive iustitia, nisi esset in voluntate, non esset in potestate. porro si in potestate non esset, nullum praemium, nulla poena iusta esset... Contra Faustum XXII, 78 (678, 27-29).*
74. *ignorantia vero et infirmitas, ut vel nesciat homo, quid velle debeat, vel non omne, quod voluerit, possit, ex occulto ordine venit et illis inscrutabilibus iudiciis dei, apud quem non est iniquitas. Contra Faustum XXII, 78 (679, 1-4).*
75. *... per illum peccatum intravit in nunc mundum..Contra Faustum XXII, 78 (679, 6-7).*
76. *... ex hac poena corpus corrumpitur et adgravat animam et deprimit terrena habitatio sensum multa cogitantem..Contra Faustum XXII, 78 (679, 8-10).*
77. *sed quae sit distributio iudicantis et miserantis dei, cur alius sic, alius autem sic, occultis fit causis, iustis tamen. Contra Faustum XXII, 78 (679, 14-16).*
78. *... ut ea, quae peccata non essent, nisi contra naturam essent, sic iudicentur et ordinentur, ne universitatis naturam turbare vel turpare permittuntur, meritorum suorum locis et condicionibus deputata. Contra Faustum XXII,78 (679, 21-24).*
79. *... cum per hoc secretum iudiciorum dei motusque humanarum voluntatum eisdem prosperitatibus alii corrumpantur, alii temperanter utantur, et eisdem adversitatibus alii deficiant, alii proficiant..Contra Faustum XXII, 78 (679, 14-17).*
80. See *Confessiones* III, viii (48, 5-8).
81. *... [iustitiam] habere simul omnia quae praecipit et nulla ex parte variari et tamen variis temporibus non omnia simul, sed propria distribuentem ac praecipientem. Confessiones III, vii,14 (47, 25-28).*

82. On this story in Augustine's writings, see *Six Traités Anti-Manichéens*, ed. R. Jolivet, and M. Jourjon, Note 34, p. 777.
83. ... *qui deus est universae creaturae. Contra Faustum XXII, 82 (684, 9).*
84. The theme of the Church as a unity encompassing good and bad is obviously related to Augustine's participation in the Donatist controversy. See Peter Brown's remarks: *Augustine of Hippo*, pp. 224-225.
85. *ea quippe hominum facta sancto spiritu disponente atque inspirante collegit propheta narrator, quorum interpositio non vacaret a praesignatione rerum, quas intendere prophetare. Contra Faustum XXII, 83 (685, 29 - 686, 3).*
86. We suggested in Chapter II, note 42 that some of the Greek Fathers had difficulty seeing the purpose of negative examples.
87. *accepit in occulto anulum, monile, et virgam: vocatione signatur, iustificatione decoratur, glorificatione exaltatur. Contra Faustum XXII, 86 (690, 22-24).*
88. *quos enim predestinavit, illos et vocavit; quos autem vocavit, illos et iustificavit; et quos iustificavit, illos et glorificavit. Contra Faustum XXII, 86 (690, 24 - 691, 1).*
89. The discussion begins at *Confessiones XII, xxvi* and follows through until *Confessiones XII, xxxi*.
90. R. D. Crouse describes Augustine's work as the "conversion of philosophy" in: R. D. Crouse, " 'In Aenigmate Trinitas' (*Confessiones*, XIII, 5,6): The Conversion of Philosophy in St. Augustine's *Confessiones*", *Dionysius*, XI, 1987, pp. 53-62. The character of the intellectual conversion is described in this article.
91. "*cibus sum grandium : cresce et manducabis me. nec tu me in te mutabis sicut cibum carnis tuae, sed tu mutaberis in me.*" *Confessiones VII, x, 16 (141, 9-12)*. For the meaning of the Platonic Vision of Truth, see C. J. Starnes, *Augustine's Conversion*, chapter 7.
92. *Christum igitur sonant haec omnia; caput illud, quod iam ascendit in caelum, et hoc corpus eius, quod usque in finem laborat in terra, scribentium literas vere sacras omnis parturivit intentio...Contra Faustum XXII, 94 (701, 2-5).*
93. *... si Manicheis vel quibusque aliis de his figuris rerum gestarum noster displicet intellectus vel ratio vel opinio..Contra Faustum XXII, 95 (702, 1-3).*
94. R. D. Crouse, "St. Augustine's *De Trinitate* : Philosophical Method", in E. A. Livingstone, ed., *Studia Patristica*, Vol. XVI, Berlin, 1985, pp. 501-510.
95. We again refer to the discussion of Scriptural interpretation in the latter half of *Confessiones XII*.
96. *... ut neque iusti in superbiam securitate extollantur nec iniqui contra medecinam desparatione abdurentur...Contra Faustum XXII, 96 (702, 18-20).*

97. *ac non tanto severius ille damnandus, quanto potius ad se vulnerandum aut occidendum abuti voluit ea re, quae ad sanandum liberandumque conscripta est? Contra Faustum XXII, 97 (703, 8-10).*
98. *sed ad excusandum profertur dei necessitas. Contra Faustum XXII, 98 (706, 28-29).*
99. *talem colant deum, qui nolunt colere deum. Contra Faustum XXII, 98 (706, 29-30).*

Conclusion

Manicheism, Contemplation, and Justice

In chapter I we tried to show that the account of Manicheism in *Confessions* Book III takes the form of a compressed but coherent treatment of the nature of justice. The immediate occasion for this discussion is as a response to the Manichean criticism of the morality of the Old Testament. Augustine writes about justice in *Confessions* III, in terms of three "wholes": the whole of nature, the whole of custom, and the whole of God's rule. His argument seeks to demonstrate that according to the view of justice that he has developed, Manicheism itself is unjust and, like every form of injustice, a "false whole".

In chapter II we showed that *Contra Faustum* XXII develops the same idea of justice at greater length. In the *Contra Faustum* as well, we see the wholes of nature, custom, and God's rule being used to respond to some of the same Manichean charges against the Old Testament. Augustine reaches the same conclusion here: Manicheism is unjust, a "false whole".

Both of these arguments are responses to the Manichees' charge that the Old Testament characters and narratives are unjust. Augustine's reply shows that the Manichean perspective is false because their position is itself an unjust one. Further, he sets out the range and complexity of the different forms of injustice. By implication, the reader is led to see the comparative poverty of the Manichean idea of justice.

We will now try to draw some conclusions about the character of this argument about justice and its place in Augustine's treatment of Manicheism. Augustine does not

argue that Manicheism is unjust simply as a polemical response to the Manichees' charges against the Old Testament and catholic Christianity. Rather, Augustine's treatment of Manicheism as a form of injustice helps him to bring out the nature of contemplation. We must recall that Augustine became a Manichee out of a desire for contemplation that came to him when he read Cicero's *Hortensius*. He was to find that Manicheism was largely a counterfeit of real contemplation, and yet there was enough of contemplation in Manicheism so that he can show in his treatment of it what the real nature of contemplation is, and what kind of justice governs the desire for it. In both of the works we have considered the argument about justice serves to illuminate the relation of justice and contemplation. Thus in the *Confessions* the consideration of the injustice of Manicheism serves to advance the argument of the work to include contemplation. In the *Contra Faustum* contemplation is introduced as a whole within justice. In turn the truth about contemplation that is brought out in both of these works leads to a further understanding of Manicheism.

In order to see this aspect of the argument more clearly, let us begin by making some general comments about the idea of justice as we have seen it developed. Augustine defines sin or injustice as that which is contrary to the Eternal Law. The Eternal Law is:

... the divine reason or will, ordaining that the natural order
be conserved and forbidding it to be broken.¹

Contra Faustum XXII, 27.

The Eternal Law, or as we have called it, the whole of God's rule, is the ultimate measure of all justice. However, within this all-encompassing whole, lesser wholes are maintained, such as the order of nature.

The order of nature in man consists of the proper natural hierarchy in the soul, with the passions and affections that belong to the sensible world ruled by the active mind,

which is in turn ruled by the contemplative mind.² In heaven, the contemplative mind will rule by intuiting directly from the Eternal Law what justice demands. In this life though, that is not possible, because we do not have such a direct knowledge of God and his law. Instead, the contemplative mind discerns the Eternal Law "by faith". That means it uses whatever intuitions it has of the Eternal Law, as well as the mediating justice of the law of nature, the Scriptures, and human society, to learn about what is just.

These mediating forms of justice are necessary for us while we "walk by faith", and they are all maintained within the Eternal Law as the natural order is. The whole of custom and the whole of human law provide provisional substitutes for the Eternal Law, which we can only know imperfectly in this life. Furthermore, these mediating wholes are known by us in a way which borrows something of the character of the Eternal Law itself; that is, they are known as *wholes*, as comprehensive and complete and universal. To some extent this character of wholeness and universality belongs to them, but it can also be falsely applied, as when the Manichees give a false universality to the customs of their own day, and criticize the patriarchs by that standard (*Confessions* III, vii, 13).³

Augustine says that we live justly if we live:

... from an unfeigned faith, which works through delight ⁴
Contra Faustum XXII, 27.

Faith, as we saw, consists of adhering to the justice of the Eternal Law, God's ruling will, and adhering to the mediating wholes of justice through which the Eternal Law comes to us. Moreover, this faith works through "delight" (*dilectio*), which is the intuitive and affective grasp by which we adhere to both the objects of our natural desires and the wholes of justice that govern them. "Delight" has the property of attaching itself to both appropriate and inappropriate objects. Temptation occurs when something delights us

which justice does not allow, and then we have to resist that inappropriate love with the rational will. The justice of a particular "delight" will depend on its relation to the particular whole of justice in which it is found.

"Delight" has not only to do with the grasp of objects, appropriate or inappropriate. It is also by delight that we grasp the wholes of justice. Actions within each whole of justice are judged according to the intuited grasp of what belongs to that whole. However, the initial grasp of a whole, the initial "delight" in it, does not necessarily mean that one will grasp all the consequences implicit in it, just as the initial delight in an object does not necessarily mean that it is an appropriate object of love. To use an example just mentioned, the Manichees do have a grasp of custom and its prescriptive force. They derive this from the whole of custom, grasped by "delight", which they share with anyone belonging to human society. However, they do not completely grasp what follows from the idea of custom, they do not grasp the *whole*, and so they attribute a false universality to the customs of their own day.

To judge whether an action or an emotion is just or not, we must know what initial delight or impulse (to use a more neutral, colourless word) gives rise to it, and whether the whole act or emotion follows from that impulse in a way that fits the whole to which the impulse belongs. For instance, the sexual love of Abraham for two women, Sarah and Hagar, is just, because it fits within the purposes of nature (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 30). In this example, in order to act justly, Abraham must correctly discern whether the whole of justice to which the impulse belongs, the whole of nature, makes the act just within that context.

The impulse to an action may not come from within the whole of nature; Isaac's playful behaviour with his wife comes from the whole of custom (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 46). It must be judged according to the whole to which it belongs. Moreover, the injustice of an action may stem from an impulse being acted on according to a whole different from the one it actually belongs to. Augustine gives the example of a hypothetical person in his own Roman society who had two wives (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 47). Even if someone had two wives for the purpose of children, which is the natural end of marriage, it would be wrong, says Augustine, because Roman society would inevitably be the context in which the impulse arose, and Roman society did not allow polygamy. In every case, justice is the integrity of the impulse and what follows from it, within the whole or wholes that it belongs to.

The young Augustine was first drawn to contemplation when he was "delighted" with the idea of it, as presented in Cicero's *Horrensus*.⁴ He now had to find out what the whole was of which he had only the initial grasp. His attempt to do this led him to Manicheism, a "false whole", but Manicheism was able to help the mature Augustine see clearly the relation between the first impulse of contemplation and the whole that followed from it.

To investigate these themes more fully we will turn again to the argument of *Contra Faustum* XXII and reconsider the section which extends from the beginning of the argument, the whole of nature, to the introduction of the active and contemplative lives in chapters 52 - 58. By focusing our attention on the movement of the argument up to the introduction of contemplation, we will see more clearly what elements belong to contemplation and how this relates to Augustine's treatment of justice and Manicheism. If any apology is needed for our going over the same ground, perhaps we could cite the

example of Augustine himself, who, in *Contra Faustum XXII*, chapters 82ff., runs again through all of the Scriptural incidents he has covered, in order to give their meaning from a deeper perspective! In this discussion, we will assume that the general outline of the argument of *Contra Faustum XXII* has been established in chapter II, and refer the reader there for a more basic treatment of its successive stages. In this concluding part of our argument, we will be less concerned to show that the argument is there and more concerned to enter more deeply into it.

The first stage of the argument, which we have called the "whole of nature" is not, in fact, directly concerned with nature, the pattern of changing sensible and animate things. Indeed a fuller view of nature emerges at a later point in the argument.⁶ Rather, the focus of the "whole of nature" (*Contra Faustum XXII*, 27-34) is the natural appetites or affections - "what we have in common with the beasts" - and the demand of justice that they be directed toward their natural objects.

The image that best depicts this whole is Augustine's image from *Confessions* III, vii, of pieces of armour and parts of the body.⁷ The natural affections should "fit" with their objects as they are designed to fit. The desire for food is to be indulged for the purpose of maintaining the life of the individual, the sexual desire for reproducing the species, and so on (*Contra Faustum XXII*, 29). However, if the natural affections are permitted to exceed what is required by these natural purposes, they distort both themselves and the higher faculties or powers of the soul:

If the natural affections fall beyond... [the natural limits]...
and lusts drag the man, no longer ruling himself, contrary to
the order of temperance, they become improper and
shameful, and deserve to be corrected by pains.⁸

Contra Faustum XXII, 29.

In this passage we can see both sides of what injustice against the whole of nature is: i) the natural affections or "mortal delights" become lusts, and, ii) the reason is torn from its ruling position. Injustice distorts the whole of nature itself by distorting the natural affections, but it also disrupts the other wholes because the whole of nature is a part of a larger whole.

What is characteristic of the whole of nature is that its elements, the natural affections, the objects of these affections, and natural purposes, are all held together abstractly. The natural affections and their objects are like limbs and armour; they fit together when they are justly ordered, but the ruling reason does not share in the logic that underlies their "fitting". For instance, when reason determines that the desire to preserve one's life is just, it does so from a position external to the instinct it is governing.

The argument moves forward when the question is posed, "Why didn't Abraham trust in God rather than concealing the fact that Sarah was his wife?" (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 36). Now "trusting in God" or faith was already a part of the argument in the whole of nature. Faith is, in the first place, a matter of maintaining the proper natural hierarchy in the soul. The attitude of faith or trust allows that the openness and receptiveness of the contemplative mind to God be considered paramount in all the other operations of the soul. Thus when the natural affections threaten to assume a disproportionate importance, justice requires that they remain subordinate because the openness of contemplation to God is known to be the primary natural good. Directly, of course, the affections are probably subordinated to something lower, such as the rule of reason, guided by custom or law. Nevertheless, the highest natural good is recognized to be that of contemplation.

However, the question of whether to trust in God or to use natural means to save one's life is not directly a matter of the soul's natural hierarchy. The question is not whether contemplation should be recognized as the highest good through faith, which is assumed, but of how the priority of contemplation affects the place of the other faculties of the soul. According to the justice of the whole of nature, to act to preserve one's life is a just response to the "instinct" of self-preservation, but what happens to the whole of nature when faith opens up the possibility that God may want a different action or may intervene in a supernatural way? The whole of nature dictates that the soul's other faculties must give way to the priority of contemplation and what it may reveal of God's will, but the question that the argument now raises is whether the natural hierarchy will keep its integrity. To address this question, for Augustine, we need a mediating knowledge, and thus the whole of custom or mediation is introduced.

The first form of mediating knowledge is that of "sound doctrine" (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 36), and sound doctrine dictates that natural means should be used when they are available. A person who has the means to save his or her life should not trust in God for it instead, because that would be "tempting God". To trust in God apart from the order of natural means and causation would be an act belonging to the whole of God's rule. In that whole God does indeed act in a way that supersedes other wholes. However, the impulse to save one's life belongs to the whole of nature. The injustice of "tempting God" would be that an impulse issuing from one whole was understood and acted on in terms of another. One might ask how you are to know if God isn't asking you to trust your life to him in a particular situation. Augustine's answer is that one must only do that out of an impulse that comes from the whole of God's rule. This leaves the problem of discerning which whole the impulse comes from, but it is just this discernment about the origin of impulses and their connection to a whole that is required by justice at this point.

Thus the idea of justice taught by sound doctrine is that there must be an integrity between the initial impulse of an action or emotion and the whole in terms of which it is understood and acted on. Augustine expresses this with the image that it is not proper for a woman to have two husbands (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 37). The "husband" represents the unified source from which the impulse and the whole it belongs to come and the "wife" represents the whole in terms of which it is understood.

In the example given, if Abraham trusted in God to preserve his life in the face of danger when there were natural means to preserve it, he would be saying, in effect, that the issue of his safety, which arose in the context of the whole of nature, issued actually from the whole of God's rule (in which one might well be asked to trust one's safety to God). The injustice of this lies in the fact that an action, trusting God, which is actually a response to an impulse from the whole of nature, pretends to be a response to the whole of God's rule. The integrity between the impulse and the whole in which it is understood is not maintained.

It will be noted that we have spoken as if the initial impulse or delight, which is of such importance in determining the justice of whatever action or emotion follows from it, issues from a whole and is understood in terms of another whole. The whole from which the impulse issues is actually the source of two things: the impulse to act and the whole in which the act is understood. These two things, the impulse and the whole of justice in which it is understood, are a unity in the whole from which they both issue. The initial grasp of delight grasps this unity in a partial and intuitive way, and thus knows what discursive whole the impulse belongs to. The unified whole that the delight grasps and from which the whole and act issue cannot be "seen" directly, because it is the source of the

whole in terms of which it is understood; that would be like trying to see the source of light. A knowledge of the whole from which the whole of justice and the impulse issues must be revealed, then, from the source itself.

This would appear to be the direction the argument is taking when Augustine speaks of Sarah's faithfulness as a type of the faithfulness to the *principle* of the whole that follows from it (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 38). The principle here corresponds to the "husband" of the previous chapter, the unified whole from which the discursive whole issues. Sarah's faithfulness is an image of the integrity of the discursive whole with the unified whole that it comes from. The same or a similar point is being made when the secret marriage of Abraham and Sarah is a type of the "secret" union of the Word and the soul. This "secret" union is the point at which the delight issues from the whole it belongs to. The source or unified whole is necessarily concealed, as Abraham is concealed in the foreign kingdom. Contemplation has priority in the hierarchy of the soul because the contemplative mind is where the wholes of acts and the wholes of justice in which they take place are received from their source.⁹

It is no surprise that the effect of this new stage of the argument has been to affirm the integrity of the whole of nature and the acts and motives within it. The mediated knowledge that the discursive whole has its source in a unified whole does not, in the first place, alter the discursive whole. The disclosure that worldly acts and justice imply an otherworldly source does not negate them. Thus, the otherworldliness that immediately enters in the argument when the mediated knowledge of the source of wholes is given (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 39), is a peculiar form of otherworldliness. The otherworldly aspect of the community of grace to which we are called is that it recognizes its source as outside of the world conceived in the abstract natural terms of the whole of nature.

However, that knowledge confirms the natural world in its integrity as issuing from a whole which comes from God.

So too, the human dimension of the mediating community of the church is validated. Augustine speaks of a relationship in which the members of the church are brothers of Christ rather than the church being the bride of Christ and it is this human dimension he is referring to (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 40). The humanity of Christ is also referred to at this point. Christ's humanity is to be understood as belonging to the divine whole of his divinity.

We may note that a new logic has entered the argument. In the whole of nature the image was of pieces of armour and parts of the body, a whole abstractly joined together. Here the appropriate image, again from *Confessions* III, vii, is of a law which binds together and directs a community.¹⁰ The law here represents the mediating wholes of Scripture, custom, or law, which act as images of the unified wholes from which impulses and discursive wholes come. Through these mediating wholes, the reason that informs each type of justice is present to those who are under the authority of the mediating wholes, and this marks a difference from the whole of nature. To the extent to which these mediating wholes genuinely mediate the Eternal Law, it is no longer "secret" or concealed.

According to the argument so far, justice is a matter of the integrity of an initial impulse and the action that follows from it, within the whole of justice that it belongs to. Both the impulse and the whole of justice itself issue from the "concealed" unified whole, which we know about by revelation. Injustice involves a confusing of the unity in which the impulse and the whole of justice issue from the concealed whole, so that an impulse is understood within a whole that it does not belong to. Up to this point in the argument the

whole of nature and the whole of custom are simply separate. An impulse belongs to either one or the other whole and remains within it, if justice is maintained.

The whole of custom is distinguished from the whole of nature because of the knowledge it has of the concealed whole from which the impulse issues. The content of the whole of custom is still largely derived from the whole of nature, which is preserved in it. The temptation here is to lose the perspective of the whole of custom and revert to that of the whole of nature. Augustine expresses this in two images. The first is that of Lot keeping himself from the corruption that surrounds him in Sodom (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 41). The second is that of Lot's wife, who looks back while leaving Sodom, and is turned into a pillar of salt (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 41). These two images represent the community of grace, in one case refusing to give up, and in the other case giving up its knowledge that it belongs within the unified whole of God.

A new possibility now comes into the argument, which is represented allegorically by Lot's daughters making Lot drunk (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 41). Augustine says this signifies those who misuse and distort "the law". "The law" here means the mediating knowledge of this part of the argument. What it means to distort this mediating knowledge is shown in the examples given in the next two chapters (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 43-44).

In chapter 43 it is assumed that the incest between Lot's daughters and their father is prohibited by the mediating knowledge of custom, law, or Scripture. However, Lot's daughters misuse and distort this knowledge by making their desire for children more important than the mediating knowledge. Chapter 44 shows the opposite form of distorting the law; the mediating human custom, which bids us to sympathize with those who suffer,

leads Lot to abuse the natural purpose of wine in getting drunk with his daughters. This time it is the whole of nature that is violated, because of the mediating whole of custom.

The impulses that result in breaking of the prohibition against incest and drunkenness both belong to the same whole, and it is somewhat different than what has gone before. Both of these acts involve an attempt to bring the whole of nature and the whole of mediating knowledge into a new relation, one by subordinating custom to nature and the other by subordinating nature to custom. Both attempts are wrong because they do not preserve the integrity of both wholes; however, the attempt to bring the wholes into relation is not wrong. It is the logical character of human custom to try to bring these into relation.

The kind of thinking that Augustine does about these cases belongs to the same whole of custom (not of custom as standing for mediation in general but of custom proper¹¹). He admits that the wholes of nature and mediating knowledge were violated, but he prompts us to consider further why these things were done. Granted that Lot's daughters gave their affections an unjust priority, and disregarded the prohibition of incest - what were the affections, the motives, that prompted them to do this? The idea of motives involves bringing into consideration other impulses beside the one that actually issues in an action and trying to bring all the impulses into relation to each other. This marks a new point in the argument. Lot's daughters and Lot himself are not merely violating the wholes of custom and law, they are violating them with a rationale for doing so - they are "misusing the law". The rationale is one that attempts to bring the wholes into relation.

The justice of this new whole is displayed further when Augustine asserts that it is just for Isaac to act playfully with his wife (*Contra Faustum* XXII, 46). Isaac's

playfulness is a concession to his wife's nature and so it involves the same bringing together of nature and custom that marks this stage of the argument. However, here a genuine harmony of custom and nature is achieved. Nature is neither distorted, nor given too much importance. The mediating knowledge of custom bids Isaac condescend to the needs of his wife as Christ condescended to humanity's needs in taking flesh.

Justice according to custom is seen in actions possessing the correct harmony of mediated knowledge and nature. Such actions use the aid of the mediating whole, made up of the shared intuition of human society, which we call custom. Injustice is a confusion of the elements that make up this whole, the postulating of a false harmony. In the community this injustice shows itself in social groupings centred around these false wholes which disrupt the common whole, as Augustine says in *Confessions* III viii:

... when the limits of human society are broken and bold
people enjoy private unions or factions, just as each thing
delights or causes offence... *Confessions* III, vi, 16.

The sin of Lot's daughters and of Lot himself is to try to falsely reconcile the wholes of nature and mediated knowledge, and thus to implicitly invent their own idea of custom, a false harmony of wholes which does what custom does. This intellectual sin is a form of *curiositas*, the misuse of the mind in making a false whole.

Nevertheless, in these sins and in the case of Isaac, who represents the just use of custom, the argument has clearly advanced. The increased concreteness of custom marks a separation from the whole of nature that is evident when it appears that nature and mediated knowledge can be reconciled without lapsing back into the whole of nature. Custom is a more complex whole than the idea of a unified whole that was introduced with the idea of mediation. Here the idea is of a whole of wholes, in which wholes are reconciled together.

The next stage of the argument (chapters 48-50) introduces wholes whose concreteness separates them even more from the natural affections. The whole of law and the whole of the gospel are both characterized as having a unifying power that is independent of the kind of motives that were involved in the whole of custom. The law governing marriage can govern sinful sexual impulses and make them serve their natural end. The gospel can "beget children to eternal life" even when it is preached for the wrong motives. The idea of law is a development of the part of the argument concerned with the control of the passions. It adds a kind of absolute quality to that control, so that the patriarchs are spoken of as having complete control over their passions, despite their multiple wives. In them:

... the soul, the ruler of the flesh, has such a powerful temperance that the motion of genital delight, placed in our mortal nature for the purpose of generation, is not allowed to exceed the imposed laws.¹³ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 48.

The gospel has a similar character to law in that it makes an absolute claim over people's lives. It claims to be a teaching of such a sort that the acceptance of it brings eternal life and the rejection of it brings eternal punishment. The gospel represents a continuation of that aspect of the argument we saw with Isaac being allowed by custom to condescend to the needs of his wife's nature. There is a certain freedom and vindication of our humanity in custom which is present, again in a more absolute sense than previously, in the preaching of the gospel and the "begetting of children to eternal life".

The various mediating wholes were introduced with the revealed knowledge that they and the impulses and actions that belong to them came from a unified whole. Law and gospel go beyond the previous wholes in being more absolutely determinative of what follows from them. Thus they approximate more closely to the character of the unified

whole itself, and this conformity of the mediating whole to the unified whole is where the greater concreteness of law and gospel lies. The aspect of the whole of custom in which it involved a "personal" act of condescension is not evident at this stage of the argument.

In this respect law and gospel might seem to involve less freedom than custom, and their absolutely determining character might be taken to be a return to the sort of "empiricism" we saw in the whole of nature. However, for Augustine, freedom is freedom from necessity, which is imposed, first of all, by the disordered natural affections. The more the mediating wholes are separated from them, the greater the freedom. In chapter 50, Jacob is so in tune with the law governing marriage, that he is free to renounce his lawful claims and be absolutely determined, under the law, by his wives' wishes. For Augustine, this is an expression of greater freedom than Isaac's freedom to condescend to be playful with his wife in chapter 46.

Jacob in fact marks a step beyond the whole of law, because he is not simply passive and obedient to it, but makes a choice not to assert himself against it. When law is simply determinative, its content, the reason that informs it, is not known. To the soul that desires to go beyond the law, and yet remains submissive to it, the whole of contemplation can emerge.

The unjust form of the whole of law and gospel is the love of glory that infects those who preach the Gospel for human recognition. The love of glory is a subtle form of the *curiositas* which has been the characteristic injustice of these mediating wholes. It has the same "absolute" character as the law and the gospel, but this is sought for the self rather than in obedience to a whole. This form of injustice, like the wholes of law and gospel,

proceeds more directly from the unified whole than previous wholes, so it is harder to be aware of the deception contained in it.¹⁴

The introduction of the whole of contemplation brings with it the development of a number of elements of the whole of law and gospel. The conformity of the natural affections to the law is an anticipation of the conformity of the mind to the unchanging word "in which we live in peace", and "from which we see the Principle" (ch. 52). Thus the law, like the other mediating wholes, is an anticipation of the role of the Word in the contemplation of God - that to which the mind conforms itself in order to see God. Also, the passivity that those under the law show towards law becomes the passivity of those "labouring to do those things which are just" as a preparation for contemplation.

Unlike previous wholes, the end or goal of the contemplation of God is self-consciously present in the whole of contemplation. It is implicitly present in the "labour of doing those things that are just". That is why, according to Augustine, the figure of Leah, who represents the active life of justice, has weak eyes. In comparison with contemplation's sure knowledge of God, the active life is lived in darkness and lack of clear truth. However, the active life of the aspiring contemplative, unlike the life of previous wholes, implicitly recognizes this. The truth that is explicitly present in the contemplative life and implicitly present in the active life, is manifested in both as a balance between activity and passivity. Thus, Augustine characterizes the active life of justice as the *labor actionum atque passionum*.¹⁵ In this it is a reflection of the contemplative life, as we will see, and also the proper preparation for it.

Chapters 52 and 53 are concerned with the active life as a preparation for the contemplative life. We can see what is involved here if we consider the movement

Augustine treats between the law and the Beatitudes (ch. 52). People expect to come to contemplation by the mediation of the law, he says, but they find that law brings rather "the toleration of labour through various temptations".¹⁶ The Beatitudes mark an advance on this because they take into account the mixture of activity and passivity that is present in temptation. Augustine says that the life of justice, lived "by faith" is "situated among the uncertainties of temptations".¹⁷ It is in coming to terms with the mixture of activity and passivity in temptations, and the uncertainties that attend them, that the soul is prepared for the contemplative life. This active life is lived "by faith"; that is, with the life of contemplation in view as the ultimate end. By such preparation is virtue formed,¹⁸ and such is the life depicted in the Beatitudes.¹⁹ Without the preparation of the active life of justice, one cannot come to the contemplative life.²⁰

The idea of justice here is one in which the proper balance between activity and passivity is achieved in the soul through the experience of the "uncertainty of temptations". One of the things that would be grasped is the character of the virtues, which depend on the achieving of the right balance in the face of temptation. What is learned in the active life of justice provides the content that is necessary for the contemplative life.

In chapters 54 through 58 Augustine goes on to give a further treatment of justice in the whole of contemplation. This treatment is parallel to the one in *Confessions* III, viii, and a comparison with that passage will make its features clearer. In *Confessions* III, viii, there was a hierarchy of motives for injustice based on the hierarchy of natures in *Confessions* III, vi.²¹ The sequence of motives was: the desire for revenge, the desire for unjust gain, the fear of harm, envy, and, finally, taking pleasure in another's pain. Then somehow, at the very bottom of the hierarchy there was injustice based on the irrational fantasies of Manicheism.

In *Contra Faustum* XXII, chapters 54 through 58, there is a corresponding hierarchy, this time of forms of justice within contemplation. It is also related to the hierarchy of natures found in *Confessions* III, vi but the argument here requires a different ordering. The first form of justice is exemplified in those who preach the gospel, begetting children for the Kingdom of God despite "fighting without and fears within".²² They preach the gospel of Christ's humanity, which is accessible to those who live the active life. This form of justice corresponds to the injustice from "fear of harm" in *Confessions* III, viii, and to the level of sensible natures in *Confessions* III, vi. In *Contra Faustum* XXII, it corresponds to the justice of the whole of nature, in which the instinct of self-preservation figured prominently. Whereas Abraham was right to save his life, following the impulse of the whole of nature, here the preachers of the gospel live with fear and danger for the sake of the gospel.

The second form of justice has a number of different manifestations. One of these is the desire of the contemplative life to make known the truth it sees, so as not to "make its way with the corruption of envy".²³ Another manifestation of this form of justice is the decision by contemplation to use sensible images to convey its truths.²⁴ A third is seen when those involved in the active life of preaching the gospel find it necessary to accept the role of those who preach the gospel insincerely. These are those to whom the apostle Paul says: "You steal, you who preach 'Do not steal'; You commit adultery, you who preach 'Do not commit adultery'" (Romans 2:21 ff.).

This form of justice corresponds to the whole of custom in *Contra Faustum* XXII. However, the correspondences to *Confessions* III, vi and viii are more complex, because they involve *two* of the levels of injustice and of natures. On the one hand there are the

references to envy which correspond to the level of envy, the level *below* "fear of harm" in the list of injustices. On the other hand, the scriptural references to theft and adultery correspond to the "desire of unjust gain", the level *above* "fear of harm". The use by contemplation of images of sensible things corresponds to the level immediately *below* that of the sensible in the hierarchy of natures in *Confessions* III, vi. Thus, the whole of custom involves both the level of the "desire for unjust gain" and the level of "envy", the levels below and above the level of the sensible in the hierarchy of natures.

The third form of justice in this new hierarchy is the whole of law. It is manifested in those who become involved in the administration of the Church, so that contemplation will gain a good reputation among the people that are helped by their efforts (chapters 56-58). This popular repute, Augustine says, is not to be equated with the judgements of the wise, but nevertheless, justice requires that it be taken into account. The administrators of the Church correspond to the motive of revenge in III, viii. Both the just administrator in the church and the person who seeks revenge have a grasp of the content of law, although the administrator serves that content and the person seeking revenge distorts it to his private ends. The images of popular repute correspond in the hierarchy of natures to the fantastic images of mythology, and in the hierarchy of motives, to the pleasure in another's pain, which also uses fantastic images.²⁵ Thus, the whole of law involves both the level of "revenge" and the "pleasure in another's pain" and, in the hierarchy of natures, the level of fantastic images.

There is an active and passive component to each of these forms of justice, of which the active side corresponds to the positive half of the hierarchy of natures - the sensible, and the soul and so on. The passive side corresponds to the half of the hierarchy of natures made up of the various kinds of images. In the first form of justice, the passive

side can be seen in the “fears within” that the preachers of the gospel endure. The active side can be seen in the preaching itself. With the whole of custom, the “envy” and the use of sensible images represent the passive side. Those in the church who make allowance for the contribution of preachers who “steal and commit adultery” represent the active side. With the whole of law the fantastic images of popular repute represent the passive side. The administration of the Church represents the active side. Starting with the sensible, each successive whole reaches higher up in the hierarchy of *Confessions* III, viii on the active side and lower down on the passive side.

There is yet another stage of the argument. We saw that in *Confessions* III, viii, the whole of Manicheism represented a further step down in the hierarchy of natures and the hierarchy of injustice. Here there is a corresponding kind of justice involved in dealing with popular repute. Augustine says that it would be *unjust* for the lovers of the contemplative life to gain a favourable popular reputation without becoming involved in the practical labours of using their intellectual gifts in the service of the church.²⁶ This is actually a more subtle point than it might appear to be. One can understand easily enough how it might be practically *impossible* for the contemplative life to win a good reputation without serving the people. It is more difficult to see how it would be *unjust*, since popular reputation is a matter of fantastic and somewhat inaccurate images. It might be thought that these make no claim of obligation on the contemplative.

This point is dealing with the same level of things as the distinction in *Confessions* III, vi, between fantastic images that are not believed to be true and fantastic images that are falsely believed to be true. There, one might ask what is the difference to the soul between one sort of fantastic image and another, since they are both images? Augustine thinks that the lack of truth of the Manichean images constitutes a crucial difference. Here as well, to

be untrue even in the realm of fantastic images is a matter of injustice. These are distinctions that cannot be made in terms of a logic that depicts the soul and its objects as if this were a relation of the senses, as in the whole of nature. To make these distinctions, has to be a matter of pure intuition, because distinctions about the truth or untruth of fantastic images have no "objective" side to them, but rest on the validity that intuition can give them. When we say this we recognize that in the ordinary way of speaking, one does say whether fantastic images have any objectivity to them. It is when they are considered as wholes, which are determinative of the whole in which they are understood, that there is no objectivity governing them of the sort that belongs to the senses.

What is the place of the distinction that is being made here in the argument about justice? We have noted the pattern of active and passive sides to each of the wholes. Here we see the passive side of another whole, the whole of contemplation. The active side of contemplation is the contemplative knowledge of God. The passive side is another aspect of the intuitive knowledge we see in the making of distinctions about fantastic images; a knowledge which has no objective side to it of the sort that accompanies the whole of nature.

Since our interest is justice, and particularly the justice that belongs to the whole of contemplation, we will not go into the metaphysical and epistemological questions raised in this last stage of the argument. However, we should note that the active and passive sides of this whole correspond to the two natures spoken of in *Confessions* XII: the contemplative "heaven of heavens" and the unformed matter that Augustine finds in the first verse of Genesis.²⁷

The "heaven of heavens" is a complex and difficult idea. It includes the Platonic ideas of things and the created intellectual beings which contemplate God. It is the "habitation" from which man will contemplate God in the life to come, and he participates in its life when he is engaged in contemplation in this life. It is only in the light of this contemplative relationship to God, represented by the whole of contemplation, that the idea of "unformed matter" occurs. It has the character of being known only by intuition:

[human thought] may attempt to know it by not knowing it
or not to know it by knowing.²⁸
Confessions XII, v.

In the hierarchy of natures of *Confessions* III, vi these two sides correspond to the *spiritalia opera* and to the false Manichean images respectively.²⁹

Now we can see better the character of Augustine's idea of contemplation. In both the *Confessions* and the *Contra Faustum* the realm of contemplation, which Augustine had entered when he was inspired by Cicero's *Horrensus*, is characterized as having an active and a passive aspect, the one corresponding to the concept of the "heaven of heavens", the other to "unformed matter". The introduction of these two aspects marks the culmination of the argument about justice in the context of contemplation, in both works.

We should also note that the idea of an active and passive side to the whole of contemplation is clearly related to Augustine's division of thought into the unified knowledge of *sapientia* and the discursive knowledge of *scientia*.³⁰ What exactly that relation is is beyond the scope of the present discussion.

The proper way of coming to terms with the balance of these active and passive aspects of the whole of contemplation, according to Augustine, is through the active life of justice. He describes this "way" in the *Contra Faustum*, and also in *Confessions* III, v,

when he speaks of the way of the Scriptures, "humble in entering and lofty in advancing".³¹ In the active life, surrounded by "the uncertainties of temptations", one learns to see justice as the proper balance of active and passive elements. The non-objective character of "temptations" means that in enduring them the capacity for intuitive thinking about activity and passivity is developed, and this enables one to think activity and passivity in their contemplative forms.³²

How this idea of justice works can be seen in the examples of justice within the context of contemplation, given in *Contra Faustum* XXII, 54-58. The apostles, who preach the gospel despite "fears within" show both the active (preaching) and the passive (fears) elements of justice according to the whole of nature. When Augustine depicts the contemplative life choosing to use sensible images to explain itself, he shows us the passive side of contemplation within the whole of custom. Instead of the desire for contemplation drawing the aspiring contemplative wholly away from images, the contemplative uses them to teach others. When he depicts the preachers of the gospel being forced to take into account those who preach the gospel for wrong motives, he shows the passive side of the active life. Those who administer the Church, who show due regard for the unstable images of popular reputation, show both the active and passive sides of justice according to the whole of law.

In each of these cases, injustice would be to allow too little to one or other of these sides. In the whole of nature, too little fear, or too little bold activity. In the contemplative side of the whole of custom, too little desire for contemplation or too little recourse to necessary images. In the active side of the whole of custom, too little zeal for the purity of the gospel, or too little allowance for the reality of the Church. In the whole of law, too little sense of the Church as it ought to be, or too little sense of how it is.

Finally, Augustine shows us the justice of the whole of contemplation, in which the contemplative vision has a corresponding passive aspect. Both of these parts must be accorded their proper weight if there is to be justice. These two aspects are the highest and lowest natures in the hierarchy of natures of *Confessions* III, vi - the spiritual works (*spiritalia opera*) and the false images (*phantasmata*) of the Manichees. The whole of contemplation is made up of both of these sides, and the "preparation" of the active life is a matter of learning to give them their appropriate weight.

This conception of the contemplative whole helps us to understand the previous wholes in the argument. With all mediated forms of justice, in order to know what justice is, one must know the unified whole from which wholes and impulses issue. To know this, one must use a kind of intuitive knowledge. This knowledge concerns both the unified whole and the limits of the discursive whole that follows from it. To know both correctly requires a just balance between the "active" intuition that grasps the whole and "passive" intuition that grasps the discursive limits.

To avoid "tempting God", for instance, one must know that God is beyond the whole of nature and yet his character does not violate the whole of nature. One must also know intuitively when an impulse to reach to God comes from nature and not from God himself. This requires a just disposition, which intuitively knows at the same time the character of God, and the workings and deceitfulness of one's self. Such knowledge is only possible, for Augustine, with the aid of revelation, concerning both the character of God and the laws and customs that help the soul to conform to the pattern of his will.

Justice, here and throughout the argument, is well described as "humble piety".³³ Humility consists of a continuous just passivity in the face of the activity of God. It is the opposite of the attitude which raises against God "the horns of a false liberty".³⁴ Indeed, the centrality of humility and the constant awareness of the danger of a proud and grasping approach to God are close to the heart of this whole conception of justice.

Then if we move forward to the whole of custom, we find that justice is a matter of maintaining different wholes in relation to each other. For instance, while someone may belong to the mediating community of the church, custom dictates that he or she should not be insensible to the needs of nature. However, since each of these wholes of mediation and of nature is held in its full integrity (as a *whole* in fact) the attitude to the wholes that are not actually present must be one of "faith". Faith is necessary, in that it must be believed that justice contains all the other wholes as well, in order to maintain the balance that enables one to move from one to another. Injustice here is a matter of losing this balance, as Lot and Lot's daughters do. One must hold all the wholes as implicitly present in the one that is actually present; such implicit knowledge belongs to the passive side of the contemplative whole.

Here we see another of the principle characteristics of the idea of justice that Augustine is developing. It is necessarily open to the whole range of life and experience and whatever kinds of justice operate in each sphere. We saw that Augustine describes injustice as occurring when "through a private pride a false whole is loved in a part" (*Confessions* III, viii). "Private" describes the absolutizing of one whole so that it cannot give way to another and Augustine's idea of justice is resolutely set against such "privacy". Practically, one can see this in the determined catholicity that informs all of his arguments against Manicheism. Theoretically, it can be seen in the widening out of his conception of

justice to include every form of human activity, high or low, good or bad. Every aspect is understood and comprehended by justice. "Private" notions of justice result in "factions" and the sin of *curiositas*. Augustine's version of justice continually opens up to the whole of life and experience, because of a certain passivity toward the whole that is given in creation.

With the whole of law, the law itself, in its character of unconditionally determining what it governs, is the active element. Law is closer to an intellectual activity than previous wholes. The passive side is the elements of nature and custom that the law rules over. For example, the law governing marriage is determinative of both the natural impulses of reproduction and the customary order governing family life. Injustice here is a more subtle matter than in previous wholes. The "love of glory" is a distortion of the just passivity one should have in the face of law.

Finally, in the whole of contemplation justice is also a matter of the just balance of active and passive sides. However, because the knowledge of both sides is purely intuitive, our knowledge of the justice of the contemplative whole depends in the first place on the justice of the wholes of nature, custom, and so on within it to provide a mediating objectivity. For example, Augustine says that it would be unjust to gain a good reputation for contemplation without serving the people and gaining their good opinions. As we have seen, this might seem like a dubious contention considered theoretically. One might easily lose sight of the passive intuition which belongs to the whole of contemplation and which demands truth at exactly this level of natures. A more reliable guide than unsupported intuition would be the other wholes, such as custom, which because of their continuity in justice with the whole of contemplation, would direct the aspiring contemplative to a correct judgement about this matter through the examples of others in the church. In this sense as

well, the active life and the wholes within it serve as a preparation for the contemplative life.

What justice demands of the passive side of the contemplative life is that it be the complete passivity of the active side and nothing else. Active contemplation should be the contemplation of the divine Word (and of such matters as lead to that contemplation), and passive contemplation should be the implicit knowledge of that. If the passive side of contemplation is mixed with an active element, its complete indeterminacy, coupled with the illicit activity of a false form of contemplation breeds *phantasmata* - indeterminate fantastic images- of which the Manichean images are an example. Augustine speaks, at the end of *Contra Faustum* XXII, 58, of the difficulty of contemplating the Word without *phantasmata*:

... it is rare, that one captures (wholesomely though in part) "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God", and whatever may be said piously and wisely about that matter, without fantasies (*phantasmata*) of carnal thought.³⁵

Contra Faustum XXII, 58.

At this point in the argument, everything takes place between the poles of a completely active contemplation of the Word, and a completely passive indeterminacy, the corruption of which is *phantasmata*.

Now we are in a position to see more clearly what the essential injustice of Manicheism was according to Augustine. The contemplative whole came to Augustine when he conceived the desire for Wisdom on reading Cicero's *Hortensius*. Augustine was "delighted" with this whole, but he only had an initial grasp of it. He now had to learn more about the nature of contemplation. The whole had two sides, the intuitive grasp of

Wisdom itself, and the passive side, with only an implicit knowledge of the active side and determined wholly by it.

However, Augustine pursued Wisdom as if it was an object, according to the sensible logic of the whole of nature. The just balance between the two sides was upset, and Augustine was unaware of the passive side of contemplation. Nevertheless, it was part of the contemplative whole that he had entered, and when the Manichees presented him with images that had the freedom of pure indeterminacy, he recognized that as part of what he was looking for. His pursuit of Wisdom in the form of fantastic images involved a complete imbalance between the active and passive sides of contemplation, which were nevertheless both present. Far from being the passivity of the Wisdom he had grasped intuitively, the Manichean images had no connection with it at all.

Augustine would have been spared this if he had had any notion of the justice according to which the contemplative whole was in continuity with the other wholes of nature, revealed truth, custom, and law. If he had held onto these as wholes that mediated the truth of contemplation, he would not have accepted the Manichean teaching, which rejected all of them. His proper course after reading the *Hortensius* would have been to accept the "preparation" of the active life, "doing those things which are just", and being in a just passive relation toward the truths of contemplation.

Thus Augustine's account of Manicheism is a "positive" one in that Manicheism does have in it the elements of the whole of contemplation and Augustine's treatment of them brings these elements out. Augustine's criticism of Manicheism is that it holds those elements in an unjust relation. This he would have avoided if he had accepted the proper

mediation. Still, the "positive" aspect of Manicheism enables him to use Manicheism to present the character of the contemplative whole, and the nature of justice within it.

In *Confessions* III, vii, Augustine says that he became a Manichee because he "did not know that which truly is". Augustine had perceived by intuition that Wisdom existed, but there was a disjunction between the way he sought Wisdom, in the form of the indeterminate Manichean images, and what Wisdom itself was - the pure activity of true being. Thus Augustine says of himself at this time that he could only see as far as a body with his eyes, and as far as a *phantasma* with his soul.³⁶ Augustine was unaware of the passive side of contemplation, inasmuch as he sought Wisdom as if it were an object of the senses, but he was dominated by it in that his thinking was chiefly occupied with the indeterminacy of things.

Augustine compares the Manichean teachings to a "harlot" in *Confessions* III, vi, because the Manichees presented him with a teaching that claimed to be free of the finite limitations of the natural and social worlds and yet at the same time immediately knowable, like a sensible object. The whole of the Manichean doctrine is like the whole of contemplation in that it claims to transcend the finite world and yet it claims to do this immediately, freeing the adherent from restrictive mediating forms of justice. Augustine applies the image of seduction to the Manichees because without these Manichean claims he would not have thought that he was pursuing God when he was pursuing the indeterminacy of the Manichean images.

Augustine was ready to make this identification because his upbringing and his own rebellion had left him preoccupied with sensible pleasures rather than with the just activities of the mediating wholes, which ought to have prepared him for contemplation. One

injustice of Manicheism was to have claimed to possess a truth which met the contradictory criteria for truth of someone in Augustine's position: an indeterminate freedom coupled with a sensible immediacy. Such an idea of truth entirely misses the concreteness and determinacy of truth as the mature Augustine saw it.

Nevertheless, Augustine's arguments about justice, and particularly the argument in the *Contra Faustum* are intended in some sense to bridge the gap between his position and that of the Manichees. At the end of chapter II we suggested that the *form* of Augustine's argument was the same as the form of the Manichean position and that this was the basis of his appeal to them. Augustine's argument for the justice of the Scriptures points to three elements: the truths in the Scriptures that are "given", the Scriptural teaching about contemplation, and the diverse and comprehensive moral content of the Scriptures. These elements of given truth, contemplation, and moral content are also fundamental to the Manichean teaching and this common form or structure should compel the Manichees to consider the catholic Scriptures as a *whole*. If they accept the catholic Scriptures as representing an intellectual and religious whole, they must then weigh that whole against their own position, rather than indulge in piecemeal criticisms, with the possibility that they may find the catholic position more complete than their own.

Augustine became a Manichee out of a desire for an intellectual and religious whole and because he could not accept the catholic Scriptures. Writing years later as a catholic bishop, he makes his defence of the Scriptures to his former co-religionists by arguing that in fact the Scriptures are an intellectual and religious whole. He makes his appeal to the Manichee's confidence that there is such a whole, a confidence which he shares. He believes that he will move them from their position when they see that the catholic Scriptures have all that is essential in their own position, and are also a more complete and

truer account of “what truly is”. Augustine thinks that Manichees are in the same position that he was in as a Manichee - “labouring feverishly for lack of truth”. The truth that they lack is the intellectual and religious whole that is present in the Scriptures, and it is this that he attempts to present to them.

Endnotes

Chapter III

1. *lex vero aeterna est ratio divina vel voluntas dei ordinem naturalem conservari iubens, perturbari vetans. Contra Faustum XXII, 27 (621, 13-15).*
2. See *Contra Faustum XXII, 27 (621, 16-25).*
3. See Chapter I, p.79-85.
4. *... iuste vivimus, si vivamus ex fide non ficta, quae per dilectionem operatur ... Contra Faustum XXII, 27 (622, 10-11).*
5. In the *Confessions* he uses that precise word: *... hoc tamen solo delectabar in illa exhortatione... Confessiones III, iv, 8 (42, 1-2).* The root word diligo appears again in the same sentence ("*sed ipsam quaeque esset sapientiam ut diligerem et quaererem ...*") and here it has a kind of technical meaning for Augustine. It refers to the beginning of the search for Wisdom. See Starnes, *Augustine's Conversion*, p. 61.
6. When Augustine speaks of an ordered whole in which natural things are not created or destroyed, but come to be and pass away according to an ordered natural pattern (*Contra Faustum XXII, 78*). See also *Confessiones IV, Xff.* where a similar view of nature is developed.
7. We can now see what the images there are intended to express; the logical structure of the wholes of nature, custom, and God's rule.
8. *... ultra si [mortales delectationes] prolapsae fuerint et contra temperantiae rationem hominem non se regentem abriperint libidines, erunt profecto illicitae ac turpes et dignae doloribus emendari. Contra Faustum XXII, 29 (623, 19-21).*
9. See the discussion in chapter II of *Contra Faustum XXII, 78* and 86 where the starting point of human action is said to be an intuition of the Eternal Law.
10. *Confessiones III, vii, 13 (96, 19-22).* Law, in the sequence of images in *Confessions III, viii*, stands for the whole of custom, which includes the mediating knowledge of the Scriptures and "sound doctrine", custom and law. The whole of custom in this sense means the whole of all mediating knowledge. We also speak of a whole of custom in a more restricted sense, meaning strictly human custom.
11. See note 10.
12. *... cum disruptis limitibus humanae societatis laetantur audaces privatis conciliarionibus aut dirempcionibus, prout quidque delectaverit aut offenderit. Confessiones III, viii, 16 (49, 23-26).*
13. *... imperator carnis animus tanta temperantiae potestate praepolleat, ut genitalis delectationis motum insitum naturae mortalium ex providentia generandi leges inpositas non permittat excedere.. Contra Faustum XXII,48 (640, 12-16).*

14. See the comments of R. D. Crouse on the nature of *curiositas* in his paper: R. D. Crouse, "In Multa Defluximus : Confessions X, 29-43, and St. Augustine's Theory of Personality", in: R. Markus & H. Blumenthal (ed.), *Neoplatonism and Early Christian Thought: Essays in honour of A.H. Armstrong*, London, Variorum Publications, 1981
15. *nam quis tandem amaverit in operibus iustitiae laborem actionum atque passionum?* *Contra Faustum* XXII, 52 (646, 9-10).
16. *... homini pro concupita et sperata pulcherrima delectatione doctrinae per temptaciones varias quasi per huius saeculi noctes tolerantia laboris adhaeserit...* *Contra Faustum* XXII, 52 (647, 1-3).
17. *... iustitiam autem, quae ex fide est, quae inter temptarionum incerta versatur...* *Contra Faustum* XXII, 52 (647, 20-21).
18. *...in eo quippe, quod versatur, virtus est laboriosa...* *Contra Faustum* XXII, 53 (648, 4).
19. Augustine also interprets the Beatitudes as representing a movement towards contemplation in the earlier *De Sermone Domini In Monte*, I, 2 - IV, 12.
20. *... ut ordo non recusetur, sed potius toleretur, sine quo non potest ad id perveniri, quod tanto ardore diligitur.* *Contra Faustum* XXII, 53 (648, 11-13).
21. See our discussion of this section in chapter 1.
22. *Contra Faustum* XXII, 54 (648, 25 - 649,6).
23. *Contra Faustum* XXII, 54 (649, 6-23).
24. *Contra Faustum* XXII, 54 (649, 23 - 650,8).
25. More exactly to the lovers of the theatre of *Confessions* III, 2. C.J. Starnes makes clear the relation between the popular images of the theatre and the pleasure the *eversores* of *Confessions* III, 3 take in other's pain. See *Augustine's Conversion*, p.56-60.
26. *Sed quia bonum est, ut etiam haec vita letius innotescans popularem gloriam mercatur, inustum est autem, ut eam consequatur, si amatorem suum administrandis ecclesiasticis curis aptum et idoneum in otio detinet...* *Contra Faustum* XXII, 57 (653, 4-7).
27. *Confessiones* XII, i-xiii. The notes in the B. A. edition provide a starting point for the literature on this question.
28. *[humana cogitatio] conetur eam vel nosse ignorando vel ignorare nescendo?* *Confessiones* XII, v, 5 (296, 16-17).
29. Another indication that contemplative truth and its passive counterpart are the essential elements of the whole of contemplation in both the section of *Contra Faustum* XXII that we are dealing with (chapters 52-58) and *Confessiones* III, vi-x

is found in the last words of *Contra Faustum* XXII, 58, where Augustine concludes with the pairing of contemplative truth and *phantasmata* (see note 34). Here the highest and lowest levels of the hierarchy are placed together at the culmination of the argument. *Phantasmata* are the images that result from an incomplete passivity to the contemplative vision of the Word.

30. Augustine's fullest treatment of this is in the final books of the *De Trinitate*.
31. See Introduction, p. 10-11.
32. The intuitive character of thinking about temptation is brought out very clearly in *Confessions* X, 29-43. See also the comments of R. D. Crouse. "*In Multa Defluximus* "
33. *itaque pietate humili reditur in te... Confessiones* III, viii, 16 (49, 29).
34. *... se iam non erigamus adversus te cornua falsae libertatis... Confessiones* III, viii, 16 (50, 2-3),
35. *... perrarum est, ut "in principio erat verbum et verbum erat apud deum et deus erat verbum et quidquid de hac re pie sapienterque dicitur, sine phantasmate carnalis cogitationis et salubriter vel ex parte capiat. Contra Faustum* XXII, 58 (654, 22-26).
36. *quod unde viderem, cuius videre usque ad corpus erat oculis et animo usque ad phantasma? Confessiones* III, vii, 12 (45, 27-29)

Bibliography

A Note on Texts

I have tried to use the best Latin text available when Augustine's works are referred to. All references to the *Confessions* are to Skutella's text (Stuttgart, Teubner, 1981). All references to the *Contra Faustum* are to the Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (C.S.E.L.) text edited by Josephus Zycha (vol.25, Sect.VI, part I(Prague, F. Tempsky, 1891)). For other works wherever possible, I used the text of the Bibliothéque Augustinienne (Paris, Desclée de Brouwer). Their modern texts, scholarly notes, and accurate translations make them the most accesible form for Augustine's Latin text. The texts I have referred to in the BA are as follows: *Contra Adimantum*, *Contra Epistulam Fundamenti*, *Contra Felicem*, *Contra Fortunatum*, *De Bono Coniugali*, *De Civitate Dei*, *De Diversis Quaestionibus LXXXIII*, *De Doctrina Christiana*, *De Duabus Animabus*, *De Libero Arbitrio*, *De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae*, *De Musica*, *De Natura Boni*, *De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia*, *De Trinitate*, *De Utilitate Credendi*, *De Vera Religione*. I used the Corpus Christianorum (CC) text for the *De Sermone Domine in Monte*. For the *Epistulae*, the *De Haeresibus*, the *De Moribus Manichaeorum*, and the *Sermones*, I referred to the text of the *Patrologia Latina*. Series volume numbers for works cited are given when the text is first cited.

In the translations from the *Confessions* and the *Contra Faustum*, I have sometimes borrowed from the translations of Watts, from the Loeb Classical Library, for the *Confessions*, and, more frequently, from R.Stothert, the translator of the text in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers series, for the *Contra Faustum*.

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