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## **Augustine the Pilgrim**

“Every man,” W. H. Auden has written, “is both a citizen and a pilgrim.”<sup>1</sup> The enormous influence that Augustine of Hippo, as a citizen, has had on the Christian culture of the West—on its theology, philosophy, political theory, and historical sense—is widely recognized. Nevertheless Augustine’s most memorable book, the one that has most deeply affected the minds and hearts of readers since his time, is the *Confessions*, the first (and many would say still the greatest) example of a spiritual autobiography in western literature. In this work Augustine clearly and consciously presents himself as a pilgrim, and it is in this guise that I wish to consider him.

When Augustine uses the term pilgrimage, he is specifically referring to the journey to the eternal Jerusalem that all Christians make from the time of their birth.<sup>2</sup> The metaphor of life-as-pilgrimage became a medieval commonplace—Chaucer’s parson, for instance, was still using it ten centuries later—and it may sound rather stale and remote to us now. Yet anyone who has struggled in pursuit of an elusive ideal, anyone who has hungered for lost innocence, or anyone who has simply yearned for respite from the anguish inherent in human existence, should be able to understand the emotion that lies behind Augustine’s longing for entrance into the celestial city. On the other hand, the reader cannot fail to see that Augustine is a pilgrim in a more universal sense than the traditional medieval symbolism might by itself suggest. The *Confessions* has retained its lasting value primarily because Augustine presents himself so effectively as an inner explorer, a seeker whose destination is the centre of his very self.

No age has been more inward turning than our own, and thanks to the discoveries of Freud we now have at our disposal the tools for a more scientific unearthing of the self’s secrets than was possible prior to the twentieth century. For this reason, and because of the kinds of informa-

tion he provides or at least suggests about himself, Augustine has been a tempting subject for psychological interpreters.<sup>3</sup> It is not my purpose, however, to psychoanalyze the saint. Instead I intend to make use of the perceptions and vocabulary of modern writers only when they help to convey my understanding of Augustine's understanding of himself. By this means I hope to make the profound psychic pilgrimage recorded in the *Confessions* more accessible than it might otherwise be to readers who live in what has been called a post-Christian era. I am convinced that Augustine is one of our significant dead teachers and that we would do well to pay attention to what he has to say; but at the same time it is evident that we must listen with our own ears.

## I

Augustine divided the *Confessions* into thirteen books. The first nine of these deal with his life prior to the composition of the book, the tenth contains an analysis of his state of being at the time of writing, and the last three provide a commentary on the opening verses of *Genesis*. Although the pivotal tenth book could be seen as a prelude to Books XI-XIII, I have preferred to consider it a postscript to Books I-IX.<sup>4</sup> Looked at in this way, the first ten books form a unit in which the last section provides a point of reference in Augustine's present for the preceding account of his past.

Of necessity the *Confessions* contains a certain amount of straightforward biographical information, which undoubtedly helps us to pin down in our minds the factual existence of a man who lived during the dying days of the Roman Empire. Yet a recital of this information would convey no sense of the texture of an extraordinarily introspective book. When he sat down to compose it, Augustine was not concerned with the external events of his life in themselves, but rather with their impact upon him as he understood it in the present. These last three words are crucial, because when he began to write the book in 397 he was not the man he had been twenty or even ten years before. At forty-three he had passed through the struggles of his youth, and his conversion experience was more than a decade behind him. The now middle-aged Bishop of Hippo was immersed in a way of life that he had not anticipated even as recently as six years earlier,<sup>5</sup> and he must have been acutely aware of this when he took time out from his busy ecclesiastical life in order to review his past. In part Augustine's purpose was didactic, as we can tell from his "writing before many witnesses" in hopes that what he had to

say would be of benefit to others (X, i-iv). At the same time the note of anxiousness or urgency that is often heard in the book points to a stronger inner motive.

That motive was nothing less than to get to know himself as fully as possible. In this he reminds one of a much more recent spiritual autobiographer, C. G. Jung, who writes, "I began to understand"—and this when at the same age as was Augustine when he undertook the writing of his "*Confessions*—" I began to understand that the goal of psychic development is the self. There is no linear evolution; there is only a circumambulation of the self. Uniform development exists, at most, only at the beginning; later, everything points toward the centre."<sup>6</sup> These words describe perfectly the course of Augustine's growth. In his early years we find the "uniform development" Jung speaks about in regard to his pursuit of a career in teaching. The emphasis at that time is on wordly achievement, on outgoingness, and is paralleled by his moving farther and farther away from Tagaste (his hometown) by way of Madaura, Carthage, Rome and Milan. But then that line is retraced, and the physical return is accompanied by an ingoingness on Augustine's part. Having gone back to where he started from—geographically Hippo is only eighty miles north of Tagaste—he seeks his spiritual centre through the self-examination that constitutes the first ten books of the *Confessions*.

Yet the task of finding that centre is supremely difficult, as Augustine well knew, because the inner world of man is so complex and mysterious. "Man is a great deep, Lord," he writes at one point. "You number his very hairs and they are not lost in Your sight: but the hairs of his head are easier to number than his affections and the movements of his heart" (IV, xiv, 62). Consequently he admits that no matter how careful and searching the attempt to attain self-knowledge may be, there remains "something of man that the very spirit of man that is in him does not know" (X, v, 176). "I cannot totally grasp myself," he declares on another page, because "the mind is not large enough to contain itself" (X, viii, 180).

Nevertheless, to the extent that the riddle of the personality can be solved, it is memory which holds the key, and in Book X Augustine provides a lengthy analysis of this faculty. Although awed by the power of memory, he feels driven to explore its "immense capaciousness" and writes:

In the innumerable fields and dens and caverns of my memory, innumerable full of innumerable kinds of things, present either by their images as are all bodies, or in themselves as are our mental capacities, or by

certain notions or awareness, like the affections of the mind—for even when the mind is not experiencing these, the memory retains them, although whatever is in the memory is in the mind too—in and through all these does my mind range, and I move swiftly from one to another and I penetrate them as deeply as I can, but find no end. (X, xvii, 186).

Yet it is not quite accurate to call the Augustian memory a faculty, because he goes so far as to say that “this thing is my mind, this thing am I” (X, xvii, 186). The power of memory, ultimately incomprehensible in its workings, is thus to be considered coextensive with the self, with what one is, because “without memory,” as Augustine says, “I could not even name myself” (X, xvi, 185).

These comments on memory clearly link Augustine with Freud who, in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, asserts “that in mental life nothing which has once been formed can perish—that everything is somehow preserved and that in suitable circumstances . . . it can once more be brought to light.”<sup>7</sup> The present life of a person, in other words, inevitably bears signs of his past life even if he is unaware of them. And the fundamental thrust of Freudian therapy, consequently, is to get the patient, through the exercise of his memory, to recover his buried self. Freud hoped that this endeavor would cure the neurotic by serving to free him from his past, and thereby enable him to live a fuller, healthier life in the present.

Now we are in a position to see that the first nine books of the *Confessions* constitute a kind of Freudian therapy 1500 years before Freud, with Augustine cast in the role of both doctor and patient. In this portion of the work he exercises his memory in the fashion that he describes in Book X:

When I turn to memory, I ask it to bring forth what I want: and some things are produced immediately, some take longer as if they had to be brought out from some more secret place of storage; some pour out in a heap, and while we are actually wanting and looking for something quite different, they hurl themselves upon us in masses as though to say: “May it not be we that you want?” I brush them from the face of my memory with the hand of my heart, until at last the thing I want is brought to light as from some hidden place. Some things are produced just as they are required, easily and in right order; and things that come first give place to those that follow, and giving place are stored up again to be produced when I want them. (X, viii, 178).

We cannot know, of course, what experiences Augustine may have repressed, because (as the above passage makes clear) what he recalls in

Books I-IX is highly selective. He tells us only those things which suit his purpose given his current understanding of himself and the nature of man in general. At the same time, by considering some of the recounted memories, I think we can see that Augustine's handling of them does in fact represent an effort on his part to "free" himself from at least certain aspects of his past. By coming to terms with them, by "mastering" them through putting them into a comprehensible framework, he prevents them, through either ignorance or inattention on his part, from blindly mastering him.

## II

The man we meet in Book X of the *Confessions* has been sobered by his experiences to an extent that may repel a reader whose milieu encourages him to find the highest good in self-gratification. Augustine is an unabashed ascetic devoted to keeping constant vigilance over his desires so that he may live a life that will do as much honor as possible to his god-sense. "O Thou, the Power of my soul," he prays, "enter into it and fit it for Thyself, that Thou mayest have it and possess it without spot or wrinkle" (X, i, 173). Toward this end he confesses that he continues to be troubled by erotic dreams, that he cannot be certain if he sometimes crosses over the line in which eating becomes a pleasure rather than a need, that he can still be distracted from serious thought by the sight of a dog chasing a hare. Surely, we think, these so-called lapses are the result of adhering to a misguided standard of conduct. No one needs to be that good, we are prompted to say; indeed it is even bad to be that good. If we are primarily concerned to understand, rather than to judge, Augustine's moral posture here, however, we must recognize that it is the result of his submission to an authority he considered to be higher than his conscious self. It was only through this submission, in fact, that Augustine was finally able to make sense out of his past and find order in his present life.

Submission to an authority superior to the conscious self: here is the sticking point. Can such an attitude have meaning for people living in a culture that pays mere lip service, if that, to the concept of God? I think so, assuming that two fundamental points are considered valid. First of all we must acknowledge that the only personally significant facts in life are psychological; the concept of God is meaningful not in itself but only insofar as it is a psychic projection of human beings. Consequently it does not matter whether the word "God" is used, because the inner condition that gives rise to it nevertheless exists as a need or a desire.

Secondly we must distinguish between the aims of youth and age. The notion of submission is anathema to the young because of their need to assert themselves as individuals in the external world. In the second half of life, however, a need arises to integrate the personality, to achieve a sense of inner harmony. Or as one Jungian commentator puts it, "In the beginning, the ego arises out of the depths of the unconscious. In the end, the ego surrenders to those depths."<sup>8</sup>

This formula can be taken as a modern variation of a theme struck by Augustine on the very first page of the *Confessions*, where he says, addressing God, that "our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee." The sentence expresses a view that the middle-aged bishop had come to, not one that the young teacher of rhetoric would have voiced; but Augustine's recognition of an inner restlessness—signifying disharmony or a lack of integration—presumably provided the primary motivation for the pilgrimage of which the whole book is the surviving record. In order to see how he arrived at his mature understanding let us first consider his account of an early experience of grief.

In Book IV Augustine writes about the death of an unnamed friend and of his reaction to it. This friend, known to him since boyhood, became very dear to him when he returned to Tagaste for his first year of teaching. As a result of being suddenly deprived of him "when he had completed scarcely a year in a friendship that had grown sweeter to me than all the sweetness of the life I knew" (IV, iv, 54), Augustine at nineteen felt overwhelmed with grief:

I raged and sighed and wept and was in torment, unable to rest, unable to think. I bore my soul all broken and bleeding and loathing to be borne by me; and I could find nowhere to set it down to rest. Not in shady groves, nor in mirth and music, nor in perfumed gardens, nor in formal banquets, nor in the delights of bedroom and bed, not in books nor in poetry could it find peace. (IV, vii, 56).

From a more detached vantage point he observes that this "first grief had pierced so easily and so deeply only because I had spilt out my soul upon the sand, in loving a mortal man as if he were never to die" (IV, viii, 57), but at the time of the death he was unequipped to deal with his feelings. "I became a great enigma to myself," he writes, "and was forever asking my soul why it was sad and why it disquieted me so sorely" (IV, iv, 55). He tried to find the rest he needed from this burden of anguish by turning to the god he had intellectually accepted at that time, the god of the Manichees. But this attempt failed and the burden fell heavily back upon him: "I remained to myself a place of unhap-

piness, in which I could not abide, yet from which I could not depart. For where was my heart to flee for refuge from my heart? Whither was I to fly from myself?" (IV, vii, 58).

This episode may be considered an Augustinian spot of time, typical of him and distinguishable from the sort made famous by Wordsworth. The latter was concerned with moments of past experience already made luminous through prior contemplation because of their continued significance in regard to the renewal of his imaginative powers. He wanted, as he wrote, to give "Substance and life to what I feel, enshrining, /Such is my hope, the spirit of the Past/ For future restoration" (*The Prelude*, XII, 284-86). For Augustine, on the other hand, spots of time such as the one just recounted refer to moments in the past which, as a result of being ruminated upon in the present, yield a significance reflecting the condition of his moral or spiritual being.

Recollecting here the occasion of his grief, Augustine sees himself as having been in a state of self-incarceration. This is a view which sounds familiar nowadays because we have been prompted by the persistent advances of science and secularism to accept imprisonment within the self as a fact of life, one to which we must adjust if we are not to live in illusion. Yet this should not be taken to mean that there is in effect no reality outside oneself. To claim that would be to adopt the attitude of the narcissist, for whom the entire world is a mirror which reflects only transformations of the self. This is in fact the emerging type of contemporary man that Philip Rieff has described in *The Triumph of the Therapeutic*. In his view the therapeutic is a person who considers the example set by Freud and his successors to be a kind of sanction for the exclusive pursuit of individual well-being. Such a person moves away from the traditional authorities established in cultural institutions and aims at an "ethic of release from inherited controls."<sup>9</sup> Far from being autonomous, however, such a person is instead "the captive and victim of his own narcissism"; that is, he suffers from a "commitment to himself which has come at the cost of his ability to commit himself to others."<sup>10</sup>

Augustine was not a man of this sort. On the contrary he had a compelling need to believe in something outside himself. Thus, although he considered his friend to be half of his own soul, he also considered himself to be his friend's "other self" (IV, vi, 56). Undeniably, therefore, he viewed his friend as a separate entity that he valued as more than a narcissistic self-transformation. What he could not at first endure was the loss of this "other" on whom he had come to depend. Our own experience teaches us that Augustine was neither unique in this

regard nor merely an example of a deluded pre-modern man. As a living psychoanalyst has written, "What we will believe may make no ultimate difference when the planet finally grows cold, but lest we become too cold while we are still here, we will have to confront the depth of our capacity to believe in a reality that exists outside ourselves."<sup>11</sup>

Although the anonymous friend was clearly one such reality for Augustine, there was another which has a much more pervasive impact on the pages of the *Confessions*: his mother. During her son's youth, as Peter Brown observes, "Monica appears, above all, as a relentless figure."<sup>12</sup> The most striking example of this occurs when Augustine was twenty-eight and preparing to leave Carthage for Rome. On this occasion his mother was in a "dreadful grief" and followed him to the port where, as he says, "she clung to me passionately, determined that I should either go back home with her or take her to Rome with me" (V, viii, 77). Augustine thought to escape her devouring love through a deception which allowed him to sail without her, but upon his arrival at Rome he succumbed to a fever which almost killed him. Monica in the meantime, although she knew nothing of his illness, prayed for her son. "I have no words to express the love she had for me," he says, "and with how much more anguish she was now in spiritual travail of me than when she had borne me in the flesh" (V, viii, 78). Another illustration of the extraordinary influence Monica had over Augustine occurred a year later, after she had finally rejoined him at Milan. While there, in an effort to turn him away from what she considered to be his sinful life, she was instrumental in making marriage arrangements for him, and he consented to wed a certain girl who was still two years short of marriageable age. More than this, he agreed to send the mistress with whom he had lived for thirteen years back to Africa because she was considered an impediment to the projected marriage, although he says that the separation caused his heart "which had held her very dear" to "shed blood" (VI, xv, 103).

If episodes of this sort could take place when Augustine was close to thirty, we can well imagine the influence Monica must have exerted upon his earlier life. We are not given many specific details in this regard, but Augustine says enough for us to picture the pattern of their relationship. Thus he acknowledges that his father's paganism did not prevail over the hold his mother's piety had upon him in his boyhood (I, xi, 12); that when he was an adolescent she anxiously urged him not to indulge in fornication, although he thought it womanish and would have blushed to obey at the time (II, iii, 25); that during his Manichean phase, even though she forbade him to live in her house for a while, she



wept more bitterly for him than mothers are accustomed to do for the bodily deaths of their children (III, xi, 45). Such comments enable us to catch glimpses of Monica's persistent, possessive devotion, a quality which her son long resented and resisted.

Resent and resist though he might, however, Augustine could never ignore her. There she was, constantly by him, in spirit if not in body, during all the days and nights of his quest. Ultimately Augustine came to see his mother's influence upon him as having been providential, and he often refers to her in retrospect as the handmaiden of God. It is doubtless this interpretation of her significance which prompts him not only to conclude the story of his past life with an account of her death, but also to lead up to that event with a presentation of the most sublime recollected moment in the *Confessions*. As Augustine tells it, Monica and he were standing by themselves,

leaning in a window, which looked inwards to the garden within the house where we were staying, at Ostia on the Tiber. . . . There we talked together, she and I alone, in deep joy. . . . And while we were thus talking of His Wisdom and panting for it, with all the effort of our heart we did for one instant attain to touch it: then sighing, and leaving the first fruits of our spirit bound to it, we returned to the sound of our own tongue, in which a word has both beginning and ending. . . . So we said: If to any man the tumult of the flesh grew silent, silent the images of earth and sea and air; and if the heavens grew silent, and the very soul grew silent to herself and by not thinking of self mounted beyond self: if all dreams and imagined visions grew silent, and every tongue and every sign and whatsoever is transient. . . if . . . they all grew silent, and in their silence He alone spoke to us, not by them but by Himself: so that we should hear His word, not by any tongue of flesh nor the voice of an angel nor the sound of thunder nor in the darkness of a parable, but that we should hear Himself whom in all these things we love, should hear Himself and not them: just as we two had but now reached forth and in a flash of the mind attained to touch the eternal Wisdom which abides over all: and if this could continue . . . would this not be: *Enter Thou into the joy of Thy Lord?* (IX, x, 163-165).

Augustine admits that this is not a faithful transcription of his actual words at the time; instead he is using all his rhetorical skill to impart some sense of a shared quasi-mystical experience. And he succeeds memorably. Here we have a spot of time that reflects a spiritual state at the opposite extreme from the one previously considered. Whereas the earlier occasion had dramatized the frustration of self-imprisonment, this one depicts the exaltation of self-transcendence.

In my view the Vision of Ostia, as the event is often called, is of even greater significance than the more famous culminating moment of the saint's conversion. The latter occurred when Augustine, in a very disturbed state of mind over the problem of continence, was complaining to himself and weeping in bitter sorrow beneath a fig tree in a garden at Milan. Suddenly he heard a sing-song voice repeatedly say, "Take and read, take and read." Interpreting the incident as a divine command, he writes that he immediately returned to the place where he had shortly before put down his book of Scripture:

I snatched it up, opened it and in silence read the passage upon which my eyes first fell: *Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences.* I had no wish to read further, and no need. For in that instant, with the very ending of the sentence, it was as though a light of utter confidence shone in all my heart, and all the darkness of uncertainty vanished away. (VIII, xii, 146).

Now there can be no doubt that this episode, which captures in striking fashion a moment of emotional crisis and catharsis, is the dramatic climax of the *Confessions*. Yet Augustine's conversion does not become fully meaningful, at least not in terms of the pilgrimage theme, until he has told about his and Monica's experience in the subsequent book. In the garden at Milan the build-up of an unbearable tension is broken, but it is only while Augustine looks out on another garden at Ostia that we become convinced he has found the surcease from restlessness that he presents himself as craving so desperately. And in the retrospective interpretation that constitutes the first nine books of his work, it is Monica who is seen as in some sense responsible for this. She is never far from Augustine's thoughts even when physically apart from him, and she is the first person he tells about his conversion, news which fills her with "triumphant exultation" and prompts her to praise God for granting even more than she had prayed for (VIII, xii, 146-47). Then, as we have seen, her experience is inextricably bound up with his at Ostia. She is the human "other" who seems to draw him back to God, the ultimate "other" of the *Confessions*.

I say *back* to God, because the fleeting sense of beatitude described in the vision passage of Book IX is achieved only after he has returned in spirit to his mother and while he is in the process of returning home to Africa. The restless journey outward, away from home and mother, is now over; and the journey back to both, re-lived as an interior pilgrimage made possible through the use of memory, finally leads him likewise to God. By way of explanation he writes,

Late have I loved thee, O Beauty so ancient and so new; late have I loved Thee! For behold Thou wert within me, and I outside; and I sought Thee outside and in my unloveliness fell upon those lovely things that Thou hast made. Thou wert with me and I was not with Thee. (X, xxvii, 192).

After years of searching Augustine was finally able, in a manner of speaking, to return to himself, and when he looked deeply enough within he there found God as well.

A key point to be noticed here is that Augustine, despite all his introspection, does not commit "the heresy of self-love."<sup>13</sup> The deep-seated need for a reality outside himself was always present within him, a need that (among other people) his unnamed friend and especially his mother met for varying lengths of time and in varying degrees. Having made the discovery, however, that God can be considered not only a being outside perceptible to the mind but also a presence within sensible to the heart, Augustine at last submits himself wholly. More precisely, he surrenders his ego or conscious self to the depths of a non-rational awareness that paradoxically uplifts him. (An obvious physical analogy can be made here to a dive into the ocean, wherein the diver discovers that his body is given buoyancy by the vast surrounding element.) In other words Augustine has found—or at least unforgettably experienced—what poets and mystics have often spoken about: the peace that passeth understanding.

We can perhaps best understand what his submission means to Augustine by considering one final epiphanic moment in the *Confessions*, the pear-stealing episode of his youth. What concerns him in this well-known passage is not the act of vandalism itself—how he and a group of companions one night stole some pears from a neighbour's tree, barely tasted them, and then threw them to the pigs—but the motives that lay behind the act. Since he and his friends did not take the fruit because they were hungry or because the pears were better than those that came from his own trees, he concludes that their "only pleasure in doing it was that it was forbidden" (II, iv, 27). In his breaking of the commandment against stealing, Augustine sees an example of a misguided and corrupt use of his will. Those who turn away from God and seek to find elsewhere what can be purely found only in him, he says, are in effect perversely imitating God.

Even this abbreviated account of Augustine's analysis makes it clear that he finds something archetypal in his theft; it is emblematic of a universal aspect of the human will. In this sense the episode inevitably brings to mind a still more famous fruit-taking scene in which Adam

and Eve were told that they would be as gods. And our sense of the parallel between the two is reinforced by Augustine's own comments on the biblical story in *The City of God*:

Our first parents fell into open disobedience because already they were secretly corrupted; for the evil act had never been done had not an evil will preceded it. And what is the origin of our evil will but pride? . . . And what is pride but the craving for undue exaltation? And this is undue exaltation, when the soul abandons Him to whom it ought to cleave as its end, and becomes a kind of end to itself. This happens when it becomes its own satisfaction. And it does so when it falls away from that unchangeable good which ought to satisfy it more than itself.<sup>14</sup>

Thus the pear-stealing episode, which occurred when Augustine was sixteen, is analogous to the story of the fall in that both events point to a prideful corruption of the will which has as its goals a self-sufficient satisfaction. Such a desire is perverse in Augustine's view because the "reasonable creature (man) was so created that submission is advantageous to it, while the fulfillment of its own will in preference to the Creator's is destruction."<sup>15</sup>

In Book X, then, we find Augustine practicing the submission of his will to what he understands to be the will of God. He has become an example, along with C. G. Jung and others, of the type of religious personality that has been called "the resigned self."<sup>16</sup> For him the consequences of resignation are manifested most dramatically in the ascetic practices he recounts in this portion of the work. Since we who live more than fifteen hundred years after Augustine's death have been taught to look upon instinctual repression as unhealthy if not abhorrent, we may find it hard to see much value in his stance of submissive devotion. Let me therefore repeat Max Scheler's words on the attitude exemplified by Augustine:

Christian asceticism—at least so far as it was not influenced by decadent Hellenistic philosophy—had as its purpose not the suppression or even extirpation of natural drives, but rather their *control* and complete *spiritualization*. It is positive, not negative, asceticism—aimed fundamentally at a liberation of the highest powers of personality from blockage by the automatism of the lower drives.<sup>17</sup>

By quoting such an explanation I am not trying to advocate a return to Augustinian severity, yet I think the renunciations of the saint could be used to counterbalance some of our current psychological pieties. Con-

temporary culture is clearly not endangered by widespread repression of individual drives and desires, but might it not in fact be threatened by the opposite?

However the case may be with us, it is clear that Augustine's renunciatory behavior had a beneficial effect on his ability to function in the world after his conversion. So powerful was the effect of his "lower drives" upon him that he felt compelled to suppress them in order to lead a stable, productive life. Viewed in this way Augustine's pilgrimage parallels the great civilizing struggle portrayed in the *Oresteia*, a struggle which is resolved only when the Furies—after all the torment they have caused—finally consent to take up residence underground in Athens. In the *Confessions*, as in Aeschylus' dramatic parable, it is the conflict itself which is memorable, yet the long-range accomplishments following the resolution of it are obviously important. No one would question the value of these accomplishments in the case of the historical city of Athens. The case of Augustine would arouse more controversy, but there can be no doubt that this Christian citizen of the disintegrating Roman Empire left behind him a legacy whose impact is still felt in western culture.

#### NOTES

1. *The Dyer's Hand and Other Essays* (New York, 1956), p. 279.
2. *The Confessions of Saint Augustine*, tr. F. J. Sheed (New York, 1942). Book IX, chapter xiii, p. 170. All future citations of the *Confessions* will be to this translation; book, chapter, and page references will be included parenthetically in the text itself.
3. See for example, E. R. Dodds, "Augustine's Confessions: A Study of Spiritual Maladjustment," *The Hibbert Journal*, XXVI (1927-28), 459-473; C. Klegemann, "A Psychoanalytic Study of the Confessions of St. Augustine," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, V (1957), 469-484; and the essays by various hands in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, V (1965), 130-152, 273-289.
4. For a brief account of the varying opinions on the construction of the *Confessions* see John J. O'Meara, *The Young Augustine* (London, 1954), pp. 13-17.
5. Having gone to Hippo with the intention of setting up a monastery, Augustine was reluctantly ordained a priest in 391, and was consecrated a successor to Bishop Valerius in 395. He became bishop, upon Valerius' death, the following year. These events are not mentioned in the *Confessions*. For an account of the circumstances surrounding Augustine's ordination see Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969), pp. 138-140. Brown's brilliant biography is indispensable for an understanding of Augustine's life and times.
6. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (New York, 1963), pp. 196-197.
7. Tr. James Strachey (New York, 1961), p. 16.
8. June Singer, *Boundaries of the Soul* (New York, 1973), p. 278.
9. (New York, 1966), p. 23.
10. Michael Beldoch, "The Therapeutic as Narcissist," *Salmagundi*, No. 20 (Summer-Fall 1972), 135, 138.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 151. Beldoch is a practicing analyst in New York City.
12. *Op. cit.*, p. 30.
13. This is the title of a book by Paul Zweig (New York, 1968), in which he examines certain exemplary figures in western culture from the Gnostics to Kierkegaard and Baudelaire in order to explore "a tradition of heroic self-scrutiny and self-affirmation." Zweig subtitles his work "A Study of Subversive Individualism," and writes: "The subversive 'egotist' responds to authority by disqualifying it, drawing out of his own idiosyncrasy another, better authority before which all else must give way" (p. 243). The difference between such an individual and Augustine is apparent in that the self-scrutiny of the latter led to self-submission before an authority which, although manifested within, maintained for him an unalterable "otherness."
14. Tr. Marcus Dods (New York, 1950), p. 460.
15. *Ibid.*
16. See Donald and Walter H. Capps, eds., *The Religious Personality* (Belmont, California, 1970). The editors give a general description of this personality type on p. 4, and then provide an anthology of excerpts from the writings of various figures who illustrate the type.
17. Quoted by Rieff, *op. cit.*, p. 18.