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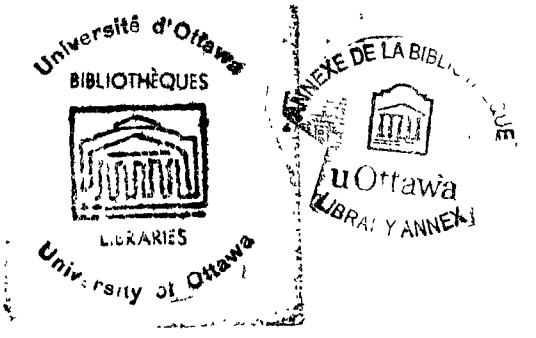
THE TRUTH OF JUDGMENT
IN ST. AUGUSTINE'S DE MAGISTRO

by Casimir Golebiewski

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Ottawa as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

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INTRODUCTION

The subject of the present dissertation lies in the center of Augustine's thought. The true judgment was for Augustine like a window which enabled him not only to penetrate into his own self, but also to raise his eyes, full of admiration, to the Being above his soul and to judge the ever-changing world of the senses.

It seems that this should urge one to study the truth of judgment not only in the De Magistro, but in the whole literary output of the Bishop of Hippo, or, at least, in his major writings.

But, as, on the one hand, the riches of that mine of ideas entreat the inquirer to an investigation of the whole field, so, on the other hand, its immensity commands self-restraint and the art of limitation. For this reason, the present study will be confined to that writing, in which the truth of judgment is treated "ex professo". This does not mean, however, that the De Magistro will be isolated from all other writings of St. Augustine. Such a method would ignore the fact that Augustine's literary activity, at least before his ordination, had evolved organically. The early writings constitute a continuation of his efforts to develop and to complete that solution to the truth of judgment which he had found shortly before his retreat at Cassaciacum.

Since the De Magistro marks the final stage in Augustine's inquiries in this regard, his writings prior and contemporary to that dialogue should be explored. Hence one is not allowed to pass by the dialogues of Cassaciacum, Rome, Milan and Thagaste, written in 386 and 387. Nor should we neglect Augustine's Letters of the first triennium of his literary activity, those from 386-389. Even the De 83 quaestionibus has to be consulted because the majority of the problems had been submitted to solution since Augustine's return from Italy and during his stay at Thagaste.

But this is not enough. Augustine's solution to the truth of judgment had been preceded by long years of searching. The early writings, and among them the De Magistro, cannot be fully understood except against the background of Augustine's experiences. In his intellectual evolution, Augustine first had started attributing his erroneous, anthropomorphist ideas about God to the Catholic Church; then, he had joined the Manichaeans who claimed to be in possession of truth; finally, he had embraced the Catholic doctrine, in the beginning by faith only, later by understanding some of the articles of faith.

From the very beginning of Augustine's philosophizing the truth of judgment loomed from the fog of his doubts and opinions. But gradually the immutability of our judgments created in Augustine's mind an acute problem of the "unde et

quemodo" of knowing the immutable truth by a mutable knowing subject. In this, we find the "genesis" and the historical "status quaestionis" of the De Magistro. This dialogue by itself would not reveal the origin of Augustine's problem. One has to study the Confessions, in order to discover how Augustine's doctrine about the true Teacher had been prepared and conditioned. The Confessions speak of Augustine's Manichaeism, of his faith recovered after a certain period of scepticism, of his efforts to understand what he believed, and of the discovery of truth with the help of the Platonic philosophy. It is of greatest importance to understand the "terminus a quo" of Augustine's conversion, I mean Augustine's Manichaeism. In this regard, the Confessions should be completed by the long list of Augustine's anti-manichaean writings prior, contemporary and posterior to the De Magistro. Even in his non-manichaean books, Augustine has in mind his former errors by concentrating on the truths opposed to the doctrine of Mani.

From this,one can see that the De Magistro is a complicated treatise, since it constitutes an outgrowth on different psychological and ideological layers. It would not be enough to study that dialogue as it stands. One has to dig deeply in the history of Augustine's soul. The chapters which follow will endeavour to connect the basic doctrine of

the *De Magistro* with that context which is hidden from the eyes of the reader, but which gradually emerges and comes to light as soon as the dialogue is studied against the background of the *Confessions* and of Augustine's early writings.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

AUGUSTINE'S LOVE FOR TRUTH

Outline

1. Truth and Wisdom in Augustine's Writings.
2. Their role in Augustine's life.
3. The usual meaning of these terms adopted by Augustine.
4. Augustine as a teacher of Truth.
5. Two types of human teachers.
6. God as the only Teacher of man.

Even a superficial reader of Augustine's writings is impressed by his incessantly recurring ideas of truth and wisdom.

From the very beginning of his literary activity up to the works of the last years of his life, not only in books, but also in his letters and improvised sermons, Augustine always appealed to truth and wisdom[1]. It would be a tedious

---

[1] It is striking that the first problem raised by Augustine in his early writings bears on the relation of our knowledge of truth to happiness: "Quoniam igitur alteri vestrum videtur beatam vitam sola investigatione veritatis, alteri nonnisi inventione posse contingere... magnopere exspecto quales sententiarum vestrarum patroni esse possitis." (C.Academicos, 1.2.6; PL, 32,909). That truth and wisdom are the main topics dealt with can be seen from the reading of the Retractationes, PL.32,583-656. It should be noted that especially the De libero arbitrio, book 2 (PL.32, 1239-1270) centers around the idea of truth and culminates in the notion of Wisdom. This is stressed by Grabmann: "Es wird nirgends in der Weltliteratur in schoneren Farben die Herrlichkeit der Wahrheit gezeichnet als im zweiten Buche der Schrift De libero arbitrio, wo Augustins Seele zu einem feierlichen Hymnus auf die Wahrheit sich erhebt." (Der gottliche Grund menschlicher Wahrheitserkenntniss nach Augustinus und Thomas von Aquin, Munster, Aschendorff, 1924, p. 12.) St. Thomas had summed up his impression received from the reading of

task to embark on collecting all relevant texts which are innumerable. Such a work would require a volume, if not volumes. This seems to indicate how deeply the idea of truth was rooted in his mind, how much it had affected all of his thinking and feeling. As a matter of fact, it lies, as we shall see, at the very center of his spiritual evolution.

The love of truth, the impetuous desire to know it accompanied Augustine in all the periods of his life. His Confessions witness that he was well aware of that characteristic feature of his mind[2].

The books of the Confessions are records of his ardent love of the truth concerning God and his soul, that truth which he was not able to find for a long time. Many years after his conversion, Augustine had pictured his love of and his longing for truth as well as his sufferings for not having found it:

> O veritas, veritas, quam intime etiam tunc [when he had joined the Manichaeans] medullae animi mei suspirabant tibi, cum te illi sonabant mihi frequenter

---

[1] (continued) Augustine's writings in the following words: "... veritatis aeternitatem venatur Augustinus" (De veritate, qu.1, art.5, c.a.).

[2] Already in Augustine's early writings there are autobiographical passages which give the first sketch of his evolution before his conversion. Cf. Courcelle, Les premières confessions de Saint Augustin, Revue des Etudes, 22 (1945), p. 155.

> et multipliciter voce sola et libris multis et ingentibus... et ego... teipsam te, Veritas, in qua non est commutatio nec momenti obumbratio, esuriebam et sitiebam[3].

The short autobiographical passages of Augustine's early writings already anticipate the Confessions by showing the different stages of his quest for truth[4]. A life not devoted to truth became for Augustine senseless: "To me", so wrote Augustine to his friend and benefactor, Romanianus, "no fortune seemed favourable unless it afforded leisure to apply oneself to philosophy; no life was a happy one except insofar as it is lived in philosophy[5]."

By the discovery of truth, his desire to know it more and more perfectly was increased a hundredfold. He envisaged

---

[3] Confessiones, 3.6.10; PL.32, 687.

[4] The most important passages which anticipate the Confessions are found in the Contra Academicos, 2.2.3-6; PL. 32, 920-922, and in the De beata vita, 1, 1-6; PL.32, 58-962.

[5] "Nam cum praesens praesenti tibi exposuissem interiores motus animi mei, vehementerque ac saepius assererem, nullam mihi videri prosperam fortunam nisi quae otium philosophandi daret, nullam beatam vitam, nisi qua in philosophia viveretur, sed me tanto meorum onere, quorum ex officio meo vita penderet, multisque necessitatibus, vel vani mei pudoris, vel ineptae meorum miseriae refrenari: tam magno es elatus gaudio, tam sancto hujus vitae inflammatus ardore, ut te diceres, si tu ab illarum importunarum litium vinculis aliquo modo eximereris, omnia mea vincula etiam patrimonii tui mecum participatione rupturum." (Contra Academicos, 2.2.4; PL 32, 924.)

this state of his mind as a great gift of God:

> Indubitanter credo atque conformo mihi istam mentem Deum dedisse ut inveniendae veritatis nihil omnino praeferam nihil aliud velim, nihil cogitem, nihil amem[6].

He resigned his teaching position in Milan in order to live the life of a Christian philosopher. The 32 year old rhetorician of Milan made it clear in his first work, Contra Academicos, addressed to those who could not understand his resignation, that he was no more moved by earthly ambitions and hopes:

> Sed ut breviter accipiatis omne propositum meum, quomodo se habeat humana sapientia eam me video nondum percepisse.
>
> Sed cum trigesimum et tertium aetatis annum agam, non me arbitror desperare debere eam me quandoque adepturum. Contemptis tamen caeteris omnibus, quae bona mortales putant, huic investigandae inservire proposui...
>
> Nulli autem dubium est gemino pondere nos impelli ad discendum, auctoritatis atque rationis. Mihi autem certum est nusquam prorsus a Christi auctoritate discedere, non enim reperio valentiorem. Quod autem subtilissima ratione persequendum est, ita enim jam sum affectus ut quid sit verum non credendo solum, sed etiam intelligendo apprehendere impatienter desiderem; apud Platonicos me interim, quod sacris nostris non repugnet, reperturum esse confido[7].

Truth and wisdom should be preferred to everything else, even to the love of our own mother, although they might be found in pagan authors.

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[6] De ordine, 2.20.52; PL.32, 1019.

[7] Contra Academicos, 2.20,43; PL.32, 957.

> The divine Scriptures [Augustine speaks to his mother], which you so heartily embrace, command, not that all philosophers, but the philosophers of this world be avoided and esteemed for naught... Indeed, whosoever thinks that all philosophy is to be avoided, wishes nothing else than that we do not love wisdom. Now if you had no love whatever for wisdom, I would utterly disregard you in my writings. If, however, you had just ordinary love for it, I would not entirely disregard you; and much less if you were to love wisdom as much as I love it. And now, seeing that you love it even more than you love me, and knowing your great love for me, and seeing that you have made such advance in it that you are not frightened by the dread of any chance discomfort, or even death itself — a most difficult attainment for even the most learned, a position which all acknowledge to be the stoutest stronghold of philosophy — in view of all this, shall I not gladly entrust myself even as a disciple?[8]

When, in exalted words Augustine speaks of Truth and Wisdom, he usually means the source of all truth and wisdom: God.

> Accepimus autem etiam auctoritate divina, Dei Filium nihil esse aliud quam Dei Sapientiam (I Cor.1.24). Sed quid putatis esse sapientiam nisi veritatem? Etiam hoc enim dictum est: Ego sum veritas (Joan.14.6)[9].

---

[8] De ordine, 1.11.23; PL. 32, 993. This is one of St. Augustine's tributes to St. Monica.

[9] It is one of the many instances in which Augustine does not see that Wisdom, Truth, Intellect are predicated of the Second Person "per appropriationem". Augustine followed Plotinus to whom God's Wisdom was the second hypostasis (Plotinus, 5.8.4; 6.6.18), but to Augustine the Second Person is equal to God the Father and to God the Holy Ghost. Cf. Perler, Der Nus bei Plotin und das Verbum bei Augustinus, als vorbildliche Ursache der Welt, Freiburg, Paderborn, 1931, p. 106-112. Perler has collected some texts in which some attributes of God are identified by Augustine with the Second Person, for instance: De beata vita, 4.34; PL.32,975; De quantitate animae, 33.75; PL.32,1076; De musica, 6.4.7; PL.32, 1166; 6.16,52; PL.32,1190; De Magistro, 11.38; PL.32,1216; De libero arbitrio, 2.13.37; PL.32,1261; De vera religione, 12,

But Augustine speaks also of the truth which we express in our judgments and words. This truth is not ours. It comes from God, the fountain of truth: "Hujus est verum omne quod loquimur[10]." For this reason, God is truly the teacher of the soul: "For while man can use words as a kind of sign for the expression of his thoughts, teaching is the work of the incorruptible Truth itself who is the one true, the only internal teacher[11]." Not only the truth which we speak comes from God, but also the very inclination and tendency to remember God in order to seek him and desire him, flows into us from the fountain of truth. This is infused by the divine Sun into the eyes of our soul:

> Admonitio autem quaedam quae nobiscum agit, ut Deum recordemur, ut eum quaeramus, ut eum pulso omni fastidio sitiamus, de ipso ad nos fonte veritatis emanat. Hoc interioribus luminibus nostris jubar ille sol secretus infundit[12].

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[9] (continued) 24-25; PL.34,132-133, etc. In his correspondence with Nebridius, Augustine tried to solve the problem of why God the Son had assumed the human nature and not God the Father or God the Holy Ghost, ep. 11.2; PL.33, 75-77.

[10] De beata vita, 4.34; PL.32, 975.

[11] Contra Epistolam Fundamenti, 36.41; PL.42,202: "Per homines enim commemoratio aliqua fieri potest signis verborum; docet autem unus verus Magister, ipsa incorruptibilis Veritas, solus Magister interior, qui etiam exterior factus est."

[12] De beata vita, 4.34; PL.32,975.

No wonder that there is no more powerful drive in the soul than that for truth: "Quid enim fortius desiderat anima quam veritatem?[13]"

During his whole life, Augustine not only desired to know the truth, but, after his conversion, he became also the teacher of truth through his words and through his writings.

His role of a teacher for his contemporaries as well as for the generations to come was well expressed by Alypius, who, enchanted by Augustine's doctrine on the ascent of the soul to God, applied to him the words of Cicero: "Habemus ducem qui nos ad ipsa veritatis arcana Deo jam monstrante perducat[14]."

There are few people who realize the spiritual tortures to which Augustine was submitted in connection with his role of a teacher of truth. As such, Augustine had the clear and strong consciousness that in its knowledge of truth the human mind depends totally on God. This developed in Augustine a painful sense of responsibility for his words.

Augustine could not abstain from writing. The love of truth and apostolic zeal compelled him to communicate the

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[13] In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus, 26.5; PL.35,1609. The same idea is expressed by Cicero in Tusc. disp. 1,19.44: "... natura inest in mentibus nostris insatiabilis quaedam cupiditas veri videndi."

[14] Contra Academicos, 2.20.44; PL.32,958.

treasures of his mind to his fellow men. He wrote volumes. Much more often he spoke "viva voce"[15]. But, his prolific literary activity in the form of books, homilies, and letters caused him much moral anxiety. The words of God: "Ex multiloquio non effugies peccatum"[16] made him uneasy. He was alarmed by his great responsibility: "Omne verbum otiosum quodcumque dixerit homo reddet pro eo rationem in die judicii[17]." How should he avoid God's judgment? Only by following the advice of the Apostle: "Si nos ipsos judicaremus, a Domino non judicaremur[18]." For this reason, Augustine planned and thought for many years how to censure his writings with a certain "judicial severity"[19]. But in such self-criticism, he should not trust his own judgment. St. James warns us:

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[15] Retractationes, Prologue, PL.32,583. Possidius stresses the powerful influence not only of Augustine's writings, but more of his personality in daily conversation: "Et in suis quidem scriptis ille Deo acceptus et carus sacerdos, quantum lucente veritate videre conceditur, recte ac sane, fidei, spei et caritatis Catholicae Ecclesiae vixisse manifestatur, atque eum de divinis scribentem legentes proficiunt. Sed ego arbitror plus ex eo proficere potuisse, qui eum et loquentem in ecclesia praesentem audire et videre potuerant, et ejus praesertim inter homines conversationem non ignoraverunt." Possidius, Vita Sancti Augustini, 31; PL.32, 64.

[16] Proverbia, 10,19.

[17] Math., 12.36.

[18] I Cor.11.31.

[19] Retractationes, Prologue. PL.32,583.

"Nolite plures magistri fieri, scientes quoniam majus judicium sumitis[20]." If we rely on our own judgment, if we assume the role of independent, self-sufficient teachers, God will judge us. Who are these self-appointed doctors?

> Magistros autem plurimos [says Augustine] tunc fieri existimo cum diversa atque inter se adversa sentiunt. Cum vero idipsum dicunt et verum dicunt ab unius veri magistri magisterio non recedunt. Offendunt autem non cum illius multa dicunt, sed cum addunt sua[21].

Here Augustine has before his mind a typical illustration of what is meant by the "plurimi magistri".

To this category belong those who "diversa atque adversa sentiunt". "Diversa sentiunt" — they do not profess the same doctrine on the same subject because they maintain contradictory opinions. At the same time, they "adversa sentiunt" non only by contradicting one another but also by offending some true principles. Being erroneous, their doctrine does not flow from the fountain of truth, from the teaching of the true teacher, but from their own opinioned self — "addunt sua". So they "incidunt ex multiloquio in falsiloquium"[22]. As truth belongs to God "hujus est verum omne loquimur", so the falsehood is their own product.

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[20] I Jacobi, 1.19.

[21] Retractationes, Prologue, PL.32,585.

[22] Proverbia, 10.19.

On the contrary, an entirely different attitude is taken by those who "idipsum dicunt et verum dicunt". They do not profess a contradictory doctrine on the same subject: "idipsum dicunt". Their affirmations, taken both separately and in relation to one another, are in harmony with true principles: "verum dicunt". The latter impose themselves on the human mind and are always accepted as true. Against the sceptics, Augustine had appealed in the Contra Academicos to these immutable truths and found their source in God's mind. For this reason, those who "idipsum dicunt et verum dicunt" do not belong to the many teachers because they draw their doctrine from the "unius veri magistri magisterio".

In the Retractationes, Augustine wanted to close his literary activity as a practical consequence of his deep conviction that: "hujus Dei est verum omne quod loquimur". In his writings, he wanted to correct whatever he found not in conformity with the Source of all truth.

It is a striking thing that precisely this same deep conviction about God as the Source of all true judgments, a convictim which compelled Augustine to write his Retractationes at the close of his life, had already been felt at the very onset of his conversion. It had been reached after nine years of searching, and constitutes a great discovery in his spiritual evolution.

From the very beginning, Augustine's literary activity centered around the mysterious knowledge of the truth of judgment which enabled him to contemplate not only his own self, but also what is above and beneath the human mind. Among Augustine's early writings, the De Magistro crowns his inquiries into the problem of the truth of our judgments. In a short statement he had formulated the results of his meditations on this subject:

> Per idem tempus [389] scripsi librum cujus est titulus De Magistro: in quo disputatur, quaeritur et invenitur magistrum non esse qui docet hominum scientiam nisi Deum, secundum illud etiam quod in Evangelio scriptum est: Unus est magister vester Christus[23].

Both the De Magistro and the Retractationes express Augustine's final solution of the problem of the truth of judgment. But there is a strict connection between Augustine's experiences and the theories developed in the De Magistro. The latter are built up after the pattern of the former. For this reason, before submitting the De Magistro to an analysis, one has first to study the problem of the "only teacher" in Augustine's evolution, and more especially, before his conversion. Without this psychological and biographical background, the De Magistro cannot be fully understood. This explains the general distribution of the dissertation into

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[23] Retractationes, 1.12. PL 32, 602.

two parts. Part I considers three approaches experienced by Augustine in attaining the truth of judgment, and Part II expounds the truth of judgment in the De Magistro.

PART I

THE TRUTH OF JUDGMENT IN AUGUSTINE'S EXPERIENCES - BEFORE HIS CONVERSION

or

Three Approaches to the Truth of Judgment

The idea of the De Magistro was a great discovery in Augustine's intellectual evolution. This could appear as an unfounded statement, if we did not realize that there was a time when the problem of the true judgment had been given a quite opposite solution by Augustine to that of his De Magistro.

Augustine had approached the problem of the truth of judgment first through his Manichaean ideas.

Then, acquainted with some elements of the Catholic Faith, he had tried in vain to solve this problem rationally in harmony with the Bible.

Finally, after reading the Platonic books, he found a general satisfying solution of the problem in accordance both with reason and the Bible.

These three approaches to the truth of judgment are recorded in the Confessions.

The De Magistro is only the development and completion of that solution which had crowned Augustine's long years of searching. The very character of this dialogue as a

continuation of Augustine's former studies on the vital question of truth commands a special consideration of his previous and contemporary writings.

CHAPTER I

THE MANICHAEAN APPROACH

1. THE BEGINNINGS OF AUGUSTINE'S PROBLEMS.

True judgment became for Augustine a problem in connection with his search for the truth about God and his soul.

During his studies at Madaura[1] and Carthage[2], Augustine became dissatisfied with his christianity. At the root of all his errors lay his lack of elementary knowledge of his religion. Christianity, known by the 19 year old student of Carthage, was still that of the 9 or 10 year old boy who came to study at Madaura, in a pagan school and in a pagan atmosphere[3].

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[1] Augustine studies at Madaura Grammar and Literature, perhaps during four years, from the year 365 to 369. An allusion to the years spent at Madaura is made in the Confessions, 2.3.5. PL 32, 677.

[2] In Carthage, Augustine studied rhetoric during the years 369 to 373. Confessions, 2.3.5-8. PL 32, 677-678; 3.1.1. PL 32, 685.

[3] Cf. Alfaric, L'évolution intellectuelle de Saint Augustin, I. Du manichéisme au néoplatonisme, Paris, Nourry, 1918, p. 13-23.

a. His detection of an error about the nature of God.- Augustine had brought with him to school a childish idea of God in human form with human members[4]. Nobody should be surprised that, as a child, Augustine imagined God to be a great, good man, always willing to help us, although not visible to our senses.

> Invenimus autem, Domine, [says Augustine about his notion of God] homines rogantes te et didicimus ab eis sentientes te, ut poteremus, esse magnum aliquem, qui posses etiam non apparens sensibus nostris exaudire nos et subvenire nobis[5].

The Confessions compare Augustine's idea of God in his thirtieth year to that of his childhood and boyhood: "...non te cogitabam Deus in figura corporis humani, ex quo audire aliquid de sapientia coepi semper hoc fugi[6]."

This means that for a long time Augustine had a very childish idea about God as a being with a human body and

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[4] Augustine speaks often in his writings of those, even in the Catholic Church, who have anthropomorphist ideas about God because of their ignorance. "Compare, now", so he speaks to the Manichaeans, "not spiritual men of the Catholic Church, whose mind, as far as possible, in this life, perceives that the divine substance and nature has no material extension, and has no shape bounded by lines, but the carnal and weak of our faith, who, when they hear the members of the body used figuratively, as when God's eyes or ears are spoken of, are accustomed, in the license of fancy, to picture God to themselves in a human form." Contra Epistolam Fundamenti, 23.25 PL 42, 189.

[5] Confessiones, 1.9.14 PL 32, 667.

[6] Confessiones, 7.1.1 PL 32, 733.

members. He stopped imagining God in this way when he began to hear something about wisdom or philosophy[7]. This probably must have happened at the end of his stay at Madaura[8].

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[7] From among the texts read during the "curriculum" of Grammar and Literature the "Orationes" of Cicero have to be mentioned. Cicero himself qualifies his orations as "refertae philosophorum sententiis". Likewise the writings of Varro were in use in the Latin schools. Although Varro's books, strictly speaking, did not deal "ex professo" with philosophy, in many places philosophical problems were touched upon. According to Cicero, Varro purposely had added lighter matters of the domain of philosophy in order to make the reading of his works more attractive and to excite the curiosity of the mind. (Cicero, Quaestiones Academicae, 1.2). It seems that Augustine's words "ex quo audire aliquid de philosophia coepi" allude to his school years in Madaura, where, occasionally, some philosophical topics must have been discussed.

[8] It was very natural that, at Madaura, the young student must have taken a critical attitude to his anthropomorphist ideas about God. There he has reached the age of puberty. His awakened intelligence could no more rely on the authority of his parents and nurses, but required a rational approach to his religion. The eternal problem of what God is had been raised in his mind.

In Augustine's soul, the problem of God was shaped according to the particular circumstances in which he had found himself. Having been brought up in a christian home, under the influence of his christian mother, Augustine came to Madaura although not baptized, with deeply rooted seeds of his christian faith (De duabus animabus, 1. PL 42, 93; De utilitate credendi, 1.2. PL 42, 63). In a pagan city like Madaura, the young boy was gradually acquainted with the religion both of the pagan populace and that of the intellectuals, especially of his teachers. He seized the opportunity of witnessing the public celebrations of pagan rites in which both the magistrates and the prominent citizens took an active part (Ep. 17.4 PL 33, 84-85). His eyes became familiar with the crowd of different deities which occupied the market place (Ep. 16. 1. and 17. PL 33, 81-83, 83-85).

While the common people piously believed in the many gods, the intellectuals criticized and repudiated the views about gods of the pagan crowds. The correspondence between Augustine and a certain Maximus of Madaura sheds light on the religion of the upper classes of that city (Cf. Ep. 16 and 17

While growing in age and knowledge, Augustine had detected his great error. Unfortunately, this had been achieved not with the help of the Church or of the Bible, but

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PL 33, 83-85, 81-83). Maximus did not deny the existence of the one, supreme God, without beginning, but also without a natural offspring, the mighty father of all. The powers of that deity are diffused through the universe. In the pagan rites they are worshipped under many names of gods because the name of the one true God is unknown. The prayers addressed to many gods seem to worship, as it were, certain parts of God, but in reality, they are related to the one God in whom all these parts constitute a whole: "Equidem unum esse Deum summum sine initio, sine prole naturae ceu patrem magnum atque magnificum quis tam demens, tam mente captus neget esse certissimum? Hujus nos virtutes per mundanum opus diffusas, multis vocabulis invocamus, quoniam nomen ejus cuncti proprium ignoramus. Nam Deus omnibus religionibus commune nomen est. Ita fit ut dum ejus quasi quaedam membra carptim, variis supplicationibus prosequimur, totum colere profecto videamur" (Ep. 16.1. PL 33, 82-83).

It is possible that Maximus the Grammarian of Madaura who professes such views on the pagan cult was one of Augustine's teachers. The old Grammarian was very interested in the former student of Madaura. He was full of admiration for the eloquence by which Augustine became renowned everywhere, but at the same time he feared to face his arguments in the "spirit of Chrisippus". The power of Augustine's dialectic in a debate was such that, according to Maximus, he was able to leave nothing certain to anyone. One thing seemed to pain the old teacher, namely, that Augustine, a man of so prominent intellectual qualities had turned aside from his faith -"quia a mea secta deviasti" (Ep.,16.3 PL 33, 87). Maximus had his own pagan religion. This seems to indicate that he had known the student of Madaura and had not considered him as a christian. In any case, his views on the pagan cult seem to represent those of Augustine's teachers. The latter could hardly agree with the crude polytheism of pagan crowds, especially with their anthropomorphist ideas of gods. With the exception of the Epicureans, no Platonist, no Stoic attributed to the gods a human form with human members. The topic about the nature of gods was known to the educated people. It was discussed by Cicero in the De natura deorum. Cicero had discredited the opinion of the Epicureans that the gods had a human form (De natura deorum 1. cap. 23-26, par. 65-74; cap. 27-37, par. 75-102).

We can presume that, at the end of his courses at

with the help of philosophers. For this reason, the young student was inclined to attribute to the Church the anthropomorphist doctrine about God. Later, while defending the

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Madaura, Augustine had become acquainted with the attitude of the intellectuals in respect to this problem. This made him reflect on his childish idea of God in human form, an idea which he had brought with him to Madaura.

No doubt he also had to listen to the criticism directed against the christian religion. In the eyes of the intellectuals of Madaura, christianity must have appeared as a kind of polytheism, similar to that professed by the pagan crowds. Maximus of Madaura is also in this regard a representative of such an approach to christianity. In his correspondence with Augustine, he could not conceal his anger and indignation that some deceased persons were worshipped by the African christians. He meant the christian martyrs. How could the tombs of criminals be visited by the pious crowds of pilgrims? Roman temples were forsaken and the memory of the ancesters was in contempt. Was it not obvious that the christian martyrs were more honoured than Jupiter, Juno, Minerva and Vesta? No christian should reproach the Romans with polytheism and anthropomorphism, since christianity does not differ from the religion of the pagan populace. It is enough to point not only to the christian cult of martyrs, but also to the special christian God, worshipped secretly, whom the believers fancy to see present among them: "Sed illud quaeso, vir sapientissime, uti... ipsa re approbes, quis sit iste Deus quem vobis christiani, quasi proprium vindicatis, et in locis abditis praesentem vos videre componitis" (Ep. 17.3 PL 33,87).

Certainly the young student of Madaura and later of Carthage must have been acquainted with the distortions of christian religion made by the pagan intellectuals. But on one subject he was in agreement with them: God should not be imagined as a being in human forms, with human members. In this regard, the philosophers were right. And yet he had brought from his home a degraded notion of God in human form. This seemed to be the doctrine of the Catholic Church, a doctrine adopted by his mother and so many other pious christian women.

One can realize how much Augustine's christian faith was jeopardized when he had detected his deeply rooted error about God's nature and when he was inclined to attribute it to the Catholic Church. This was the beginning of a dangerous crisis in his spiritual life. The only way of getting rid of his doubts and perplexity would be to consult some Catholic doctors who could solve his problems. It seems that the young

Catholic Church against the accusations of the Manichaeans, Augustine will not conceal the fact of distorted notions about God among some Catholics.

> There are among us children who think of God as having a human form, which they suppose He really has, which is the most degrading idea...[9]

> The fancies of old women or of children you attack with a vehemence that is only ridiculous. Any one whom you persuade in this way to join you shows no fault in the teaching of the Church, but only proves his ignorance of it[10].

With the detection of his error about God, Augustine began to undergo an intellectual and religious crisis. A problem arose in his mind: If God has no bodily form, no

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student had embarked on this road, but he became bitterly disappointed. This may be implied in his warning and advice given to those who suffer from similar experiences as he did: "And should the inquirer meet with some, whether bishops or presbyters, or any officials or ministers of the Catholic Church, who either avoid in all cases opening up mysteries, or, content with simple faith, have no desire for more recondite knowledge, he must not despair of finding the knowledge of the truth in a case where neither are all able to teach, to whom the inquiry is addressed, nor are all inquirers worthy of learning the truth. Diligence and piety are both necessary: on the one hand we must have knowledge to find truth, and on the other hand, we must deserve to get the knowledge" (De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae, 1.1 PL 32, 1309).

Against this background, we can better understand Augustine's confession: "... non te cogitabam Deus in figura corporis humani; ex quo audire aliquid de sapientia coepi, semper hoc fugi".

[9] De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae, 1.10.17 PL 32,1318.

[10] Ibidem.

human members, how should he be imagined? Since Augustine had lost his confidence in the authority of the Church, in his inquiries, he was left helpless: "... sed quid te aliud cogitarem non occurrebat[11]".

b. His problem "cur mala faciamus". — Beside this question on the nature of God, another problem started to torture Augustine's mind. Already, in Madaura, his moral principles had been undermined by the pagan atmosphere of the school and the city[12]. The revolt of his passions in Tagaste and Carthage[13], the habit of giving in to temptations weakened his will so much that he felt powerless to resist his sensual attractions. At the same time, the christian ideal of life did not stop attracting him[14]. In this conflict between the lower and higher man, Augustine asked himself whether he was responsible for his sins, where was the source of his evil actions. A year after his baptism, a similar problem was raised by his pupil and friend, Evodius: "Dic mihi unde mala faciamus"[15]. This question evoked painful

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[11] Confessiones, 7.1.1 PL 32, 733.

[12] Confessiones, book 1, chapters 13, 14, 16, 17.

[13] Confessiones, books 2 and 3.

[14] At that time, Augustine used to pray: "Da mihi castitatem et continentiam, sed noli modo" (Confessiones, 8.7.17 PL 32, 757.

[15] De libero arbitrio, 1.2.4 PL 32, 1223.

memories in Augustine's mind:

> Eam quaestionem moves, quae me admodum adolescentem vehementer exercuit et fatigatum in haereticos impulit atque dejecit. Quo casu ita sum afflictus et tantis obrutus acervis inanium fabularum, ut, nisi mihi amor inveniendi veri opem divinam impetravisset, emergere inde atque in ipsam primam quaerendi libertatem respirare non possem[16].

Augustine's difficulty in regard to the evil actions consisted in this:

> Movet autem animum, si peccata ex iis animabus sunt quas Deus creavit, illae autem animae ex Deo, quomodo non parvo intervallo referantur in Deum[17].

It is not enough to say that the origin of the evil actions is in the souls. Since the latter are created by God, it would seem that ultimately God is responsible for our sins.

2. THE MANICHAEAN SOLUTION OF HIS PROBLEM.

Tortured by such problems in regard to the nature of God and the origin of evil, Augustine met the Manichaeans.

a. <u>The Manichaean method of approaching God: first, reason; then, faith</u>. — He did not approach the Catholic doctors for a solution of his difficulties, because the faithful were commanded <u>first</u> to believe the truths proposed without having understood them beforehand[18]. A quite different method

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[16] <u>De libero arbitrio</u>, 1.2.4 PL 32, 1233.

[17] <u>Ibidem</u>.

[18] <u>De utilitate credendi</u>, 1.2 PL 42, 66.

was pursued by the Manichaeans. They started with reason and then required faith. This sounded to Augustine like a revelation. He had come to the same conclusion while disgusted with the old wives' fables about God in a human form, and searching for a new approach to his religion, he found it in the Manichaean sect. Later, in the preface to De utilitate credendi, Augustine will recall the impression which he had received during his discussion with the Manichaeans.

> You know, Honoratus, [so he writes to his friend] that for no other reason did we fall in with such men than that they kept saying that by pure and simple reason, apart from all formidable authority, they would lead their willing listeners on to God and free them of all error.
>
> For, what else forced me for almost nine years, during which time I rejected the religion that my parents had implanted in me as a child, to follow these men and diligently to listen to them save that they said we were terrified by superstition, and that faith was demanded of us before reason, while they, on the other hand, were forcing faith on no one without first hunting for and disentangling the truth[19].

Tortured by his problem concerning God and the origin of evil, inflamed to search for wisdom by the Hortentius of Cicero[20], Augustine embraced the Manichaean sect as an auditor.

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20 "Inter hos ego imbecilla tunc aetate discebam libros eloquentiae, in qua eminere cupiebam fine damnabili et ventoso per gaudia vanitatis humanae. Et usitato jam discendi ordine perveneram in librum cujusdam Ciceronis, cujus linguam fere omnes mirantur, pectus non ita. Sed liber ille, ipsius exhortationem continet ad philosophiam, et vocatur Hortensius. Ille vero liber mutavit affectum meum et ad te ipsum, Domine, mutavit preces meas et vota ac desideria mea fecit alia. Viluit mihi repente omnis vana spes et immortalitatem sapientiae concupiscebam aestu cordi incredibili et surgere jam coeperam, ut

He found there, as he thought, both the true christianity and reason.

The names of the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost were always on their lips[21]. Christ was considered as the Saviour of the world[22]. Mani, the founder of the sect, called himself the apostle of Jesus Christ[23]. The Manichaeens accepted in principle the New Testament and the Epistles of St. Paul[24]. Even in their

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ad te redirem. Non enim ad acuendam linguam, quod videbar emere maternis mercedibus, cum agerem annum aetatis undevigesimum, jam defuncto patre ante biennium; non ergo ad acuendam linguam referebam illum librum, neque mihi locutionem, sed quod loquebatur persuaserat"(Confessiones, 3.7.7 PL 32, 685).

Already in his early writings, Augustine mentions the Hortensius: Contra Academicos, 1.1.4 PL 32, 908;13.7 PL 32, 909; 3.4.7 PL 32, 937; 3.14.31 PL 32, 938; De beata vita, 2.10 PL 32, 964; 2.22 PL 32, 970; 4.26 PL 32, 972. We can find important quotations taken from the Hortensius in Augustine's later writings: Contra Julianum, 4.14.72 PL 44, 774; 4.15.78 PL 44, 778;5.29 PL 44, 803; De Trinitate, 13.4.7 PL 42, 1019; 14.9.12 PL 42, 1046; 14.19.26 PL 42, 1056.

21 Confessiones, 3.4.7 PL 32, 685.

22 Confessiones, 3.6.10 PL 32, 687.

23 Contra Epistolam Fundamenti, 6.7 PL 42, 177.

24 The De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae shows the harmony between the New Testament accepted by the Manichaeans and the Old Testament rejected by them: "Et ea de Scripturis assumam testimonia quibus eos necesse est credere, ex Novo scilicet Testamento... Nec omnino ullam relinquam testem sententiam productam de Apostolica disciplina, cum non de Veteri Testamento similem comparem."De moribus .., 1.1.2 PL 32, 1311. "Videamus quemadmodum ipse Dominus in Evangelio nobis praeceperit esse vivendum; quomodo etiam Paulus Apostolus; has enim Scripturas illi condemnare non audent" (De moribus, 1.3.13 PL 32, 1316).

external organization they resembled the Catholics. There were among them deacons, priests, seventy-two bishops, above the latter, twelve Teachers or Masters and the highest Head who took the place of Mani. Mani himself, who had continued the work of Christ, was accompanied by twelve Apostles[25].

b. The nature of God: corporeal light. — Above all, the Manichaeans from the very beginning seemed to have solved rationally Augustine's problems about the nature of God and the origin of evil.

In connection with the nature of God, they asked him whether God was bound by a bodily shape and whether he had hair and nails. A long time before Augustine had rejected such a childish notion of God, but his new teachers insisted that this is the teaching of the Old Testament, because according to it man was made to the image of God. In this way they ridiculed the Old Testament and discredited in his eyes, at least indirectly, the Catholic Church which accepts the Old Testament. Later, the Manichaeans succeeded in deepening in Augustine the conviction that this was precisely the authentic Catholic doctrine. Even when Augustine left the Manichaeans, for a length of time he could not get rid of his false ideas.

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[25] De haeresibus, 46 PL 42, 36.

> I had no hope, says Augustine, of being able to find the truth in your Church... for they [Manichaeans] had turned me against it and it seemed to me degrading to believe that You had the shape of our human flesh and were circumscribed within the bodily outlines of our limbs. When I desired to think of God I could not think of him save as a bodily magnitude for it seemed to me that what was not such was nothing at all: this indeed was the principal and practically the sole cause of my inevitable error[26].

On the contrary, the Manichaeans boasted of having a higher idea of God than the Catholics. God was a kind of light expanded through infinite spaces, although on one side limited by the Principle of Evil. This appealed more to Augustine's imagination for he believed that God must be infinite and present everywhere. These attributes of God are saved, to a certain extent, in the notion of God as light, but not in that of a being shut up in a human body. Does not St. John say: "Erat lux vera quae illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum? ... Et lux in tenebris lucet et tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt?"

> Ita etiam te, vita vitae meae, grandem per infinita spatia undique cogitabam penetrare totam mundi molem et extra eam quaqueversum per immensa sine termino, ut haberet te terra, haberet coelum, haberent omnia et illa finirentur in te, tu autem nusquam. Sicut autem luci solis non obsisteret corpus aeris hujus qui supra terram est quominus per eum traiceretur, penetrans eum non dirumpendo aut concidendo, sed implendum eum totum, sic putabam non solum caeli et aeris et maris, sed etiam terrae corpus pervium et ex omnibus maximis minimisque partibus penetrabile ad capiendam praesentiam tuam occulta inspiratione intrinsecus et extrinsecus administrantem quae creasti[27].

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[26] Confessiones, 5.10.19 PL 32, 715.

[27] Confessiones, 7.1.2 PL 32, 733-734.

Later, Augustine will upbraid the Manichaeans for such a materialistic notion of God.

> Non intelligunt lucem in qua Deus erat antequam faceret istam lucem. Non enim norunt isti lucem nisi quam carneis oculis vident. Et ideo istum solem quem pariter non solum cum bestiis majoribus et vermiculis cernimus illi sic colunt ut particulam dicerent lucis illius in qua habitat Deus[28].

In his nineteenth year, without a sufficient knowledge of his Christian religion, Augustine was not able to take a critical attitude to the Manichaean views about God. Later, for many years he would consider the Manichaean doctrine far above the Catholic teaching.

> When my mind tried to find help in the Catholic faith, it was beaten back, because the Catholic faith is not what I thought it was. It seemed to me more reverent, O my God, to hold you infinite in all other parts, even if I must confess You finite in that part where the power of evil was set against You than to imagine You finitely contained in all Your parts in the shape of a human body[29].

Likewise Augustine has received from the Manichaeans a solution of his problem of evil "cur mala faciamus". Following their own method, they proceeded by asking him about the origin of evil: "whence is evil?" At that time, Augustine did not know that evil was a privation of good[30]. He was

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[28] De Genesi contra Manichaeos, 1.3.6 PL 34, 176.

[29] Confessiones, 5.10.19 PL 32, 715.

[30] Confessiones, 3.7.12 PL 32, 688.

expected to answer that man is responsible for his evil actions. But this was to create a new problem: Where is man from? The Catholic answer was that God is the maker of man and of angel. Now, the Manichaean victim was urged to admit that, according to the Catholics, God, as the maker of man, must be in some way responsible for the sins of man. But such a horrible blasphemy should be avoided. The Manichaeans had found a solution.

Augustine learned from them that, according to their founder, there are two Principles, eternal and co-eternal, opposed to one another. These two Principles constitute two separate natures or substances: the substantial Good and the substantial Evil[31].

The substantial Good is just God, or the nature of Light, and the substantial Evil is the Devil, or the nature of Darkness. In the beginning, according to Mani's Fundamental Letter, these two substances were divided. God the Father reigned in the empire of Light. But on the border of the holy region of Light was the land of Darkness where abided the Prince of Darkness, or the Principle of Evil[32].

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[31] (Contra Epistolam Fundamenti) De haeresibus, 46 PL 42, 34.

[32] Contra Epistolam Fundamenti, 13.16 PL 42, 182; 15.19 PL 42, 184.

Augustine thought that it was reasonable to accept the existence of the Principle of Evil. We face evils in every day life. He experienced the evil in his sins and in material things subject to corruption[33]. What could be the origin of such evils? Either God or something other than God. But it would be a blasphemy to attribute evils to God. It follows that there must exist an evil substance. This evil is eternal, like God, and has a certain infinity, although lesser than that of God.

> And because such poor piety as I had constrained me to hold that the good God could not have created any nature evil I suppose that there were two opposing powers, each infinite yet the evil one lesser and the good one greater[34].

Augustine heard also from the Manichaeans that the existence of the Principle of Light and Darkness was confirmed by the New Testament. Mani was unjustly blamed for his acceptance of two natures. Christ Himself proclaimed the same doctrine, when he said: "Every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit." (Matth. 7.17) There we have two natures. In another passage of the Gospel we read: "Didst Thou not sow good seed in thy field? How, then, does it have weeds? An enemy has done this." If this enemy is

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33 Contra Epistolam Fundamenti, 33.44 PL 42, 203.

34 Confessiones, 5.10.20 PL 32, 175; Contra Faustum, 32.20 PL 42, 509.

not foreign to God, one should prove it. If he is connected with God, what kind of seed did he sow? Christ will say to those on His left hand: "Depart from me accursed ones into the everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels."(Matth. 25.31)[35]

As the Principle of Light, so also the Principle of Evil, was of corporeal nature.

> It had its own hideous and formless bulk, either gross which they called earth, or thin and tenuous like the air: for they imagine it to be some malignant mind creeping over the earth[36].

3. THE MANICHAEAN VIEWS ON THE CORPOREAL WORLD AND MAN.

With such materialistic ideas about God and Evil, Augustine was not able to understand the notion of creation from nothing. To the Manichaeans, the idea of creation seemed to be in contradiction with our experiences. We know that nothing can be made without pre-existing matter.

> Omnipotentem Deum non credunt aliquid de nihilo facere potuisse, cum considerent fabros et quoslibet opifices non posse aliquid fabricare, nisi habuerint unde fabricent[37].

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[35] Contra Felicem, 2.2. PL 42, 536.

[36] Confessiones, 5.10.20 PL 32, 715; Contra Faustum, 32.22 PL 42, 510.

[37] De Genesi contra Manichaeos, 1.6.10 PL 34, 178.

How, then, should one explain the existence of the things which surround us? — Analogically, with what we see by our senses. Consequently, all things come into existence by way of material emanation, either from God or from the Principle of Evil. So the human souls are particles of God; but bodies, as subject to change and corruption, are derived from the Principle of Evil. Their source cannot be in God, otherwise they would be perfect. Later, Augustine would remind the Manichaeans that "there is impiety in calling it a defect in anything not to be what God is, and in denying a thing to be good because it is inferior to God...[38]" It is unreasonable to require that things made out of nothing should be as perfectly good as He who was begotten of God Himself[39].

There are two souls in man: one of divine origin, the other shut up in the body and derived, like the body itself, from the Principle of Evil:

> ... quarum dicunt unam partem Dei esse, alteram de gente tenebrarum, quam non condiderit Deus et quae sit Deo aeterna et has ambas animas, unam bonam, alteram malam in uno homine esse delirant: istam scilicet malam propriam carnis esse dicentes, quam carnem etiam dicunt esse generis tenebrarum; illam vero bonam ex adventitia Dei parte quae cum tenebrarum gente conflixerit atque utrumque miscuerit[40].

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[38] Contra Epistolam Fundamenti, 37.43 PL 42, 202-203.

[39] Contra Epistolam Fundamenti, 37.42 PL 42, 202.

[40] Retractationes, 1.15.1 PL 32, 608; Contra Faustum, 6.8 PL 42, 319.

This doctrine about two souls destroys the liberty of man. All evil tendencies and instincts were attributed by the Manichaeans to the evil soul in man. In this way, Augustine could excuse himself of all his sins. So the Manichaeans gave him the solution to his problem: "cur mala faciamus". Even after leaving Carthage, during his stay in Rome, this solution was deeply rooted in his mind.

> I still held the view that it was not we that sinned, but some other nature sinning in us and it pleased my pride to be beyond fault and when I did any evil not to confess that I had done it... I very much preferred to excuse myself and accuse some other thing that was in me, but was not I[41].

4. THE ORIGIN OF THE TRUE JUDGMENTS.

From the time he had read the Hortensius and joined the Manichaean sect, Augustine's mind became more and more theo-centric. Although the Manichaean writings became a special object of his studies, he did not neglect the liberal disciplines which he taught as a teacher, first, for a short time at Tagaste and, then, in Carthage. Though the liberal discipline do not deal with theological questions, Augustine found in them a theological aspect. He was struck by the immutable judgments contained in them. Aware of his certitude about their truth, he tried to explain to himself the origin

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[41] Confessiones, 5.10.18 PL 32, 714.

of their immutable truth and his lack of any doubt about it. But, at that time, he was not able to find the right solution to his problem; later, as a bishop, he would deplore his efforts and the time spent on such studies without reaching the true solution.

> Et quid mihi proderat quod libros artium quas liberales vocant tunc nequissimus malarum cupiditatum servus per meipsum legi et intellexi quoscumque legere potui. Et gaudebam in eis et nesciebam unde esset quidquid ibi verum et certum esset[42].

"I knew not", says Augustine, "whence came whatever in them was true and certain." By this, he intended to say that he did not know the true solution to the problem. Yet the problem itself was known to him. He focussed his attention on it, the more that he found in natural phenomena the verification of certain mathematically true judgments. "I read", says Augustine, "many books of the philosophers and retained a great deal in my memory[43]." Above all he was interested in their doctrine about nature. He admired them for their investigations concerning the stars, the places of the constellations, and the courses of the planets[44]. "I remembered many truths that they have spoken of the created world itself and I saw their theories justified by numbers and the

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[42] Confessiones, 4.16.30 PL 32, 705.

[43] Confessiones, 5.3.3 PL 32, 707.

[44] Ibidem.

order of time and the visible evidence of the stars[45]." No wonder that in addition to the artes sermocinales, the artes mathematicales became for Augustine the object of interest.

a. The problem of the truth of judgment. — But, the problem of the true immutable judgment was not raised by Augustine himself. He became acquainted with it when he was already 19 years old, at which time he was reading the Hortensius of Cicero. Through Cicero, also, Augustine came to know its solution, the platonic theory of reminiscence.

In the Hortensius, Augustine found the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul. There is the fact of the dreadful union of the soul with the body. According to Cicero, in this life now, we are being tortured like those who once fell into the hands of the Etruscan robbers. Their prisoners, while still alive, were tied up against dead bodies. In a similar way, our souls are united with living bodies, which are in reality, for the soul, like corpses[46]. What can

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[45] Confessiones, 5.3.6. PL 32, 708.

[46] The fragment of the Hortensius relevant to the problem of pre-existence is found in Augustine's writing Contra Julianum Pelagianum. This shows how much Augustine had been impressed by that theory. The Platonic doctrine is embodied in the following way: "Quanto ergo te melius [Augustine speaks to Julian] veritatique vicinius de hominum generatione sensuerunt, quos Cicero in extremis partibus Hortensii dialogi commemorat? Nam cum multa quae videmus et gemimus, de hominum vanitate atque infelicitate dixisset, "ex quibus", inquit, "humanae vitae erroribus et aerumnis fit, ut interdum veteres illi, sive vates, sive in sacris initiisque tradendis diviae mentis interpretes, qui nos ob aliqua scelera suscepta in vita

be the cause of this unnatural union? Cicero reports an ancient tradition which tries to explain the unhappiness of man:

> On account of the errors and troubles, says Cicero in the Hortensius, it happened that sometimes the ancient seers or interpreters of God's will seem to have discovered some truth in sacred rites and initiations, when they said that, because of certain crimes committed in the other life, we have been born in order to suffer punishment[47].

By its explanation of the evil in man's life, the theory of pre-existence must have struck deeply into Augustine's imagination, tortured as it was by the problem of his own sins. It was not for him a purely literary problem, found in the writings of Cicero. The student and teacher of Carthage was already a father of a beloved son. As such, he concentrated his thoughts not only on the needs of his family, but also on the mystery of human life. He was granted the opportunity of watching, step by step, as far as it was possible, the beginning and the development both physiological

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superiore poenarum luendarum causa natos esse dixerunt, aliquid vidisse videantur; verumque sit illud quod est apud Aristotelem, simili nos affectos esse supplicio atque eos qui quondam, cum in praedonum Etruscorum manus incidissent, crudelitate excogitata necabantur, quorum corpora viva cum mortuis, adversa adversis accomodata, quam aptissime colligabantur; sic nostros animos cum corporibus copulatos, ut vivos cum mortuis esse conjunctos" (Contra Julianum Pelagianum, 4.15.78 PL 44, 778.

47 Contra Julianum, ibidem.

as well as psychological, of a human being. The ideas of the first book of the Confessions concerning the origin and evolution of the child are certainly based on authentic observations made day by day on his son, Adeodatus. They reflect, at least partly, the thoughts of the young thinker and father who watched with emotion the coming to be of a human life. Day by day, he saw this life growing in the woman's womb, the life of his own son. Where did he come from? About eighteen years ago, Augustine himself had lived such a life in Monica's womb. Where had he been before? While writing about his own childhood, Augustine asked God for just that solution to this problem:

> For what I wish to say, O Lord, my God, but that I know not whence I came hither into this - shall I call it - dying life or living death...[48] Tell me, whether my infancy succeeded another age of mine which had at that time perished. Was it that which I passed in my mother's womb? For of that something has been known to me, and I myself have seen women with child. And what, O God, preceded this life? Was I indeed anywhere and anybody? For no one can tell me these things, neither father nor mother, nor the experiences of others, nor my own memory?[49]

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[48] Confessiones, 1.6.7 PL 32, 663: "Quid enim est, quod volo dicere, Domine, nisi quia nescio unde venerim huc, in istam dicam mortalem vitam, an mortem vitalem nescio?"

[49] Confessiones, 1.6.9 PL 32, 664: "Dic mihi supplici tuo, Deus, et misericors misero tuo, dic mihi, utrum alicui jam aetati meae mortuae successit infantia mea, an illa est, quam egi inter viscera matris meae? Nam et de illa mihi nonnihil indicatum est et praegnantes vidi feminas. Quid etiam ante hanc, ducedo mea, Deus meus, fui ne alicubi an aliquis? Nam quis mihi dicat ista non habea, nec pater, nec mater potuerunt, nec aliorum experimentum, nec memoria mea."

Had not such questions or similar ones been anticipated by Augustine at the time to which he points when he says: "of that something had been known to me, and I have myself seen women with child"? The name given to his son indicates Augustine's great spiritual experience in connection with the conception and birth of Adeodatus. However this may be, it is certain that in the writings of Cicero, and even before he had joined the Manichaeans, Augustine found an explanation of his problem of evil: the soul had lived in another world before being born into its body. By the latter it had been punished for the sins committed in the previous life. By this theory the idea was impressed upon Augustine's mind that the body is a certain evil for the soul.

b. The theory of reminiscence. — But, how can we know that man's soul had really pre-existed before being born into his body? Most probably The Hortensius explained to Augustine the foundation of the theory of pre-existence. This can be concluded from Cicero's intention while writing that dialogue. Among the Romans at that time, many outstanding men were opposed to a comprehensive study of philosophy and raised different objections against it. On the contrary, Cicero did not like the idea of limiting the study of philosophy to a few subjects. Such a study should embrace the totality of problems. It is difficult to acquire some knowledge without acquainting oneself with many or all of its

branches; nor can one take a few subjects without selecting them out of a great number; and if one has acquired the knowledge of a few points, he will certainly endeavour to understand more[50]. This sheds light on the meaning of Cicero's words: "Nos autem universae philosophiae vituperatoribus respondimus in Hortensio[51]." The Hortensius discussed all problems of philosophy. No wonder that it was used in the "schola rhetoris" as a kind of introduction to philosophy for those students who were advanced in their studies[52]. It would be strange if Cicero had not discussed the platonic theory of reminiscence, although he had spoken of the pre-existence of the soul. However this may be, the arguments of Plato for pre-existence could not have been unknown to Augustine. The Tusculanae disputationes also expose the platonic theory.

There is the fact that we have knowledge of many truths which cannot be drawn from the sensible world during

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[50] Cicero, Tusculanae disputationes, (1) 2.1.1: "Difficile est enim in philosophia pauca esse ei nota, cui non sint aut pleraque aut omnia. Nam nec pauca nisi e multis eligi possunt, nec, qui pauca perceperit, non idem reliqua... persequetur.

[51] Tusculanae Disputationes, 2.2.5.

[52] Prosper Alfaric, L'évolution intellectuelle de Saint Augustin, Paris, Nourry, p. 23.

this life. Such knowledge is found even in illiterate man. How should one explain such knowledge? "Plato considers it", says Cicero, "as a recollection of a former life."

> Habet primum [animus] memoriam et eam infinitam rerum innumerabilium, quam quidem Plato recordationem esse vult praeteritae vitae. Nam in illo libro, qui inscribitur [illegible]pusionem quemdam Socrates interrogat quaedam geometrica de dimensione quadrati. Ad ea sic ille respondet ut puer; et tamen ita faciles interrogationes sunt, ut gradatim respondens eodem perveniat, quo si geometrica didicisset. Ex quo effici vult Socrates, ut discere nihil aliud sit nisi recordari.
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> Quem locum multo etiam accuratius explicat in eo sermone, quem habuit eo ipso die, quo excessit e vita: docet enim, quamvis, qui omnium rerum rudis esse videatur bene interroganti respondentem declarare, se non tum illa discere, sed reminiscendo recognoscere; nec vero fieri ullo modo posse, ut a pueris tot rerum atque tantarum insitas et quasi consignatas in animis notiones, quas [illegible] vocant, haberemus, nisi animus, antequam in corpus intravisset, in rerum cognitione viguisset.
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> Quumque nihil esset, ut omnibus locis a Platone disseritur (nihil enim ille putat esse, quod oriatur et intereat, idque solum esse, quod semper tale sit, quale [illegible] appellat ille, nos speciem); non potuit animus haec in corpore inclusus agnoscere, cognita attulit; ex quo tam multarum rerum cognitionis admiratio tollitur.
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> Neque ea plane videt animus, cum repente in tam insolitum tamquam perturbatum domicilium immigravit, sed cum se collegit atque recreavit, tum agnoscit illa reminiscendo. Ita est nihil aliud discere, nisi recordari.
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> Ego autem majore etiam quodam modo memoriam admiror. Quid est enim illud, quo meminimus? aut quam habet vim? aut unde natam? Non quaero, quanta memoria Simonides fuisse dicatur... de communi hominum memoria loquor, et eorum maxime, qui in aliquo majore studio et arte versantur: quorum quanta mens sit, difficile est existimare; ita multa meminerunt.[53]

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[53] Tusculanae disputationes, 1.24.56-59.

From this we can see why Augustine had paid so much attention to the immutable truths of the liberal disciplines. It was Cicero who gave him this direction. From Cicero he learned that the theory of the origin of the immutable truths was exposed in Meno and was more fully developed by Plato in the conversation in which Socrates took part on the day of his death. Everybody shows, when rightly questioned, that he does not learn but remembers.

If we compare the characteristics of the things known by the mind with that of sensible things, we see that the latter have a beginning and an end, in other words, they are mutable. For this reason, they do not form the true reality:

> ... nihil enim ille [Plato] putat esse quod oriatur et intereat idque solum esse quod semper tale sit, quale ideam appellat ille nos autem speciem.

The true reality is that which is always the same. Now even children know many things of this character. From this, we have to draw the following conclusion:

> ... nec vero fieri illo modo posset ut a pueris tot rerum atque tantarum insitas et quasi consignatas in animis notiones quas ennoias vocant haberemus, nisi animus, antequam in corpus intravisset, in rerum cognitione viguisset.

While descending into its body, the soul was stored with knowledge, but suddenly transferred to its earthly abode, it became so disturbed that its former knowledge was lost to its sight. The only way to recovery is to return to itself,

or to reflect on itself. By this method the soul is able to recall by means of memory what has been forgotten: "Ita nihil est aliud discere nisi recordari".

5. MANICHAEISM AND PLATONISM COMPARED.

It is natural that with his ideas Augustine was not able to realize the full meaning of the Platonic doctrine. But, although there is a basic difference between materialistic Manichaeism and spiritualistic Platonism, the Platonic explanation of the truth of judgment exposed by Cicero was in some points in harmony with the Manichaean doctrine.

a. Manichaeism: a pretended spiritualistic system. — Manichaeism pretended to be a spiritualistic system on account of the difference between light and solid matter. The properties of light are such that in comparison with those of bodies, all beings which are light, like God, or derived from light like souls, were considered by the Manichaeans as spiritual. In the Contra Epistolam Fundamenti, Augustine will brand the Manichaean notion of spirituality in the following manner:

> How could you ever be so blinded in mind as to say that only the region of darkness was material, and that the so-called region of light was immaterial and spiritual? My good friends, let us open your eyes for once, and see now that we are told of it, what is most obvious, that two regions cannot be joined at

their sides unless both are material.[54]

As a Manichaean, Augustine did not have the slightest idea of a spiritual being: but he could see the striking similarities of the Manichaean and Platonic doctrine.

b. The divine origin of the soul in both doctrines.— First of all, both the Manichaeans and the Platonists attributed to the soul a divine origin. Cicero must have confirmed Augustine in his belief that the soul is a particle of God because the Roman philosopher himself considered the soul as a divine being:

> The origin of the soul of man is not to be found upon earth, for there is nothing in the soul of a mixed or concrete nature or that has any appearance of being formed or made out of the earth, nothing even humid or airy or fiery. For what is there in natures of that kind which has the power of memory, understanding or thought? which can recollect the past, foresee the future and comprehend the present? for these capabilities are confined to divine beings; nor can we discover any source from which men could derive them but from God. There is, therefore, a peculiar nature and power in the soul, distinct from those natures which are more known and familiar to us. Whatever, then, that is which thinks, and which has understanding and volition and a principle of life, is heavenly and divine and on that

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[54] Contra Epistolam Fundamenti, 21.22 PL.42, 187: "Cur ergo nobis dicebatur, nescio qua caecitate perversis, tenebrarum tantum terram fuisse vel esse corpoream; illa vero quae terra luminis diceretur incorpoream et spiritualem credi oportere." Although Mani stresses God's spirituality, it is not a true spirituality, but rather a name only. "Mani n'enseignait pas un véritable spiritualisme métaphysique et n'éliminait de l'idée de Dieu qu'un corporalisme anthropomorphique et grossier"(E. Gilson, Introduction à l'étude de Saint Augustin, Paris, Vrin, 1949, p. 301, ft.1).

account must necessarily be eternal; nor can God Himself, who is known to us, be conceived to be anything else except a soul free and unembarrassed, distinct from all mortal concretion, acquainted with everything and giving motion to everything ant itself endued with perpetual motion.[55]

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[55] Tusculanae disputationes, 1.27.66. Naturally, there is a great difference between the Manichaean and Platonic soul. The latter has nothing material in its constitution, while the former is a particle of light detached from the divine light or God: "Sed quid mihi hoc proderat putanti, quod tu, Domine Deus veritas, corpus esses lucidum et immensum, et ego frustum de illo corpore" (Conf., 4.16.31 PL.32, 706).

Likewise there is a certain similarity between the Platonic and Manichaean doctrine on evil. Concerning Plato, "Aristotle credits him with a frank dualism, that is to say with a recognition of two principles of things, one good and the other bad, and on this point ranges him with Empedocles and Anaxagoras (Aristotle, Metaphysics, A, 6, 988a 7-17). Cf. E. Gilson, The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy, New York, 1940, p. 451. Gilson thinks that "it is not easy to find a clear text in Plato to justify the assertion... Perhaps the Letter to Dionysius (11.313a), whether authentic or not, strikes the true note when it says that Plato had reflected much on the question of evil in general, but had never resolved it"(Ibid., p. 452). So there are some texts in Plato's dialogues which seem to suggest that matter is the principle of evil. The Chaos that the Demiurge orders would be its equivalent. Likewise the idea of matter is suggested in the Politics (273b) and in the Republic (11.379c). In the latter dialogue Plato says: "... few are the goods of human life, and many are the evils, and the good is to be attributed to God alone; of the evils the causes are to be sought elsewhere, and not in him." This principle was often repeated by the Manichaeans. They found the source of evil in matter, because otherwise they would be compelled to make God responsible for all evils. This blasphemy should be avoided. And yet it is committed, according to the Manichaeans, not only by the pagan crowds but also by Catholics. "The pagan doctrine is, that all things good and evil, mean and glorious, fading and unfading, changeable and unchangeable material and divine, have only one principle" (Contra Faustum, 20.3 PL.42, 370). In this regard the Catholics are called by Faustus a schism of Pagans, since they profess the same doctrine about one principle of all things, although they do not worship in common: "... you, in your schism from the Gentiles, have brought with you the doctrine of a single principle, for you believe that all things are of God." (Contra Faustum, 20.4 PL.42, 370). How the Manichaeans are

c. The descent of the soul. — Secondly, both the Manichaean and the Platonic soul descended from their heavenly abode to the bodies to be united with them.

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opposed both to the Pagans and Catholics: "Pagani bona et mala, tetra et splendida, perpetua et caduca, mutabilia et certa, corporalia et divina unum habere principium dogmatizant. His ego valde contraria sentio, qui bonis omnibus principium fateor Deum, contrariis vero Hylen: sic enim mali principium ac naturam theologus noster appellat" (Contra Faustum, 20.3 PL.42, 370).

In the Contra Faustum, Augustine points out the Manichaean mistake in the interpretation of the greek term HYLE: "HYLEN namque Graeci, cum de natura disserunt materiem quamdam rerum definiunt, nullo prorsus modo formatam, sed omnium corporalium formarum capacem; quae quidem in corporum mutabilitate utcumque cognoscitur; nam per seipsam nec sentiri nec intelligi potest. Verum in hoc errant quidam gentilium, quod eam tamquam coaeternam Deo conjungunt... ut haec ab illo non sit, quamvis ab illo formetur, quod alienum est a veritate, ipsa veritas docet. Ecce tamen quibus Paganis de hac ipsa HYLE invenimini esse consimiles, quod eam vos suum principium habere, nec ex Deo esse perhibetis... qui nescientes quid sit HYLE, id est, quid sit rerum materies, gentem tenebrarum eam dicitis..." (Contra Faustum, 20.14 PL.42, 379).

As to Plotinus there is a principle of evil, but not in the same sense as that of the Manichaeans. While, according to the doctrine of Mani, matter has not its ultimate origin in God, according to Plotinus it is derived from the One. For this reason matter is also divine, although far inferior to other emanations from the One. In spite of it, matter is a principle of evil. Why? All beings, in as far as they exist necessarily produce of their substance a reality which tends to be without an depends on its source. Cf. Enn. 5.1.6. This is realized in the NOUS which produces the World-Soul. But there must be a term to the emanations from the One. Matter constitutes their ultimate term. Enn. 1.8.7. As derived from the One, matter is an eternal and substantial reality. As a being without perfection it is the source of ugliness, multiplicity, disorder, corruption, errors of all evils. It does not follow that that material things are evil. Plotinus defends the material universe against the Gnostics. But matter in itself is formless. It remains unchanged by the forms impressed upon it through the Soul. A.H. Armstrong, An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy, Westminster, The Newmann Press, 1949, p. 193. As such, matter is considered by Plotinus as a total privation of goodness, in other words as a substantial

According to Plato, such a descent was a punishment for the soul for its sins in the other world. According to Mani, the particle of God was united with matter, or the principle of Evil, in order to check and weaken the power of the realm of Darkness.[56] But matter became a prison and a

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evil. (Enn. 1.8.2).

Augustine shows that the Manichaeans had distorted the notion of the HYLE: "...nescientes quid sit HYLE, id est quid sit rerum materies, gentem tenebrarum eam dicitis, ubi non solum distinctas quinque generibus innumerabiles corporum formas, verum etiam mentem constituitis horum corporum formatricem; et quod est imperitius, vel potius dementius, ipsam magis mentem dicitis HYLEN, quam non formari, sed formare perhibetis. Nam si esset ibi mens quaedam formans et elementa corporea quae formarentur illa elementa dicenda essent HYLE id est materies quam formaret eadem mens, quam mentem principium mali esse vultis. Hoc si diceretis, non quidem multum erraretis in eo quod est HYLE, nisi quod ipsa quoque elementa, quamvis in alias formas formanda, tamen quia jam elementa essent, et speciebus propriis distinguerentur, HYLE non essent, quia illa est prorsus informis; veruntamen tolerabilis esset imperitia vestra, quia eam quae formaretur, non eam quae formaret, HYLEN diceretis; sed tamen etiam sic eo teneremini vani atque sacrilegi, quia nescientes omnem modum naturarum numerumque formarum et ordinem ponderum non esse posse, nisi a Patre, Filio et Spiritu sancto, principio mali tantum bonum tribueretis." From this, we can see that the Manichaeans had failed to grasp the meaning of the term HYLE. The Greeks signified by this term the formless matter, but Faustus applied the term to the matter already formed. What is worse, the Manichaeans attributed the formation of matter to the Evil Mind and this Evil Mind constitutes the HYLE more than matter itself.

[56] Confessiones, 7.2.3 PL.32, 734.

source of suffering for the particles of God, although they are sinless. The Manichaeans taught a certain metempsychose. The Elected of the sect were promised to reach heaven immediately after their death. But the auditors must still suffer after their death in a new body until they become entirely purified by following the way of life designed for the Elected. Otherwise, they will be compelled to live in a plant, in a tree, for instance, and wait for their salvation indefinitely.[57]

Thirdly, in the moment of the union with the body, both the Platonic and the Manichaean soul are in a state of ignorance. The only way of getting rid of this ignorance is a kind of dialectic. The body is the real cause for the Platonic soul having forgotten the science acquired in the other world. The soul had been irradiated by the truth shining from the Good,[58] but in contact with the body the eye

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[57] De haeresibus, 46 PL.42, 34; Contra Faustum, 5.10 PL 42, 226-227: "Quid autem fallitis auditores vestros, qui cum suis uxoribus, et filiis, et familiis, et domibus, et agris vobis serviunt, si quisquis ista omnia non dimiserit, non accipere evangelium? Sed quia eis non resurrectionem, sed revolutionem ad istam mortalitatem promittitis, ut rursus nascantur, et vita Electorum vestrorum vivant, tam vana et inepta et sacrilega, quam vos vivitis, quando valde laudamini; aut si melioris meriti sunt, in melones et cucumeres, vel in aliquos alios cibos veniant, quos vos manducaturi estis, ut vestris ructatibus cito purgentur, merito eos a mandatis evangelicis alienatis..."

[58] Contra Academicos, 3.17.37 PL.32, 954.

of the soul was fixed on mutable things and so the heavenly knowledge was forgotten. In order to recall this knowledge, the soul has to return to itself by withdrawing its gaze from material things.

A similar method has to be followed by the Manichaean soul; but it does not mean that it had been illuminated by God before its union with the body. Being a particle of the Divine Light, the soul did not need an illumination. It always possesses all sciences in itself; it is the source of all knowledge. But the portion of God immersed in matter lost its actual intelligence and the consciousness of its former state. It had been struck by ignorance. The regeneration starts when the fallen soul becomes conscious of its unhappiness[59] and recovers the remembrance of its origin. At this moment, all knowledge is recalled.

6. THE SOLUTION OF THE TRUTH OF JUDGMENT ACCORDING TO MANICHAEAN PRINCIPLES.

When Augustine says in his Confessions concerning the liberal disciplines" ...but I knew not whence came whatever in them was certain and true", it does not mean that he had no solution at all to this problem. Augustine wanted to say that his solution was not the true solution. His ignorance on this

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[59] Contra Secundinum, 10. PL.42, 586; Contra Fortunatum, 20 PL.42, 122.

subject can be explained by the grossest errors about God, the human soul, and the Truth itself. On account of his ignorance he says about himself:

> Dorsum enim habebam ad lumen et ad ea quae illuminantur faciem unde ipsa facies mea qua illuminata cernebam non elluminabatur.[60]

Since God was considered by him as an enormous luminous body and his soul as a particle of this body, such a God could be neither simple nor immutable[61]. The structure of God was that of every material being composed of substance and accidents. God's goodness and God's beauty were rooted as accidents in God's substance[62].

The soul, being a particle of God, must have the nature of God Himself. It was Augustine's soul that knew the truths of the liberal disciplines. These truths were rooted in his soul as corporeal accidents in the body. Both the soul and truth formed a physical unity. "In illa unitate mens rationalis et natura veritatis ac summi boni mihi esse videbatur[63]." The truth which he knew was not a participated truth, but truth by itself; he was its independent source "nesciente

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[60] Confessiones, 4.16.16 PL.32, 705.

[61] Confessiones, 4.16.31 PL.32, 706.

[62] Confessiones, 4.16.29 PL.32, 703.

[63] Confessiones, 4.15.24 (PL.32, 703.

me alio lumine illustrandam esse animam ut sit particeps veritatis quia non est ipsa natura veritatis[64]."

Augustine was for himself not only the source of truth, but also his own "summum bonum": "... non enim noveram neque didiceram nec ipsam mentem nostram summum atque incommutabile bonum esse[65]."

7. CHRIST AS THE TEACHER OF THE SOUL IN MANICHAEAN INTERPRETATION.

One may object that Augustine's idea about the source of truth is in contradiction with the Manichaean teaching, taken from the Bible that Christ is the only teacher of man. Augustine, who even as a Manichaean was so fond of Christ, must have known that it was Christ who had the mission of teaching and conferring the true life[66]. Christ had appeared,

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64 Confessiones, 4.15.24 PL.32, 703.

65 Ibidem.

66 "Et nostra professio ipsa est ... Sui autem [Dei] similem Salvatorem direxisse: Verbum natum ante constitutionem mundi, cum mundum fabricaret post mundi fabricam inter homines venisse; dignas sibi animas elegisse sanctae suae voluntati, mandatis suis coelestibus sanctificatas, fide ac ratione imbutas coelestium rerum; ipso ductore hinc iterum easdem animas ad regnum Dei reversuras esse, secundum sanctam ipsius pollicitationem, qui dixit: "Ego sum via, veritas, et janua". Et "Nemo potest ad Patrem pervenire, nisi per me" Joan. 4.6. His rebus nos credimus, quia alias animae, id est, alio mediante, non potuerunt ad Deum reverti, nisi ipsum reperirent viam, veritatem et januam..." (Contra Fortunatum, 3 PL. 42, 114). "Animae vero substantiam ostendit [Apostolus] quod sit ex Deo, et animam aliter non posse reconciliari Deo nisi per magistrum qui est Christus Jesus" (Contra Fortunatum, 17 Pl. 42, 120).

according to the Manichaeans, at the foundation of the world: "Verbum natum a constitutione mundi cum mundum fabricaret[67]." He is Wisdom and Virtue of the Father[68]. Adam recovered his intelligence by means of the teaching of Christ. This applies to all men: "Qua scientia admonita anima et memoriae pristinae reddita recognoscit ex quo originem trahat[69]."

Certainly Augustine knew the text of St. Matthew, Chapter 23 and Verse 8, according to which Christ is the only teacher. But at that time, his Christ was not the Christ of the Gospel — true God and true man. With his Manichaean principles, Augustine could not believe that the Second Person had assumed the human body. "I thought of our Saviour Himself your only begotten Son as brought forth for our salvation from the mass of your most luminous substance. And I could believe nothing of him unless I could picture it in my own vain imagination. I argued that such a nature could not possibly be born of the Virgin Mary, unless it were mingled with her flesh. And I could not see how that which I had thus figured to myself could be mingled and not defiled. I feared to believe the Word made flesh lest I be forced to believe

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67 Contra Fortunatum, 17 PL.42, 114.

68 Contra Faustum, 20.2 PL.42, 369.

69 Contra Fortunatum, 20 PL.42, 122.

the Word defiled by flesh[70]."

Who was therefore Christ? Augustine saw no essential difference between Christ and his own soul. Both Christ and Augustine's soul were particles of God. But the human soul is an unhappy particle, because it is imprisoned in matter by the powers of the Darkness, while Christ is that particle of God which enjoys freedom and as such is destined to free, by his teaching, the imprisoned souls[71]. Being of the same substance of God as the soul, his teaching is not from within, but by reminding. This has been stressed by the Manichaean Fortunatus, who describes the results of Christ's teaching: "Qua scientia anima admonita et memoriae pristinae reddita recognoscit ex quo originem trahat[72]."

From this it follows that Augustine's idea of the soul as the source of truth was in full harmony with Manichaean principles.

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[70] Confessiones, 5.10.20 PL.32, 716.

[71] Confessiones, 7.2.3 PL.32, 734.

[72] Contra Fortunatum, 20 PL.42, 122.

CHAPTER II

THE CHRISTIANO-MANICHAEAN APPROACH

1. THE CLAIM OF MANICHAEISM TO BE A UNIVERSAL SYSTEM OF KNOWLEDGE.

The study of different philosophers during his Manichaean years gave Augustine the opportunity of comparing their doctrine on some natural phenomena with the Manichaean teaching on the same subject.[1]

Mani pretended to give an all-embracing knowledge. He was considered by the Manichaeans as the Paraclete who teaches all the truth: "Vado ad Patrem et mittam vobis Spiritum Sanctum Paraclytum, qui vos inducat in omnem veritatem" (Joan. 15:13). This promise was applied by the Manichaeans to Mani because no one of the apostles had taught all the truth, not even St. Paul who says of himself: "Ex parte scimus et ex parte prophetamus: cum venerit autem quod perfectum est, abolentur ea quae ex parte dicta sunt." (I Cor., 13:9-10). Mani himself "did not want to be thought little of, but tried to persuade men that the Holy Ghost was resident in himself

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[1] Confessiones, 5.3.3 PL.32, 707.

personally with plenary authority[2]." According to the Manichaean Felix, Mani was he who taught the beginnin, the middle and the end of all things. His doctrine considered the whole universe, "why it had been made, out of what it had been made, and who were those who made it. He taught why there are days and nights, the course of the sun and of the moon[3]." From this one sees that the Manichaean doctrine does not confine itself to purely moral and religious matters, but claims to explain the physical problems in regard to the whole universe.

No wonder that Augustine found in the writings of Mani chapters "at great length on the solstices, on the equinoxes, on the eclipses of sun and moon[4]." But, in comparison with the doctrine of the philosophers "who justified their theories by numbers and the order of time and the visible evidence of the stars[5]", Mani gave no reasonable explanation of the phenomena of nature. His doctrine "did not harmonize with the principles at which Augustine arrived by mathematics and the experience of his senses[6]."

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[2] Confessiones, 5.5.8 PL.32, 712; Contra Epistolam Fundamenti, 6.7 PL.42, 178; De utilitate credendi, 3.7 PL 42,70.

[3] Contra Felicem, 1.9 PL.42, 525-526.

[4] Contra Epistolam Fundamenti, 15.19 PL.42, 184; Confessiones, 5.3.6 PL.32, 708.

[5] Confessiones, 5.3.6. PL.32, 712.

[6] Ibidem.

2. AUGUSTINE'S STUDIES OF NATURAL PHENOMENA.

For a long time, Augustine believed in the sanctity of Mani. This had strengthened his confidence in Mani's teachings in other fields.

He was not quite certain "whether the changes in the length of days and nights and the alternation of night and day and the eclipses of sun and moon of which he read in the books of astronomers could be explained along the Manichaean lines." If they could, even though it might still remain unproved whether the things were so or not, yet Augustine was prepared to trust rather in his authority on account of his reputation for sanctity[7]. What the philosophers taught seemed to Augustine more probable[8], but they did not have the piety of Mani.

However, the more Augustine studied the philosophers, the more firm was he in his conclusion that in matters of the physical world they were right. The philosophers "had discovered much and foretold many years in advance eclipses of the sun and the moon, the day, the hour, and what part should be in eclipse, and their calculations proved right. It

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[7] Confessiones, 5.5.9 PL.32, 710.

[8] Confessiones, 5.3.9 PL.32, 707.

happened as they have foretold; and they put in writings the rules they had arrived at and these may be read today; and by these rules can be foretold the year and the month of the year and the day of the month and the hour of the day and the part of its light that sun or moon is to suffer eclipse: and it will happen as foretold[9]."

3. IMPOSSIBILITY OF RECONCILING THE DOCTRINE OF MANI WITH THAT OF THE PHILOSOPHERS.

The doctrine of the philosophers undermined Augustine's certitude in regard to the teaching of Mani about the things pertaining to nature. No one of the Manichaeans of Carthage was able to solve his problems. He had to wait for the coming of the famous Faustus. The latter was supposed to give a satisfactory answer to his difficulties concerning the phenomena of nature and other more important questions[10].

For almost nine years, Augustine was longing for a discussion with Faustus. When he was twenty-nine, the latter came to Carthage[11]. But, during the public lectures it was not allowed to address Faustus and to discuss the questions

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[9] Confessiones, 5.3.4. PL.32, 712.

[10] Confessiones, 5.6.10 PL.32, 710.

[11] Confessiones, 5.3.3. PL.32, 707.

man to man and to comment back and forth. However, Augustine found the opportunity to meet him privately with some of his friends and to expose his problems concerning the Manichaean doctrine "about the sky and the stars and the sun and the moon[12]". The results of these discussions were more than disappointing. "I now no longer thought him able", says Augustine, "satisfactorily to decide what I much desired, whether, on comparison of these things with the calculations I had elsewhere read, the account given in the books of Mani were preferable or at least as good[13]."

Faustus refused to discuss Augustine's problems: "When I set these questions out for consideration and discussion he was too modest to presume to undertake the task. He knew that he did not know these things and he was not ashamed to admit it[14]." This confession destroyed all of Augustine's hopes of solving his religious problems in that sect[15]. He gave up the studies of the writings of Mani. Although externally he still belonged to the auditors, spiritually he felt more and more separated from the religion of Mani.

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[12] Confessiones, 5.7.12 PL.32, 711.

[13] Ibidem.

[14] Ibidem.

[15] Confessiones, 5.7.13 PL.32, 711.

4. AUGUSTINE'S SCEPTICISM.

Augustine met Faustus in the winter of 383. In autumn of the same year, he moved to Rome and in 384 to Milan as an official rhetorician. His failure to find what he sought in Manichaeism resulted in scepticism[16]. During this stage the great Manichaean dogmas were gradually replaced by Christian principles, first by faith, then by reason. This happened during the years 384 to 386 in Milan. At that time Augustine succeeded step by step in getting rid of the idea that the soul is the source of truth and that man is able to see God face to face even in this life.

5. THE DETECTION OF A MANICHAEAN ERROR IN REGARD TO THE NATURE OF GOD: GOD'S MUTABILITY IMPLIED IN THE MANICHAEAN DUALISM.

The beginning of this great change had taken place already in Carthage at the climax of his Manichaean fervor. Along with the difficulties concerning the physical phenomena of nature, Augustine underwent a crisis in regard to the major Manichaean beliefs.

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16 Confessiones, 5.19.19 PL.32, 711.

He had placed God in the Aristotelian categories of substance and accidents[17]. Consequently, God was considered by him as a mutable being. Such a view was expressed in his first writing, De pulchro et apto, which no longer is in extant.

> What could be worse pride, [says Augustine] than the incredible folly in which I asserted that I was by nature what you are? Since I was not myself immutable — as was clear enough from the fact of my desire to become wise and change from worse to better — I chose rather to think you mutable than to think I was not what you are[18].

It was his young friend, Nebridius, who could not agree with Augustine's notion of a mutable God and of the existence of a substantial Evil. His arguments ran along these lines:

M. - The immutable is better than the mutable.

m. - God is the highest being.

Cl. - Therefore God must be immutable.

Based on this argument and the notion of God as an immutable being, Nebridius had showed that the Manichaean religion and doctrine implies God's mutability. There are, according to the Manichaeans, two highest principles, eternally opposed to one another: the Principle of Light and the

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17 Confessiones, 4.16.28 PL.32, 704.

18 Confessiones, 4.15.26 PL. 32, 734.

Principle of Darkness[19].

Theoretically, one must say that, if there were a struggle between these two Principles, two possibilities would result: either God would be injured, and then He is corruptible; or God, being immutable, could not be harmed. But, in the latter case, there would not be reason for a struggle[20].

Now, according to the Manichaeans, such a struggle between God and the Principle of Evil really took place. In order to check the power of the Principle of Evil, a part of God, detached from Him, was mingled with the Principle of Darkness and became unhappy. This means that God is a mutable being[21].

> Sat erat mihi [says Augustine about the argument of Nebridius] adversus illos deceptos deceptores [Manichaeans] et loquaces mutos quoniam non ex eis sonabat verbum tuum, sat ergo erat illud quod jamdiu ab usque Carthagine a Nebridio proponi solebat, et omnes qui audieramus concussi sumus.
>
> Quid erat tibi factura nescio quae gens tenebrarum, quam ex adversa mole solent opponere, si tu cum ea pugnare noluisses?
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> Si enim responderetur aliquid fuisse nocituram, violabilis tu et corruptibilis fores.

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[19] Confessiones, 7.2.3 PL.32, 734.

[20] Ibidem.

[21] Confessiones, 7.2.3 PL.32, 734.

> Si autem nihil ea nocere potuisse diceretur, nulla afferetur causa pugnandi et ita pugnandi ut quaedam portio tua vel membrum tuum vel proles de ipsa substantia tua misceretur adversis potestatibus et non a te creatis naturis atque in tantum ab eis corrumperetur et commutaretur in deterius, ut a beatitudine in miseriam verteretur et indigeret auxilio, quo erui purgarique posset; et hanc esse animam, cui tuus sermo servienti liber et contaminatae purus et corruptae integer subveniret; sed et ipse corruptibilis, quia ex una eademque substantia.
>
> Itaque, si te, quidquid es, id est substantiam tuam, quasi incorruptibilem dicerent, falsa esse illa omnia et execrabilia; si autem corruptibilem, idipsum jam falsum et prima voce abominandum.
>
> Sat ergo erat istud adversus eos omnino evomendos a pressura pectoris: quia non habebant qua exirent sine horribili sacrilegio cordis et linguae, sentiendo de te ista et loquendo[22].

This criticism of the Manichaean doctrine, a criticism made by Nebridius, occurred in Carthage most probably in connection with Augustine's writing De pulchro et apto, in which he still maintained that God is a mutable being. Augustine makes an allusion to a discussion on the view expressed in his first writing and to the critical attitude of those who became acquainted with it: "Et tamen pulchrum illud... nullo collaudatore mirabar[23]." No one had agreed with Augustine's idea of a mutable God. And yet such was the logical consequence, drawn from the Manichaean principles. Nebridius clearly saw

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[22] Confessiones, 7.2.3 PL.32, 734.

[23] Confessiones, 4.14.23 PL.32, 703.

that the conclusion about the mutable God contradicts our common notion of God as the highest being and for this reason the premises from which it is drawn must be false. Even after many years, Augustine did not erase from his memory the deep impression which Nebridius's argument had made on him and other listeners: "Et omnes qui audieramus concussi sumus[24]."

There is an indication that Augustine had submitted his difficulties about the substantial Evil to Faustus. His Manichaean friends, concerned about Augustine's perplexity, promised him that Faustus would explicate all his doubts, not only about the physical world, but also about more serious matters:

> ... illum mihi promittebant, cujus adventu collatoque colloquio facillime mihi haec et si qua forte majora quaererem enodatissime expedirentur[25].

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[24] Confessiones, 7.2.3 PL.32, 734. Later, Augustine will always point out this Manichaean notion of an immutable God, a notion which they accepted in theory, but contradicted by their doctrine about the two co-eternal principles. "In primis summum errorem puto, omnipotentem Deum, in quo una nobis spes est, ex aliqua parte violabilem, aut coinquinabilem, aut corruptibilem credere. Hoc vestram haeresim affirmare scio, non quidem verbis quibus nunc usus sum, nam et vos interrogati confitemini Deum esse incorruptibilem; sed cum coeperitis caetera exponere, cogimini eum corruptibilem, penetrabilem et coinquinabilem confiteri (Contra Fortunatum, 1.1. PL.42, 111).

[25] Confessiones, 5.6.10 PL.32, 710.

The "majora" seem to allude to the essential Manichaean doctrine, namely that Evil is a substance. Since Augustine enjoyed the meetings with Faustus in company with his friends or alone[26], it is to be expected that the problem of evil was brought up. Augustine mentions a discussion on this subject with a certain Manichaean leader who might have been Faustus himself. To the question "What is evil?", the Manichaeans used to reply "that evil is fire, poison, a wild beast and so on". It happened that somebody had the courage to maintain that evil is not a substance. This aroused an excitement and was reported to a leader of the sect. Augustine describes the reaction of the latter:

> ... de quodam dicente nullam substantial malum esse unus de primatibus hujus haeresis quem familiarius crebriusque audiebamus dicebat:
>
> Vellem scorpionem in hominis manus ponere ac videre utrum non subtraheret manum: quod si faceret, non verbis, sed re ipsa convinceretur aliquam substantiam malum esse, quando quidem illud animal esse substantiam non negaret.
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> Et dicebat hoc non coram illo, sed cum ad eum nos commoti referremus quod ille dixerit[27].

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[26] Confessiones, 5.7.13 PL.32, 711.

[27] De moribus Manichaeorum, 2.8.11 PL.32, 333.

6. GOD'S IMMUTABILITY WAS AUGUSTINE'S CENTRAL IDEA IN MILAN.

Nebridius's argument criticizing the Manichaean dualism and defending God's immutability must have deeply moved Augustine's mind. The Manichaean errors in regard to the physical phenomena certainly undermined Augustine's confidence in Mani, but the error about God's nature must have shaken his whole being. It seemed so obvious that God must be an immutable being and that the existence of the principle of Evil contradicted God's immutability. Probably the detection of this error about God plunged Augustine into scepticism and made him, in his heart, forsake the sect[28].

In Milan, where Augustine embraced the Catholic doctrine first by belief only, the immutability of God became a pillar in his new mental orientation, even before the reading of the Platonic books. This should be stressed. It was not a neo-Platonic contribution to Augustine's intellectual

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[28] In spite of it, Augustine did not forsake at once the Manichaean dualism. He was not able to grasp the nature of evil. The evil was for him a reality which he experienced in himself, in his evil inclinations and actions. From these effects he had concluded to their cause. He thought that it would be a blasphemy to make God responsible for them. The only logical inference would be that the evil realities can be explained by the existence of an evil substance. But, on the other hand, he could not deny that the existence of the substantial evil contradicted God's immutability. One is able to understand Augustine's intellectual perplexity.

conversion. "With all my heart", says Augustine, "I believed you incorruptible and inviolable and immutable." And the reason for his belief was condensed in the following confession:

> I saw with utter certainty that what can be corrupted is lower than what cannot be corrupted, that the inviolable is beyond question better than the violable, and that what can suffer no change is better than what can be changed[29].

From this principle, Augustine concluded that God must be an unchangeable being:

> I had already come to realize that incorruptible is better than corruptible, so that you must be incorruptible, whatever might be your nature. For no soul ever has been able to conceive anything better than You, the supreme and perfect good. Therefore, since the incorruptible is unquestionably to be held greater than the corruptible — and I so held it — I could now draw the conclusion than unless you were incorruptible there was something better than my God[30].

Despite his firm conviction about God's immutability, Augustine could not understand the notion of God's spirituality. He heard from St. Ambrose and Theodorus that one should not try to imagine God in material forms whatsoever[31]. But

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[29] Confessiones, 7.1.1. PL.32, 733.

[30] Confessiones, 7.4.6 PL.32, 735.

[31] De beata vita, 1.4 PL.32, 961. "Animadverti enim et saepe in sacerdotis nostri [he meant St. Ambrose] et aliquando in sermonibus tuis [he speaks to Theodorus] cum de Deo cogitaretur, nihil omnino corporis esse cogitandum, neque cum de anima, nam id est unum in rebus proximum Deo."

in all his efforts to represent to himself God, his imagination was always at work:

> I could not but think of You as some corporeal substance, occupying all place, whether infused in the world or else diffused through infinite space beyond the world... Whenever I tried to see as not in space, seemed to me to be nothing, not even a void[32].

One should not wonder that, with such materialistic conceptions of God and His spirituality, itwas also impossible for Augustine to grasp the notion of creation from nothing. Nevertheless, he firmly believed that God created all things, both souls and bodies[33]. Incapable to understand God's immateriality, he could not imagine the proceeding of all things from God otherwise than on the pattern of material things.

7. THE LOGICAL FOUNDATION OF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S IMMUTABILITY.

Yet, the notion of the immutability of God, although not harmonized with the notion of spirituality and creation from nothing, shed a new light on his problem of truth.

Augustine was well aware of his own mutability, both as to his body and his soul. He became certain not only by faith but also by reason that God is an immutable being, and

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[32] Confessiones, 7.1.1 PL.32, 733.

[33] Confessiones, 7.3.4 PL.32, 735.

that, being a mutable man, he cannot have a divine nature as the Manichaeans fancied.

But truth is immutable, therefore it exhibits divine features. In spite of it, he, a mutable being, knew the immutable truth with absolute certitude. Did he not come to the conclusion about God's immutability by means of the absolutely certain principle "that what can be corrupted is lower than what cannot be corrupted"? He had the consciousness that the act of knowledge of this principle proceeded from his soul. But there was an evident disproportion between him as a mutable being and the truth which is immutable and therefore divine. It is clear that he could not be the source of truth. The mutable does not generate what is immutable. From where does the knowledge of the immutable principle come into his mind? Being mutable himself, in what way can he see the immutable truth?

> Quia nesciens unde et quomodo, plane tamen videbam et certus eram id quod corrumpi potest, deterius esse quam id quod non potest; et quod violari non potest incunctanter praeponebam violabili; et quod nullam patitur mutationem melius esse quam id quod mutari potest[34].

So a new problem arose in Augustine's mind, that of the immutable truth, known by a mutable mind: the "unde" and the "quomodo" of such knowledge.

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[34] Confessiones, 7.1.1 PL.32, 733.

8. THE SOLUTION TO THE "UNDE" AND "QUOMODO" GIVEN BY FAITH.

His faith gave him a solution, first, of the "unde".

Did not St. John say that man has been created by God, the whole man with his body and soul: "Omnia per ipsum facta sunt"?[35] For this reason also, man's knowledge of the immutable truth must have its source in God. Man knows the truth, because God illuminates him: "Erat lux vera quae illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum." Hence it is not true that man is the maker of the immutable truth: "Non erat ille lux", but God alone.

The Bible also gave Augustine a very general solution to the "quomodo", of how we know the immutable truth. It is a fact discovered in our consciousness that man knows the immutable truth with absolute certitude. Being immutable, the truth is divine. According to the Bible, God is the plenitude

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[35] Even as a Manichaean, St. Augustine was acquainted with St. John. The followers of Mani found in St. John's Gospel and Letters, the confirmation of their theories, namely, that God is light, that there is an opposition between the Divine Light and the Evil Darkness, that God utters his "Verbum". Under the influence of St. Ambrose, Augustine had recovered his faith without, however, being able to fathom the full meaning of St. John's Prologue.

of truth, even Truth itself[36]. Does it follow that, while knowing the immutable truth, man sees God Himself directly? This was explicitly excluded by the Bible: "Deum nemo vidit umquam[37]". It is impossible to see God with corporeal eyes[38].

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36 At that time, Augustine was not able to consider Christ as the source of truth since he was not aware of the true meaning of the words "Et Verbum caro factum est". The Christ of the New Testament was, according to him, a true man, but endowed with the highest created wisdom: "Quid autem sacramenti haberet "Verbum caro factum est" ne suspicari quidem poteram" (Confessiones, 7.19.25 PL.32, 746) ... "totum hominem in Christo agnoscebam, non corpus tantum hominis, aut cum corpore sine mente animam, sed ipsum hominem; non persona veritatis, sed magna quadam naturae humanae excellentia et perfectione sapientiae, praeferri caeteris arbitrabar"(Confessiones, 7.19.25 PL.32,746).

It is strange to say that, even under the influence of St. Ambrose, Augustine was, for a certain time, a christian by his faith without explicitly believing in the divinity of Christ because he thought that this was the teaching of the Catholic Church: "Ego autem aliquanto posterius didicisse me fateor in eo quod "Verbum caro factum est" quomodo Catholica veritas a Photini falsitate dirimatur" (Confessiones, 7.19.25 PL.32, 746).

He was more christian by his will to believe the doctrine of the Church than by his knowledge of what should be believed. This unbalanced religious psychology was described by him in the following words: "...stabiliter tamen haerebat in corde meo, in Catholica Ecclesia fides Christi tui Domini et Salvatoris nostri, in multis quidem adhuc informis et praeter doctrinae normam fluctuans, sed tamen non eam relinquebat animus, immo in dies magis magisque imbibebat" (Confessiones, 7.5.7 PL.32, 737).

37 John, 1.18.

38 At that time, Augustine still professed the Manichaean theory of knowledge. He was unable to grasp the difference between the sensitive and intellectual knowledge, since "... quidquid non per aliquanta spatia tenderetur, vel diffunderetur, vel conglobaretur, vel tumeret, vel tale aliquid caperet vel capere posset, nihil prorsus arbitrabar. Per quales enim formas ire solent oculi mei, per tales imagines ibat cor meum, nec videbam hanc eamdem intentionem, qua illas ipsas imagines formabam non esse tale aliquid, quae tamen ipsa

9. THE MANICHAEAN CLAIMS TO THE DIRECT VISION OF GOD.

During his Manichaean years, Augustine was therefore entirely wrong in his belief that man is able to see God directly.

His former belief was in full agreement with the Manichaean principles. If the human soule is a particle of God, why should not man become aware of himself, of his origin, and so contemplate God directly in his own soul? According to the Manichaeans, the true salvation of the soul would follow such a knowledge[39]. Later, Augustine would ridicule the Manichaean claims to a beatific vision in this

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nam formaret, nisi esset magnum aliquid" (Confessiones, 7.1.2 PL.32, 733).

The Manichaean theory of knowledge is well described in the Contra Faustum (20.7 PL.42, 372): "Quando enim discernitis lucem qua cernimus [Augustine addresses the Manichaeans] ab ea luce qua intelligimus, cum aliud nihil unquam putaveritis esse intelligere veritatem, nisi formas corporeas cogitare, sive finitas, sive ex aliquibus partibus infinitas; quae inania phantasmata esse nescitis. Proinde cum tantum intersit inter cogitationem qua cogito terram luminis vestram quae omnino nusquam est, et cogitationem qua cogito Alexandriam quam numquam vidi, sed tamen est; rursusque tantum intersit inter istam qua cogito Alexandriam incognitam, et eam qua cogito Carthaginem cognitam; ab hac quoque cogitatione, qua certa et nota corpora cogito, longe incomparabiliter distat cogitatio qua [cogito] intelligo justitiam, castitatem, fidem, veritatem, charitatem, benignitatem et quidquid ejusmodi est."

39 Contra Felicem, 1.16 PL.42, 530: "Pietas vero Spiritus Sancti intima vestri pectoris adaperiat, ut ipsis oculis vestris videatis vestras animas."

life[40]. Mani himself encouraged his followers to pursue this ideal in all their practices intended for the purification of the soul from the stains of the body: "Pietas Spiritus Sancti intima vestri cordis adaperiat ut ipsis oculis videatis animas vestras[41]."

At the climax of his Manichaean zeal, although only an auditor, Augustine had the daring courage to make an effort to reach the highest perfection reserved to the Elected of the sect. In his De pulchro et apto, he concentrated on his soul, the particle of God, in the hope that he might see its nature with its lines, colours and bulk — "Lineamenta, colores et tumentes magnitudines[42]". As the soul itself, so the

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[40] In his public discussion with Felix, Augustine asked him openly: "Dic ergo, vides Deum facie ad faciem, secundum pollicitationem tuam; quia dixisti Apostolum Paulum de vobis dixisse quia tam plenam veritatem accepturi essetis ut intelligamus vel credamus, apostolum habuisse partem, et te totum" (Contra Felicem, 1.13 PL.42, 527-528). "...respondisti [Augustine addresses the Manichaean Felix] apostolum ipsum Paulum dixisse, quia ex parte scit et ex parte prophetat. Dixi nos non posse scire divina, cum sumus in hac vita, et hic videre per speculum et in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem; et quaesivi a te, si hoc putas dixisse Apostolum Paulum, qod venturus esset Manichaeus, qui doceret quod non poterat Paulus, pertinere ad te, qui te dicis accepisse ipsum Spiritum, videre modo Deum facie ad faciem. Quod quia non potes, manifestum est Paulum de illa vita dixisse de qua dicit et Joannes: filii Dei sumus, et nondum apparuit quid erimus; scimus autem cum apparuerit, similes ei erimus quoniam videbimus eum sicuti est" (Contra Felicem, 1.11 PL.42, 527; 1.16 PL.42, 526).

[41] Contra Felicem, 1.16 PL.42, 530.

[42] Confessiones, 4.15.24 PL.42, 703.

truth rooted in the soul should be visible being a corporeal accident of the soul.

"But", says Augustine, "the false view I had of spiritual things would not let me get at the truth, although by its sheer form the truth was staring me in the face[43]." His efforts resulted in a failure, although to him as a professor of liberal disciplines, the existence of the immutable truths, especially those of dialectics and mathematics was a fact which could not be questioned. However, he explained to himself the lack of success not by the impossibility of seeing the soul and the truth with material eyes, but by the lack, on his part, of due purification as required by the Manichaean doctrine and as practised by the Elected. This is the meaning of his statement:"putabam me non posse videre animum meum[44]."

10. ST. PAUL'S METHOD OF KNOWING GOD THROUGH CREATURES BELIEVED BY AUGUSTINE, BUT NOT UNDERSTOOD BY HIM.

Although the Scriptures excluded the vision of God face to face, they positively described the method of our natural knowledge of God, proper to the conditions of our mortal life.

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[43] Confessiones, 4.15.24 PL.42, 703.

[44] Ibidem.

Augustine was acquainted with the text in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, where St. Paul says that the pagans are not excused if they do not know God. The method of knowing God, taught by St. Paul, was in contradiction with the Manichaean principles and therefore was rejected by the followers of Mani. The teaching of St. Paul gave Augustine the solution of how we can see the immutable truth which is God Himself:

> For the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those men who in wickedness hold back the truth of God seeing that what may be known about God is manifest to them. For God has manifested it to them. For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes are clearly seen - his everlasting power, also and divinity - being understood through the things that are made. And they have changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the image made like the corruptible man and the birds and fourfooted beasts and creeping things[45].

It is understandable why the Manichaeans were opposed to the above mentioned doctrine of St. Paul. Matter was considered by them as derived from the Principle of Evil. How could a substance, contrary to God, become for man a leader to the true God? The only road leading to God was, according to the Manichaeans, the road of self-knowledge of the soul, that particle of God. The demonstration of God had

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[45] Rom., 1.20-23. The letters of St. Paul were esteemed by the Manichaeans, but the followers of Mani rejected some passages as spurious as soon as they were not able to interpret them in the spirit of dualism. The above quoted passage belongs to this category of texts. Cf. De utilitate credendi, 3.8 PL.42, 70.

no meaning to the follower of Mani. If the soul is a god, there is no need to prove to man the existence of God.

For this reason, the Manichaeans vehemently protested against the Catholic doctrine that man is created on the image of God. First of all, the creation from nothing was considered by them as a contradictory notion. Secondly, they distorted the very meaning of man as the image of God. This notion results, so they thought, in a crude anthropomorphist conception of God. It would follow that God should have a body similar to that of man, with different members.

> Istam maxime quaestionem solent manichaei loquaciter agitare et insultare nobis quod hominem credamus factum ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei. Attendunt enim figuram corporis nostri et infeliciter quaerunt, utrum habeat Deus nares et dentes et barbam et membra etiam interiora et caetera quae in nobis sunt necessaria. In Deo autem ridiculum est, imo impium credere et ideo negant hominem factum esse ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei[46].

No wonder that, imbued with such ideas, Augustine was not able for a long time to grasp the teaching of the Bible on this subject.

In Milan, under the influence of St.Ambrose, Augustine came to know the true meaning of the Catholic doctrine of the creation of man in the image of God. He discovered that the anthropomorphism, attributed to the Church, was entirely foreign to her:

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[46] De Genesi contra Manichaeos, 1.17.27 PL.34, 184.

> Ubi vero etiam cemperi ad imaginem tuam hominem a te factum a spiritualibus filiis tuis, quod de matre Catholica per gratiam regenerasti, non sic intelligi, ut humani corporis forma te terminatum crederent, quamquam quomodo se haberet spiritualis substantia ne quidem tenuiter atque in aenigmate suspicabar; tamen gaudens erubui non me tot annis adversus catholicam fidem, sed contra carnalium cogitationum figmenta latrasse[47].

11. AUGUSTINE'S PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS IN HIS KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT HE BELIEVED.

Although the spirituality of God remained for Augustine a mystery, he had made, in Milan, a great progress in his approach to the immutable truth, known in the judgment that the immutable is better than the mutable. Both as to the "unde" and the "quomodo" of his knowledge, he was progressing steadily, but not without problems that would have to be solved.

As to the "unde", Augustine has entirely repudiated the Manichaean doctrine that man was the source of immutable truth. On this subject, the Bible was unequivocal: "Erat lux vera quae illuminat omnem hominem venientem un hunc mundum[48]." Reason itself seemed to confirm this solution: the mutable cannot generate the immutable.

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[47] Confessiones, 6.3.4 PL.32, 721.

[48] John, 1.9.

But Augustine faced the difficulty of understanding the nature of God's illumination. He was told that one should not consider God and the human soul as material substances[49]. Yet, unable to transcend his imagination, he was inclined to think of them not otherwise than in material forms. God's illumination of the human mind followed the same pattern. In the sunshine there seems to be a migration of certain particles of light to the body illuminated. The knowledge of truth seemed to Augustine to be something similar. Truth would migrate from God to the mind like a ray from the sun, like a material quality received in a new subject[50].

As to the "quomodo" of our knowledge, Augustine was compelled to repudiate the direct intuition of God by way of introspection taught by the Manichaean creed, for the simple reason that being mutable the soul cannot be the immutable God.

But, does not the soul see the immutable truth in God Himself who communicates the truth? This was excluded by the Bible: "Deum nemo vidit umquam", and it seemed to be in accordance with reason: there is a disproportion between the mutable and immutable.

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[49] De beata vita, 1.4 PL.32, 961.

[50] In the De immortalitate animae (4.5 PL.32, 1024), Augustine categorically rejects the theory of the migration of ideas.

And yet the immutable truth is known by the soul with absolute certainty, in spite of the mutability of man. This was Augustine's great problem. The truth is divine on account of its immutability. If it is not God Himself, what is its relation to God? Why do we not see the immutable God directly, while knowing the immutable truth?

There remained only one way to know God — Indirectly, through creatures, especially through the human soul, the image of God. The Maker can be known, to a certain extent, by means of his works: "Invisibilia Dei per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur". Here again, Augustine faced the greatest difficulty in understanding this method of our knowledge of God. Although he had a very strong faith, he could not get rid of his Manichaeans way of thinking. It seemed to be natural that whatever proceeds from God should be most perfect[51]. If matter and the human soul are created by God, why are the material things corruptible, why is the human soul mutable and sinful? Augustine did not understand

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[51] Contra epistolam Fundamenti, 37.42 PL.42, 202. "Quod ergo de illo est, meminerimus natum de illo esse, non ab eo factum de nihilo, et ideo est hoc summe, id est, incorruptibiliter bonum esse: videmusque injuste flagitari, ut tam summe bona sint, quae fecit de nihilo, quam summe bonus est quem de se genuit... Quod si dixerimus, non jam est ista bona, quae de nihilo facta sunt, sed tantummodo Dei natura esset, invidebimus tantis bonis et vox impia est injuriam putare non hoc esse quod Deus est, et ideo nolle esse aliquod bonum, quoniam ei praeponitur Deus" (ibidem, 202-203).

at that time the difference between emanation from God by way of generation and that by way of creation. Later he will see that what is generated by God is God, and that what is created by God from nothing bears the stamp of mutability which flows from the inherent inclination of the creature towards nothing[52]. The Manichaeans saw the origin of matter in the Principle of Evil. Augustine already believed that matter was created by God. But this did not satisfy his inquiring mind. He wanted to know by reason what he believed. How should he prove by reason that the corruptible matter was created by God? As to the human soul, he was told of its spirituality, immateriality, but this did not exclude its mutability, a characteristic of which everybody is conscious. The mutable seemed rather to point to the mutable only, but not to the immutable.

Augustine saw that there was in the soul only one thing which is immutable — the truth known by the mind. If the soul does not see the truth in God Himself by seeing God, how does it see it? If the immutable God can be known only indirectly through creatures, can the immutable truth of the judgment be known by the soul in the same way? It was for

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[52] Contra epistolam Fundamenti, 40.46 PL.42, 204-205. Augustine explains how corruptible things tend towards non-being: "omne autem quod ad interitum tendit, ad non esse tendit".

Augustine a very simple thing to conclude from the fact of his knowledge of immutable truths that God is the source of all truth. But the "quomodo" of his knowledge of the truth and the "quomodo" of God's activity on the soul was still for him a great problem. The rational premises from which he started were not sufficient to solve his problem and to give him the understanding of what he believed.

CHAPTER III

THE CHRISTIANO-PLATONIC APPROACH

1. AUGUSTINE'S CONTRADICTORY IDEAS ABOUT GOD.

The root of all Augustine's difficulties consisted in his contradictory ideas about God.

He wanted to reconcile the immutability of God with a materialistic concept of His nature. The spirituality of God meant for him a kind of subtle matter, more subtle than the light of the sun[1]. "This, indeed," says Augustine, "was the principal and practically the sole cause of my inevitable error[2]."

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[1] De haeresibus, 46 PL. 42, 35: "Lucem istam corpoream animantium mortalium oculis adjacentem... Dei dicunt esse naturam." In comparison with the ordinary light, God's light was considered "quasi ex eodem genere grandior, tamquam si ista [lux] multo multoque clarius clarescceret, totumque occuparet magnitudine" (Confessiones, 7.10.16 PL.32, 742). "Sicut autem luci solis non obsisteret corpus aeris hujus qui supra terram est, quominus per eam traiceretur, penetrans eam non dirumpendo et concidendo, sed implendo eum totum, sic putabam non solum coeli et aeris et maris, sed etiam terrae corpus pervium et ex omnibus maximis minimisque partibus penetrabile ad capiendam praesentiam tuam occulta inspiratione intrinsecus et extrinsecus administrantem omnia quae creasti" (Confessiones, 7.1.2 PL.32, 734).

[2] Confessiones, 5.10.19 PL.32, 715. "Et quoniam cum de Deo meo cogitare vellem, cogitare nisi moles corporum non noveram, neque enim videbatur mihi esse quidquam, quod tale non esset, ea maxime et prope sola causa erat inevitabilis erroris mei".

In the same way, Augustine envisaged the spirituality of the human soul, that particle of God. From such a notion flows also his materialistic conception of knowledge: "My mind was in search of such images as the forms my eye was accustomed to see, and I did not realize that the mental act by which I formed these images was not itself a bodily image[3]." According to this principle, the knowledge of immutable truths took place, when God, the huge material light, acted upon the soul by producing in it some sensible images like the bodies which impress their resemblance on the organ of sight.

2. CONSCIOUSNESS OF HIS INCONSISTENCY.

Augustine instinctively felt the inconsistency of his ideas about God as a corporeal substance, and, at the same time, as the immutable, highest Being.

On the one hand, he knew that material things are subject to a continual change, and, on the other hand, it seemed to him that, without some corporeal form, God would be nothing:

> My heart cried out passionately against all my imaginings and tried with one truth [that of God's immutability] to beat away all that circling host of uncleanness from the eyes of my mind. But they were scarce gone for the space of a single glance. They came again, close packed upon me, pressed upon

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[3] Confessiones, 7.1.2 PL.32, 733; Contra Faustum, 20.7 PL.42, 372.

> my gaze and so clouded it that though I did not even then think of you under the shape of human body, yet I could not but think of you as some corporeal substance[4].

However, the tendency of imagining God in a material form never succeeded in erasing from or suppressing in his mind the conviction of God's immutability. This notion was now so firmly rooted in his soul that it became a general criterion for the solution of all his difficulties, at least in a negative way. This was the case with the problem of evil: "Whatever its cause might be, I saw that no explanation would do which would force me to believe the immutable God mutable[5]." The notion of God's immutability will be turned into a working idea later in his theories.

3. HIS INABILITY TO UNDERSTAND FOUR PROBLEMS.

But, in spite of such a progress in his knowledge of God, as God's spirituality remained for Augustine a mystery, so also God, the Creator of the universe, was for him an object of faith only. He believed that it is "God who made not only our souls and bodies but all things whatsoever[6]." Yet,

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4 Confessiones, 7.1.1 PL.32, 733.

5 Confessiones, 7.3.4 PL.32, 735.

6 Ibidem.

the notion of creation from nothing, although accepted by his Christian heart, still defied his Manichaean imagination. No wonder that it was also impossible for Augustine to understand the true meaning of God's illumination as taught by St. John and the indirect knowledge of God through his creatures, as taught by St. Paul[7].

4. THE NECESSITY OF A DEEPER INSIGHT INTO THE WORKING OF THE HUMAN MIND.

Only a deep insight into the working of the mind could help Augustine to solve his problems by seeing the difference between the things of the mind and those of the senses.

The doctrine of man as the image of God, not as to his body, but as to his soul, pointed to the rightmethod to be used in order to know both God and the soul.

The pagan philosophers, and among them Cicero, whom Augustine so highly esteemed at this time, recommended self-knowledge according to the Socratic principle "Nosce teipsum".

> Est illud quidem vel maximum [says Cicero in his Tusculanae disputationes] animo ipso animum videre, et nimirum hanc habet vim praeceptum Appòlinis, quo monet ut se quisque noscat. Non enim credo id praecipit, ut membra nostra aut staturam figuramque noscamus. Neque nos corpora sumus, nec ego tibi haec dicens corpori tuo dico. Quum igitur "nosce te" dicit, hoc dicit "nosce animum tuum". Nam corpus quidem quasi vas est aut aliquod animi receptaculum: ab animo tuo, quoquid agitur, id agitur a te. Hunc

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7 Rom. 1.20.

> igitur nosse nisi divinum esset, non esset hoc acrioris cujusdam animi praeceptum, sic ut tributum deo sit[8].

5. THE ASCENT TO GOD BY MEANS OF THE IMMUTABLY TRUE JUDGMENT.

A great change took place in Augustine's mind when he happened to read the Platonic writings which were translated into Latin by Victorinus[9]. According to the Confessions, the

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[8] Tusculanae disputationes, 1.22.52.

[9] Confessiones, 8.2.3 PL.32, 750. "... commemoravi legisse me quosdam libros Platonicorum, quos Victorinus, quondam rhetor urbis Romae, quem christianum defunctum esse audieram, in linguam latinam transtulisset..." Augustine had received the Platonic books from a certain man imbued with pride: "Procurasti mihi per quemdam hominem immanissimo typho turgidum quosdam Platonicorum libros ex graeca lingua in latinam versos" (Confessiones, 7.9.13 PL.32, 740).

Some scholars think that this "typho turgidus" was Theodorus to whom Augustine had dedicated the De beata vita. But it seems to be more probable that Augustine pointed to a non-christian Neo-Platonist. He reproached him with pride for repudiating the doctrine of Incarnation. When the Neo-Platonists are qualified by Augustine as proud people, it is because they refuse to acknowledge Christ's divinity. Augustine knew that the Neo-Platonists were full of admiration for the beginning of the Gospel of St. John, but they were shocked by the doctrine of Incarnation and Redemption. Cf. Confessiones 7.9.14. In the De Civitate Dei,(10.29 PL.41, 309), he reports what he had heard from Simplicianus, the successor of St. Ambrose in Milan: "Quod initium sancti Evangelii, cui nomen est secundum Joannem, quidam Platonicus, sicut a sancto sene Simpliciano, qui postea Mediolanensi Ecclesiae praesedit Episcopus, solebamus audire, aureis litteris conscribendum et per omnes ecclesias in locis eminentissimis proponendum esse dicebat. Se ideo valuit superbis Deus ille magister, quia Verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis: ut parum sit miseris quod aegrotent, nisi se in ipsa etiam aegritudine extollant, et de medicina qua sanari poterant, erubescant." This attitude of contempt towards the mystery of Incarnation has been branded in the De Civitate Dei, (10.29): "Quam [sapientiam] si

contribution of the Platonic books, especially those of Plotinus[10], consisted, at least during the first reading , in

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vere et fideliteramasses [Augustine speaks to Porphyry] Christum Dei Virtutem et Sapientiam cognovisses, nec ab ejus saluberrima humilitate tumore inflatus vanae scientiae resâluisses")PL.41, 306). Now such a reproach of pride which rejects the mystery of Incarnation could not have been addressed to Theodorus, who was a christian. The "retractatio" concerning Theodorus bears on the exaggerate praise bestowed on him: "Displicet autem illic [in the De beata vita] quod Manlio Theodoro, ad quem librum ipsum scripsi quamvis docto et christiano viro, plus tribui, quam deberem" (Retractationes, 1.2 PL.32, 588). Cf. P. Courcelle, Recherches sur les Confessions de St. Augustin, 1950, p. 156.

[10] Augustine usually says "libri Platonicorum". It depends on the context how we have to take the term Platonici. Sometimes the Platonici are identified by Augustine with the Academici in the wide sense. The philosophers called Academici or Platonici have one and the same parent: Plato. The predecessor of Arcesilas who confuted the Stoics and Epicureans was Polemo. Polemo was preceded by Xenocrates, the disciple of Plato who had appointed Xenocrates his successor in the Academy. (Ep. 118 ad Dioscurum, nr.16 PL.33, 440).

Strictly speaking, the term Platonici is applied by Augustine to four philosophers called now Neo-Platonists. "Recentiorum tamen philosophi nobilissimi quibus Plato sectandus fuit, noluerunt se dici Peripateticos, aut Academicos, s sed Platonicos. Ex quibus valde sunt nobilitati Graeci - Plotinus, Jamblichus, Porphyrius; in utraque autem lingua, i.e. graeca et latina, Apulejus Afer extitit Platonicus nobilis" (De Civitate Dei, 8.12 PL.41, 237). In the Contra Academicos, Plotinus and even Aristotle belong to the Academy in the wide sense.(Contra Academicos, 3.18.41 PL.32, 956). In the Letter to Dioscurus, Plotinus belongs to the Platonici: "Platonici vero, qui falsorum philosophorum erroribus illo tempore circumlatrantibus, non habentes divinam personam, qua imperarent fidem, sententiam suam tegere quaerendam quam polluendam proferre maluerunt, cum jam Christi nomen terrenis regnis admirantibus perturbatisque crebresceret, emergere coeperant ad proferendum atque aperiendum, quid Plato sensisset. Tunc Plotini schola Romae floruit, habuitque condiscipulos, multos acutissimos et solertissimos viros. Sed aliqui eorum magicarum artium curiositate depravati sunt..."

Finally, to the Platonici belong also some Christian philosophers who followed Plato without forsaking the Christian faith: "... aliqui [condiscipuli Plotini] Dominum

encouraging him to return to himself. This was stressed both in his early writings and in the Confessions. He was

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Jesum Christum ipsius veritatis,atque sapientiae incommutabilis, quam conabantur attingere, cognoscentes gestare personam, in ejus militiam transierunt. Itaque tetum culmen auctoritatis lumenque rationis in illo uno salutari nomine atque in una ejus Ecclesia, recreando atque reformando humano generi constitutum est" (Ep. ad Dioscurum, 118.5.33 PL.33, 448).

We can see from Augustine's writings that there existed in Milan a Neo-Platonic circle of philosophers. From among them Augustine mentions Theodorus and Simplicianus. Hermogenianus (Ep. 1) and Zenobius (Ep.2), the unknown philosopher "typho turgidus" from whom Augustine had received the "libri Platonicorum" and St. Ambrose himself belong also to this group. As to St. Ambrose, cf. P. Courcelle, Recherches sur les Confessions de St. Augustin, Paris, 1950, p. 106-138: Courcelle shows some influences on St. Ambrose of Plotinus. The God of Exodus 3.14 is being itself, that is that which always is (in Ps. 43.19) God is entity, essentia, ousia, it means always existing (De fide, 3.15). We find in St. Ambrose the notion of evil as non-being (De Isaac et anima, VII,60-61) on virtue and vices (ibid.,VII, 65-79), on the spiritual f flight of man toward his Father and true homeland (ibid.78-79) In De bono mortis St. Ambrose says that Death is not evil (1.1) and Ibidem (IV,13) that the soul uses its body (ibid.,VII,27) that the soul is life and therefore immortal (ibid.IX,42). "All these philosophical notions, will be taken up by Augustine; whether he was indebted to Ambrose for them is hard to say; what is certain is that Augustine learned from Ambrose to interpret Scripture in a spiritual sense, Confessions,6.4. 6." (Gilson, History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages, New York, p. 589). In addition to it Augustine had learned from St. Ambrose that God and the human soul are of spiritual nature, that both bodies and souls have been created by God, cf. De beata vita, 1.4, Confessiones, 7.3.4. Most probably Augustine heard from St. Ambrose the notion of evil, since, according to Possidius,(Vita sancti Augustini, cap.1) St. Ambrose solved gradually Augustine's problems concerning the Old Testament and so Augustine was free from the Manichaean errors: "Et praevenit Dei liberatoris clementia sui sacerdotis cor [penetrantis] pertractantis, ut contra illud errorem incidentes legis solverentur quaestiones, atque i ta edoctus sensim atque paulatim haeresis illa miseratione divina ejus ex animaexpulsa est." This implies the refutation of the essential Manichaean error concerning the nature of evil. But at that time, Augustine was not able to understand the notion of evil as a privation of being, since because of his

"admonitus redire ad meipsum[11]... prorsus totus in me cursim redibam[12]". It was nothing new for Augustine. He had

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materialistic theory of knowledge he could not understand the notion of being: "Quid si enim cognitio summi mali sine cognitione summi boni contingere homini non potest? Non enim nosse mus tenebras, si in tenebris semper essemus: sed lucis notitia contrarium suum non sinit incognitum" (De duabus animabus, 10). Augustine's expression "Platonicorum libri" raised the problem of the concrete meaning of that term. In the De beata vita (1.4), Augustine points to Plotinus: "lectis paucissimis Plotini libris". About the readings Plotinus or Plato, cf. P. Henry, Plotin et l'Occident, Louvain, 1934 and in English Augustine and Plotinus, Journal of Theological Studies, London, 38 (1937), 1-23. The conclusions reached by Henry are well presented in the monograph of Switaski, Bruno, Neoplatonism and the Ethics of St. Augustine, New York, 1946, p. 83-88. Dyroff, Adolf, Über Form und Begriffsgehalt der augustinischen Schrift De ordine (in Grabmann-Mausbach, Aurelius Augustinus, Koln, 1930, p. 47 advocates the reading Platonis.

[11] Confessiones, 7.10.16 PL.32, 742.

[12] Contra Academicos, 2.2.5 PL.32, 921. Augustine's first impressions which resulted from the reading of the "libri Platonicorum" are recorded in the De beata vita and the Contra Academicos. "Lectis autem Plotini paucissimis libris, cujus te esse studiosissimum accepi, collataque cum eis, quantum potui, etiam illorum auctoritate qui divina mysteria tradiderunt, sic exarsi, ut omnes illas vellem anchoras rumpere, nisi me nonnullorum hominum existimatio commoveret" (De beata vita, 1.4 PL.32, 961).

"Itaque cum admoto nobis fomite discessisses numquam cessavimus inhiantes in philosophiam, atque illam vitam quae inter nos placuit atque convenit, prorsus nihil aliud cogitare, atque id constanter quidem, sed minus acriter agebamus; putabamus tamen satis nos agere. Et quoniam nondum aderat illa flamma quae summa nos arreptura erat; illa qua lente aestuabamus, arbitrabamur vel esse maximam. Cum ecce libri quidam pleni, ut ait Celsius, bonas res arabicas cum exhalarunt in nos, ubi illi flammulae instillarunt in nos pretiosissimi unguenti guttas paucissimas; incredibile, Romaniane, incredibile, et ultra quam de me fortasse et tu credis; quid amplius dicam etiam mihi ipsi de meipso incredibile incendium concitarunt. Quis me tunc honor, quae hominum pompa, quae inanis famae cupiditas, quod denique hujus mortalis vitae fomentum atque retinaculum commovebat? Prorsus totus in me cursim redibam.

practised this method already in Carthage while writing the De pulchro et apto in which he endeavoured to contemplate that particle of God, namely, his own soul, being certain that there he would find the source of truth.

After having repudiated by faith the Manichaean doctrine, Augustine concentrated in vain on the principle that "the immutable is better than the mutable" in order to discover the "unde" and the "quomodo" of such knowledge. It was an anticipation of the very method of introspection recommended by the Platonic books[13].

But now, under their influence, Augustine again made the greatest effort to solve his problems and, above all, to understand the spirituality of God, God's illumination, and

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Respexi tantum, confiteor, quasi de itinere, in illam religionem, quae pueris nobis insita est, et medullitus implicata: verum autem ipsa me ad se nescientem rapiebat. Itaque titubans properans, haesitans arripio apostolum Paulum. Neque enim vere isti, inquam, tanta potuissent, vixissentque ita, ut eos vixisse manifestum est, si eorum Litterae atque rationes tanto bono adversarentur. Perlegi totum intentissime atque castissime.

Tunc vero quantulocumque jam lumine asperso, tanta se mihi philosophiae facies aperuit, ut non dicam tibi, qui ejus incognitae fame semper arsisti, sed et ipsi adversario tuo... eam demonstrare potuissem..." (Contra Academicos, 2.2.5 PL.32, 921; 2.2.6 PL.32, 922).

[13] Cicero had condensed the Platonic doctrine on this subject in the following statement: "Magnis est ingeniis revocare mentem a sensibus et cogitationem a consuetudine abducere" (Tusculanae disputationes, 1.6.38).

the notion of creation. Nevertheless, he did not concentrate in the very beginning on the above-mentioned principle in its abstract form, but in its concrete application.

Augustine combined the Platonic advice "nosce teipsum" with the teaching of the Bible that God can be known through his creatures. This doctrine should not only be believed but also understood. We saw that this method was opposed to the Manichaean principles.

Augustine started his move towards God in the same way as he did in the De pulchro et apto with his experiences of the beautiful in the material world. At that time, he had asked himself: "Do we love anything but what is beautiful?"[14] From the love of the beautiful and its knowledge, he had turned his eye to the soul itself which loves and which knows the beautiful, in order to see the nature of the soul which he identified with God Himself[15].

In Milan, Augustine returned to his knowledge of the material world, to his judgments about beautiful things. His task was to find out, rationally, the source of such judgments; the standard according to which we declare bodies to be beautiful. Augustine discovered that at the root of such judgments, there was the immutable truth:

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[14] Confessiones, 2.13.20 PL.32, 701.

[15] Confessiones, 4.15.21 PL.32, 745.

> Quaerens enim unde approbarem pulchritudinem corporum sive coelestium sive terrestrium et quid mihi praesto esset integre de mutabilibus judicanti et dicenti: "hoc ita esse debet, illud non ita", hoc ergo quaerens unde judicarem, invenieram incommutabilem veram aeternitatis veritatem[16].

In other words, when we declare bodies to be beautiful, we judge them according to a certain principle or law: "hoc ita esse debet, illud non ita"[17]. Bodies are beautiful because they conform to the law of beauty. They are ugly because they do not conform to the law of beauty. Now, this law of beauty is always the same; it never changes. Where should we find it? Augustine looked around for this unchangeable law in the material world and in himself. The bodies do not contain it, because they are mutable. Nor was it possible to find it in the different parts of the soul. He meant the external senses by means of which the soul perceives the bodies; the internal sense to which the external senses report what they perceived of their bodies; the power of reasoning, which judges the data of all the senses. All these powers are mutable, and, as such, cannot be considered as the source of the true, immutable truth.

> Atque ita gradatim a corporibus ad sentientem per corpus animam atque inde ad ejus interiorem vim, cui sensus corporis exteriora nuntiaret quousque possunt bestiae: atque inde rursus ad ratiocinantem potentiam, ad quam refertur ad judicandum, quod sumitur a sensibus

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16 Confessiones, 7.17.23 PL.32, 745.

17 Ibidem.

> corporis, quae se quoque in me comperiens mutabilem, erexit se ad intelligentiam suam et abduxit cogitationem a consuetudine subtrahens se a contradicentibus turbis phantasmatum[18].

If we now compare all these mutable things with the true immutable truth according to which we judge the mutable things, we must say that "the immutable is better than the mutable", that the first should be preferred to the second. This we know with an absolute certainty.

Such a true and immutable principle cannot be known even by the "ratiocinans potentia" which makes its judgments according to this principle. It is only known by the intelligentia. But the latter is not its source, being itself mutable. Yet, the intelligentia knows in some way the "immutable", otherwise it could never see the truth of the principle that "the immutable is to be preferred to the mutable". Here we face the problem: by what light is the intelligence besprinkled so that it utters with certitude the above-mentioned judgment.

> ... erexit se ad intelligentiam suam... ut inveniret quo lumine aspergeretur, cum sine ulla dubitatione clamarem incommutabile praeferendum esse commutabili, unde nosset ipsum incommutabile quod nisi aliquo modo nosset, nullo modo illud mutabili certe praeponeret; et pervenit ad id quod est in ictu trepidantis aspectus[19].

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[18] Ibidem.

[19] Ibidem.

When Augustine concentrated on this judgment, both certain and true, he arrived at the "id quod est". The truth of the immutable judgment can be explained only by the true, immutable Truth: "Inveneram incommutabilem et veram veritatis aeternitatem supra mentem meam commutabilem." Augustine distinguishes here truth and immutability as the properties of judgment and the Immutable True, Truth or God, "Id quod est", the ultimate foundation and the source of the properties of judgment.

6. AUGUSTINE VIEWS WHAT IS ABOVE, IN AND BENEATH HIS SOUL.

By considering the properties of judgment, Augustine occupied a central position from which he was able to glance at what is above, beneath and in his soul.

a. Above his soul - the Immutable God. — First Augustine could glance at what was above his soul, at the "id quod est".

For many years he was not able to realize that there could be a thing which would not be extended, something without lines, colours and bulk: "Whatever I tried to see as not in space seemed to me to be nothing, not even a void, for if the body were taken out of its place and the place remained without any body, whether of earth or water, or air, or sky,

it would still be an empty place, a space occupying nothing[20]."

Now while contemplating the properties of judgment, Augustine became aware that he knew in some way the immutable[21]. It was the immutable which besprinkled his mind with light and enabled him to see the truth of the immutable judgment. This "immutable" was something, although not extended in space: "numquid nihil est veritas quoniam neque per finita neque per infinita spatia diffusa est?"[22] As a Manichaean, he had considered God in spatial forms, and he continued to do it, even while under the influence of St. Ambrose, who stressed so often the spirituality of God:

> I considered You, Life of my life, as mighty, everywhere and throughout infinite space, piercing through the whole mass of the world and spread measureless and limitless every way beyond the world so that the earth should have you and the sky should have you and all the things should have you and that they should be bounded in You but You nowhere bounded. For as the body which is above the earth does not hinder the sun's light from passing through it and that light penetrates it yet does not break it or cut it, but fills it wholly so I thought that the body not only of the sky and air and sea, but of the earth also was penetrable by you and easily to be pierced in all its parts great and small for the receiving of your presence, while your secret inspiration governed inwardly and outwardly all the things you had created[23].

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[20] Confessiones, 7.1.1 PL.32, 723.

[21] Confessiones, 7.17.23 PL.32, 745: "...quod nisi aliquo modo nosset, nullo modo illud mutabili certe praeponeret".

[22] Confessiones, 7.10.16 PL.32, 742.

[23] Confessiones, 7.1.1 PL.32, 738-739.

This habit of Augustine's mind in imagining God in material forms had been suddenly changed (but not without preparation) during the introspection to which he was encouraged by the Platonic books. In the De pulchro et apto, his approach to God and the soul was different from that which he adopted at this moment. In Carthage, Augustine expected to find in the soul lines, colour and bulk on the assumption that no being can exist without them[24]. After having been acquainted with the views of St. Ambrose on the nature of spirituality, and after the reading of Plotinus, the mere absence of spatial forms did not mean for him the absence of being. Despite the non existence of material forms, he knew something; he faced a reality quite different from the changing world, namely, "that which is: At pervenit ad quod est"[25]. He had no doubt about it:

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[24] Confessiones, 4.14.24 PL.32, 703.

[25] Confessiones, 7.17.23 PL.32, 741. We see from Augustine's early writings how much he had been impressed by the idea of God as being or that which is always the same "semper manens... aeternus" (De beata vita, 2.11); "una, aeterna, vera substantia, ubi nulla discrepantia, nulla confusio, nulla transitio, nulla indigentia, nulla mors. Ubi summa concordia, summa evidentia, summa constantia, summa plenitudo, summa vita. Ubi nihil deest, nihil redundat" (Soliloquia, 1.4). About being, goodness and evil, see the first chapters of the De moribus manichaeorum. If somebody wants to know why Augustine does not speak of God's infinity, he should read Augustine's answer to the question of Faustus whether God is finite or infinite in Contra Faustum, 25.2: "Absit ut hoc vos quisquam interroget, qui vos novit, aut de hac omnino re cum talibus disputet. Prius enim estis a figmento carnalium corporaliumque cogitationum pia fide et quantulacumque veritatis ratione

> Sed tunc lectis Platonicorum illis libris posteaquam inde admonitus quaerere incorpoream veritatem, invisibilia tua per ea quae facta sunt conspexi et repulsus sensi quid per tenebras animae meae contemplari non sinerer[26].

This something which he was unable to understand was precisely God's spirituality. He had no doubt about it:

> ... certus te et infinitum esse nec tamen per locos finitos infinitosve diffundi qui semper idem ipse esses ex nulla parte nulloque motu aliter aut aliter[27].

God's infinity was of different kind from that of the Manichaeans: "I saw You infinite in a different way, but that sight was not with the eyes of flesh[28]."

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mundandi, ut spiritalia quoquo modo et ex quantacumque parte cogitare possitis. Quod quamdiu non potestis (haeresis quippe vestra nihil aliud novit, quam et corpus et animam et Deum per locorum spatia vel finita vel infinita distendere, cum solum corpus talia occupet spatia, vel spatiis talibus occupetur) consultius feceritis, si vos huic quaestioni non commiscueritis, ubi nec doceri potestis aliquid veri, sicut nec in caeteris; nec discere estis idonei, quod fortasse potestis in caeteris si superbi litigiosique non sitis. Cum enim quaeri coeperit, quomodo sit Deus finitus, quem nullus locus capit; quomodo infinitus, quem totum Filius novit; quomodo finitus, immensus; quomodo infinitus, perfectus; quomodo finitus, nullum habens modum; quomodo infinitus modus omnium, omnis cogitatio carnalis evanescit, et si vult se fieri quod nondum est, prius ex eo quod est erubescit." About Augustine's notion of God, see J. Norrgaard, Augustine Bekehrung, p. 142-156; Gilson, History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages, p.591-592; Gilson, Introduction à l'étude de St. Augustin, p.27, God's eternity; 27-28, immortality, "Ego sum qui sum" 28, God as substance; 27-28, essence.

[26] Confessiones, 7.20.26 PL.32, 748.

[27] Ibidem.

[28] Confessiones, 7.14.20 PL.32, 744.

There was also the principle of the Manichaeans that God is a light. They were right according to the general meaning of the word, but they were wrong in considering God as a corporeal light. "It was not the light of every day that the eyes of flesh can see, nor some greater light of the same order such as might be if the brightness of our daily light should be seen shining with a more intense brightness and filling all things with its greatness. Your light was not that but other, altogether other than all such lights[29]." This light was the very being who said to Moses: "Ego sum qui sum[30]."

The truth of the immutable judgment constituted for Augustine an instrument or a bridge over which he was able to pass to the immutable, not spatial being. As he could not doubt the truth of the necessary judgment, so also there could be no doubt about the existence of the non-spatial Truth: "And there was from that moment no ground of doubt in me: I would more easily have doubted my own life than have doubted that Truth is which is clearly seen being understood by the things that are made[31]."

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[29] Confessiones, 7.10.16 PL.32, 742.

[30] Ibidem.

[31] Confessiones, 7.17.23 PL.32, ; 7.10.16 PL.32,742.

b. In his soul - its relation to God. — In his assent to the Immutable Truth, Augustine understood not only the spirituality of God, the "id quod est", but also that man depends totally on God.

Man depends totally on God as to his knowledge. The immutable truth of judgment is not a product of the human mind. The mind discovers the truth; it does not create it. If man knows the truth, it is because God besprinkles his mind with his light. The whole inquiry concerning the judgments about beautiful things was accomplished by Augustine in order to know and find out "quo lumine aspergeretur"[32]. The Immutable Truth is for man an "illuminator" in accordance with the teaching of the Bible: "Erat lux vera quae illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum." The light which illuminates man and enables him to know the immutable truth of judgment does not constitute a part of the mind. It is above the mind: "Being admonished to return to myself I entered into my own depths... I entered and with the eye of my soul such as it was I saw your unchangeable light shining over the same eye of my soul over my mind[33]."

In what sense is the divine light above the human mind? The relation of the mind to this light is not that of

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32 Confessiones, 7.17.23 PL.32, 745.

33 Confessiones, 7.10.16 PL.32, 7[illegible].

two beings separated by place in which the one is above the other. It is the relation of the effect to the cause of the whole being: "Nor was it above my mind as oil above the water it floats on, nor as the sky is above the earth; it was above because it made me and I was below, because made by it[34]." God the Unchangeable Light is not only the illuminator of the human mind, but also its Creator. The foundation of such a conclusion is the mutability of the mind. Its existence can be explained only by the creative activity of an unchangeable mind.

c. Beneath his soul. — By means of the truth of judgment, Augustine was also able to understand that the mutable things which he saw below his soul were not a product of an evil principle but created from nothing by God. In general, all things other than God[35], in a certain sense, are and are not: because of their mutability: "I saw that they neither absolutely are, nor yet totally are not; they are in as much as they are from You. They are not in as much as they are not what You are. For that truly is which abides unchangeably[36]." The material things are subject to

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34 Ibidem.

35 Confessiones, 7.11.17 PL.32, 743.

36 Confessiones, 7.11.17 PL.32, 742: "Et inspexi caetera infra te et vidi nec omnino esse, nec omnino non esse. Esse quidem, quoniam abs te sunt; non esse autem, quoniam id quod es non sunt; id enim vere est quod incommutabiliter manet."

corruption but, since they have their being from God, they are good:

> If they were supremely good, they could not be corrupted; but also if they were not good at all, they could not be corrupted... If they were supremely good, they would be incorruptible; if they were in no way good, there would be nothing in them that might corrupt... If they were deprived of all goodness, they would be altogether nothing: therefore, as long as they are, they are good. Thus, whatsoever things are, are good and that evil, whose origin I sought, is not a substance, because if it were a substance, it would be good. For either it would be an incorruptible substance, that is to say the highest goodness, or it would be a corruptible substance, which would not be corruptible unless it were good... Thus I saw and clearly realized that You have made all things good and that there are no substances not made by You[37].

Augustine also understood the nature of moral evil. His acute torments in considering this problem came to an end[38]. The Manichaeans attributed all sins to an evil principle, to an evil substance which was united with the human soul[39]. But this had been now rationally repudiated: "So then when I now asked what is iniquity I realized that it was

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[37] Confessiones, 7.12.18 PL.32, 743.

[38] There was no room enough in this dissertation to study "in extenso" Augustine's evolution of the notion of evil. It suffices to notice that still in the Manichaean sect he had encountered the assertion that the evil is not a substance. This, however, according to his way of thinking, belied our experiences. He himself suffered from the evil. It could not be nothing. For this reason his problm was not what evil is, but whence evil is. Confessiones, 7.5.7 PL.32, 736.

[39] Retractationes, 1.15.1 PL.32, 608.

not a substance but a swerving of the will which is turned towards lower things and away from you, O God, Who are the supreme substance: so that it casts away what is most inward and swells greedily for outward things[40]."

7. THE LIFE OF ALL THINGS IN GOD'S IDEAS.

The new notion of creation showed Augustine that all things depend entirely on God, because they have received, or will receive, their being from God, but also that they are all in God:

> And I looked upon other things and I saw that thy owe their being to You and that all finite things are in You, but in a different manner, being in You not as in a place, but because You are and hold all things in the hand of your truth and all things are true inasmuch as they are, nor is falsehood anything save that something is thought to be which is not[41].

In other words, it became clear to Augustine that all creatures exist in God as their exemplary cause according to which God has created whatever exists. God's Truth is both the exemplary and the efficient cause of all things. For this reason, Augustine compared it with God's hand which holds all things. If God withdrew His hand, all things would disappear in the abyss of nothingness.

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[40] Confessiones, 7.16.22 PL.32, 744.

[41] Confessiones, 7.15.21 PL.32, 744; De Trinitate, 8.1.3 PL.32, 42, 880; Confessiones, 1.6.9 PL.32, 663; De 83 quaest. qu.46 PL.40, 30.

The things which are in God's Truth not locally, have received from God by the act of creation their own being "harmonized not only with their places, but also with their times[42]". Their truth is just their being which is in conformity with its exemplary cause in God.

Although the things themselves are limited by place and time, God's act of creation has no such limits. The Manichaeans considered God as an artificer who forms pre-existing matter[43] in place and time. Augustine had discovered that such matter is a mere invention of their imagination. He also understood that God cannot work in time:

> I observed that You who alone are eternal did not begin to work after innumerable spaces of time had gone by: since all the spaces of time, spaces past, spaces to come, could neither go nor come if You did not operate and abide[44].

6. SUMMARY.

To sum up briefly, the results of Augustine's ascent, this process of reasoning enabled Augustine to solve his problems on the "unde" and "quomodo" of immutable truths, the problem which for a long time had puzzled him so much.

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[42] Confessiones, 7.15.21 PL.32, 744.

[43] This pre-existing matter was for the Manichaeans the substantial evil.

[44] Confessiones, 7.15.21 PL.32, 744.

He found at the basis of his judgments about beautiful things the principle that "the immutable is better than the mutable". The immutability of the truth of the above-mentioned principle convinced him of the existence of the immutable source of truth. God alone is immutable. The immutability of judgment can be explained by God alone as its source. However, God's immutability is not compatible with materiality. If the immutable truth of judgment is not limited by place and time, God cannot be considered as something existing in place and time. This would involve His mutability. God impresses the truth on the human mind, besprinkles it with His light. This should not be understood in a material sense. Since God is immaterial, spiritual light, His illumination is also of a spiritual nature. The fact of God's illumination is also of a spiritual nature. The fact of God's illumination has to be admitted because the immutable truth exceeds the mutable mind; therefore, it must be granted by God. Moreover, since the soul is mutable, God, the Immutable Truth, is not only the Illuminator of the soul, but also its Creator.

The immutable truth of judgment made Augustine understand not only God's spirituality, the meaning of God's illumination, the notion of creation, but also the truth of St. Paul's method which leads to God:

> Et non erat prorsus unde dubitarem: faciliusque dubitarem vivere me quam non esse veritatem quae per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspicitur[45].

This should be stressed very strongly. We saw how this method of knowing God was opposed to Manichaean principles and practice. The followers of Mani never made the ascent towards God by means of the material world which they held in contempt. They concentrated on the soul. Augustine, who endeavoured to understand the teaching of the Bible and at the same time to refute the Manichaean doctrine, could not have concentrated on the properties of the material world in order to demonstrate by the principle of causality the existence, say, of the immutable cause. This would not have corresponded with his purpose and with his personal intellectual needs. He started with the judgments of his soul about material things. The Manichaeans could offer no objections to this procedure. By analyzing the activity of his soul, Augustine found out that his judgment about material things implied another judgment, the immutably true judgment that "the immutable is better than the mutable". The certain and immutable truth of this judgment was in striking contrast with his own mutability. These two facts discovered in the soul, facts which could not be questioned by the Manichaeans required an

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[45] Confessiones, 7.10.16 PL.32, 742.

explanation. Here was the principle of causality at work. Augustine understood that his mutable soul could not be the source of the immutable truth. God, being the cause of the immutability of the truth known by Augustine, must also be the creator of his mutable soul. This shows that Augustine came to the knowledge of God as the Creator and the Illuminator of the soul not by applying the principle of causality to the data known by the sense, but to the facts discovered in his consciousness. Only "ex post" was the principle of causality applied to the material world. If the mutable soul requires an immutable creator, or God, the mutability of the material world is not derogatory to God, as the Manichaeans fancied. In other words, God is also the Creator of the material world.

In this way Augustine understood St. Paul's teaching about the method of knowing God "per ea quae facta sunt". Augustine emphasized four times, in the seventh Book of the Confessions, that this was the result of his ascent in which he started with the judgment about beautiful things and by means of the necessary and immutable truth concentrated on God. Besides the quotation already mentioned, there is a passage in which Augustine describes the whole process of his ascent to God, and at the end he makes this remark: "Tunc vero invisibilia tua per ea quae facta sunt intellecta

conspexi[46]." Similarly, he stressed the same point in another passage which summarizes his way of discovering the truth:

> Tunc lectis Platonicorum illis libris inde admonitus quaerere incorpoream veritatem invisibilia tua per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspexi[47].

There is a fourth instance in the seventh Book of the Confessions in which Augustine speaks of his certitude concerning the way of knowing God:

> ... sed mecum erat memoria tui, neque ullo modo dubitabam esse cui cohaererem ... Eramque certissimus quod invisibilia tua a constitutione mundi per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur, sempiterna quoque virtus et divinitas tua[48].

Without the understanding of the notion of creation, the true meaning of St. Paul's approach to God would have remained for Augustine a mystery. He has succeeded in solving his problem by considering the realities more known to him, those in the soul itself. The external world helped him by way of reminding him to concentrate on his soul and to conclude that God is the source of the truth known by the soul and the Creator of the sout itself.

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[46] Confessiones, 7.17.25 PL.32, 745.

[47] Confessiones, 7.20.26 PL.32, 748.

[48] Confessiones, 7.17.23 PL.32, 744-745. Augustine's interpretation of St. Paul's method of knowing God through his creatures should be submitted to a special study. Cf. Sermo 141, 2&0; Contra Adimantum, cap. 28. The ascent through material things towards the NOVS and the One was taught also by Plotinus, see Perler, Der Nus bei Plotin, p. 9-15.

PART II

THE TRUTH OF JUDOMENT IN THE DE MAGISTRO

or

THE LITERARY EXPRESSION AND CONTINUATION OF THE CHRISTIANO-PLATONIC ASCENT.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

With his new ideas about God and the soul, Augustine had resigned his professorship in Milan in 386 A.D. and embarked on a prolific literary career, first, at Cassaciacum, then at Milan, Rome and Tagaste. The De Magistro crowns the beginnings of Augustine's literary activity.

It is an expression and continuation of his studies of the problems raised before his conversion. It does not mean that all of the aspects concerning the "unde" and the "quomodo" of his knowledge of the immutable truths are treated in the De Magistro. One should not expect to find here an extensive and systematic exposition of his doctrine on that subject. This follows from the special purpose and character of his early writings.

The De Magistro was written in 389 A.D., two years after Augustine's baptism, when his Christian self-education was in a stage of formation. The treatise was composed in the form of a dialogue between Augustine, the teacher, and his son Adeodatus, his pupil. Now, all the other of Augustine's philosophical writings, to which the De Magistro belongs,

constitute a body, growing with every year, not merely materially, centered around his main preoccupation, expressed in the well-known saying: "Deum et animam scire cupio[1]". At that time, Augustine's literary activity was not conditioned by external circumstances but rather achieved under the pressure of his profound intellectual and religious experiences[2]. Only gradually had Augustine succeeded in understanding by reason what he had accepted by faith and thus in destroying the remnants of his Manichaeism[3]. Augustine's early writings, expecially the dialogues, picture this growing of his mind. Well aware of his spiritual evolution, he would later advise the reader to study his writings in a chronological order: "Perhaps he who will read my books according to the order in which they have been written will find out how I had made progress. That he might see it I will try in this work [he meant the Retractationes], as far as possible, to make him know this order[4]." Augustine was of such a mind that the solutions of different problems compelled him to exteriorize his ideas in

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[1] Soliloquia, 1.2.7 PL.32, 872; De ordine, 2.18.47 PL.32, 1017.

[2] This can be seen from his Retractationes, PL.32,583. Later, external circumstances will play a great role in Augustine's literary activity.

[3] Contra Academicos, 2.3.9 PL.32, 923: "Ego enim nunc aliud nihil ago, quam me ipse purgo a vanis perniciosisque opinionibus".

[4] Retractationes, Prologue, PL.32, 583.

writings and at the same time, the very act of writing became a powerful factor in exploiting and developing his original thoughts: "I have indeed to confess," says Augustine, "that I try to be one of those who, while making progress in understanding, give way to writing and while writing advance more in knowledge[5]." Hence the De Magistro should not be isolated from Augustine's other writings, especially from those by which it is preceded in time.

The De Magistro is in strict connection with Augustine's dialogues. It had been written at Tagaste, where Augustine lived in the company of his friends and pupils leading a monastic life, and where he pursued their religious education which he had already started in Italy at Cassaciacum and continued in Milan and Rome. Among his pupils was his son, Adeodatus. The De Magistro is a record of a real conversation which Augustine had with Adeodatus. The latter is considered by Augustine, in a certain sense, as a co-author of the famous treatise about God's illumination: "There is a book of ours," says Augustine, "entitled De Magistro. It is a dialogue between him and me. Thou knowest," Augustine addresses God, "that all things there put into the mouth of the person

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[5] Epistulae 143,2. ad Marcellinum, PL.33, 586: "Ego proinde fateor me ex eorum numero esse conavi, qui proficiendo scribunt, et scribendo proficiunt."

in argument with me were his thoughts in his sixteenth year. Many other more wonderful things did I find in him. That talent was a source of awe to me[6]."

Being a classwork, a scholastic discussion, the De Magistro cannot be considered as a perfect literary unit, impeccable in its structure and exposition, exhibiting no special difficulties concerning its principles, arguments and developments. Nobody should look for such qualities in a conversation between the teacher and his pupil. During his discussion with Adeodatus, Augustine did not have before his eyes the general group of readers to whom he would have to adapt his method and exposition. The teacher who intends to impress a doctrine on the mind of his pupil has tobuild up the whole structure of his concepts on the principles already known to his pupil. Hence there is not always a need to explain them. But the knowledge presupposed in the pupil is not necessarily that of an outside reader. From this it follows that we should complete and interpret the De Magistro, as far as possible, with the help of the principles presupposed by Augustine in Adeodatus. These principles have to be explored in Augustine's early writings as the latter partly constitute his educational import in relation to his friends and pupils.

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[6] Confessiones, 9.6.14 PL.32, 769: "Est liber noster, cui inscribitur De magistro ipse [Adeodatus] ibi mecum loquitur. Tu scis illius esse sensa omnia quae inseruntur ibi ex persona colloc:utoris mei, cum esset in annis sexdecim. Multa ejus alia mirabiliora expertus sum; horrori mihi erat illud ingenium."

The majority of the writings which had preceded the De Magistro are composed in the form of a dialogue. We know positively that they reflect, at least in substance, the records of real discussions. It is natural to presume Adeodatus's acquaintance with these dialogues and their ideas which were exposed and discussed in class-conversations.

Because of this characteristic of the early writings, among which is found the De Magistro, we should study the "unde" and the "quomodo" of the immutable judgments, first, in the Contra academicos and the De beata vita; then, in the De ordine, Soliloquia and the De immortalitate animae; then, in the De quantitate animae, De musica, and the De libero arbitrio. Finally, the study of the De Magistro itself would complete and crown our inquiries. Without saying, the other contemporary writings, books, and letters should be also consulted.

This method of study, according to a chronological order, would exploit each dialogue and show the organic growth of Augustine's thought against the background of his inquiries and spiritual experiences as described in the Confessions. But, such a procedure, although most useful and methodical, would immensely extend the volume of the dissertation. Beside this, it would be subject to many repetitions.

In order to avoid, at least partly, these inconveniences, after exposing Augustine's theory of the ascent to God,

elaborated by him immediately after his discovery of truth, a theory in accordance with the method of St. Paul, we will concentrate on the De Magistro itself.

The idea of knowing God through creatures dominated Augustine's mind. While reading the Platonic books, he seemed to be exceedingly intent on the understanding of St. Paul's method. No wonder that the approach to God through creatures became a special object of Augustine's studies[7] at Cassaciacum, Milan, Rome, and also at Tagaste. So the De Magistro will be set against its background.

In the analysis of that writing, different problems will arise which have to be explained and solved, as far as possible, with the help of other contemporary writings and especially of the dialogues. But, one should not forget that Augustine's experiences constitute the pattern of his theory. As in his experience Manichaeism was overcome with the help of Platonic philosophy in harmony with the revealed doctrine, so also in his theory of the ascent the Manichaean ideas are always explicitly or implicitly the target of his attacks, while the revealed truth is the ultimate criterion of his

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[7] This is said explicitly in regard to the De ordine in Retractationes, L.3.1 PL.32, 588; in regard to all Liberal Disciplines, in Retractationes, 1.6 PL.32, 591; in regard to the De musica, in the De musica, 6.1.1 PL.32, 1162; 6.2.2 PL. 32, 1163; in the Retractationes, 1.11.1 PL.32, 600; in regard to the De magistro, 8.21 PL.32, 1207.

theories, built up with the help of Platonic notions.

From this it follows that in order to understand these early writings, one has to disengage from them these different layers which exist there, sometimes "inter lineas". It is not enoughto read the text as it stands "prima facie". We have to reconstruct not only the objective context, but also the existential context of his experiences of the past and present. The modern reader would not be able to rebuild these existential conditions and circumstances of Augustine's early writhgs without the help of the Confessions. If we take into consideration the philosophical dialogues, we see that Augustine had before his eyes a circle of friends and pupils who knew him for a shorter or longer period of time, and who were able to connect his doctrine with the odyssey of his soul. But what should one think of other readers separated from Augustine by space and time? It may be that one of the reasons for composing the Confessions was to give a key to the understanding of his first books. "De facto" in the light of the Confessions, one comes to the conclusion that Augustine's early writings, and among them is the De Magistro, constitute a gradual development and deepening of these principles at which he had arrived in his spiritual evolution before the retreat at Cassaciacum. The seventh Book of the Confessions shows Augustine at the climax of his evolution: the rhetorician of Milan has discovered the means for the understanding

of certain revealed truths which are simply the denial of fundamental Manichaean principles. One of the most important truths is that which he mentions with a great relief: "Tunc vero invisibilia tua per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspexi[8]"; and the other one is: "Erat lux vera quae illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum[9]", or "Unus est magister vester Christus[10]". Let us now see how Augustine has elaborated his own theory of the Pauline method of knowing God through creatures and how the De Magistro fits in and completes his theory.

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[8] Confessiones, 7.17.23 PL.32, 745.

[9] St. John, Prologue.

[10] Math. 23.10.

CHAPTER IV

THE PRINCIPLES OF AUGUSTINE'S THEORY OF THE ASCENT TO GOD.

(The background of the De Magistro.)

1. THE THEORY OF NUMBERS IN THE DE PULCHRO ET APTO.

The most important result of Augustine's "return to himself"[1] was the understanding of God's spirituality, God's illumination, and the notion of creation. This was due to his proceeding according to the principle of St. Paul that God can be known through His creatures.

The study of liberal disciplines has played a great role in that intellectual conversion. It drew Augustine's attention on the immutably true judgments, especially in the domain of mathematics. It is striking that in the De pulchro et apto[2], Augustine had considered both God and the Principle of Evil, the soul and the truth in terms of mathematics:

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[1] Confessiones, 7.10.16 PL.32, 742. Cf. Plato, Phaedo, 9; Plotinus, 1.6.9; 6.9.7; Cicero, Tusculanae disputationes, 1.23.52: De oratore, 2.2.2; Seneca, Epistula ad Lucillum, 1.7; Later Augustine will express this teaching in the well known sentence: "Noli foras ire, in teipsum redi, in interiore homine habitat veritas; et si tuam naturam mutabilem inveneris, transcende et teipsum" (De vera religione, 39.72 PL.34, 154.

[2] Confessiones, 4.15.24 PL.32, 703.

> Et cum virtute pacem amarem, in vitiositate autem odissem discordiam, in illa unitatem, in ista quamdam divisionem notabam; inque illa unitate mens rationalis et natura veritatis ac summi boni mihi esse videbatur; in ipsa vero divisione irrationalis vitae nescio quam substantiam et naturam summi mali, quae non solum esset substantia, sed omnino vita esset... miser opinabam. Et illam monadem appellabam, tamquam sine ullo sexu mentem, hanc very dyadem, iram in facinoribus, libidinem in flagitiis, nesciens quid loquerer[3].

Since Augustine considered both God and the Principle of Evil as some material beings, the unity or monas and the dyas or multiplicity - duality - were also of a material nature.

In a similar way Augustine envisaged the starting point of his considerations about God and Evil, namely, beautiful things.

According to the Manichaean doctrine, the things which we admire for their charm owe their beauty to the presence within them of the particles of God. The latter can be tested by our senses. There are particles of God in corn, legumes, cabbage, flowers and fruits. This is evident from the beauty of the colour and the sweetness of the taste[4]. From this it follows that the eyes, nose and palate constitute sufficient means of testing the divine part in corporeal objects[5].

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[3] Ibidem.

[4] De moribus manichaeorum, 16.39 PL.32, 1362.

[5] Ibidem, and Contra Faustum, 21.4 PL.42, 391.

Without formally contesting the Manichaeans doctrine, Augustine had approached beauty in material things from a different standpoint. He thought that our love of the beautiful has its source in the thing itself, which can be considered either as a whole, composed of parts which result in a "decus et species", or in the finality, that is to say, in the adaptation of the parts to the whole.

> Quid est enim pulchrum? Et quid est pulchritudo? Quid est quod nos allicit et consiliat rebus, quas amamus? Nisi enim esset in eis decus et species, nullo modo nos ad se moverent. Et animadvertebam et videbam in ipsis corporibus aliud esse quasi totum, ideo pulchrum, aliud autem quod ideo deceret quoniam apte accommodaretur alicui, sicut pars corporis ad universum suum, aut calceamentum ad pedem et similia. Et ista consideratio scaturivit in animo meo ex intimo cordis meo et scripsi libros De pulchro et apto[6].

This kind of contemplation of the beautiful met with no approval on the part of the Manichaeans. If the beautiful consists in the harmony of parts, a certain agreement of parts may be found even in the things which were considered by the Manichaeans as hideous and ugly. This would lead to the conclusion that all things can be good, and that the presence in these things of the particles of God or of Evil is a mere Manichaean invention. In spite of the opposition of his Manichaean friends, Augustine had found delight in his new views about beauty:

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[6] Confessiones, 4.13.20 PL.32, 701.

> Et tamen pulchrum illud atque aptum... libenter animo meo versabam ob os contemplationis meae et nullo collaudatore mirabar[7].

Later in Milan, beautiful things became the starting point of Augstine's ascent to God. Probably Augustine found in Plotinus, in his treatise About the Beautiful, the same method[8] which he had tried (while a Manichaean) to use as a means of knowing God and his own soul. He had been delighted in beautiful things because of the agreement of parts in the whole. But such agreement implies certain proportions and consequently numbers. Numbers are, therefore, at the basis of all beautiful things. This was formally stated by Augustine in the De ordine, when he realized "that nothing pleased reason but beauty and in beauty design [figurae] and in design dimensions, and in dimensions numbers[9]."

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[7] Confessiones, 4.14.23 PL.32, 703. We have seen in the first part that Nebridius opposed Augustine's idea of a mutable God. Likewise the Manichaean Fortunatus firmly supported the view of Nebridius in spite of the premises which lead to the opposite conclusion. Contra Fortunatum,1 PL.42,113.

[8] The first allusions to the beautiful already appear in the Contra Academicos, 2.2.6 PL.32, 922: "...tanta se mihi philosophiae facies apparuit ut..., si adversario tuo... eam demonstrare potuissem.., ad ejus pulchritudinem blandus amator advolaret". God as Wisdom is identified by Augustine with Beauty: "Quid est ergo Sapientia? Nonne ipsa vera est pulchritudo?" (Contra Academicos, 2.3.7 PL.32, 922). The confession "tanta se mihi facies philosophiae aperuit" is a short and succinct reminiscence of Augustine's experiences described in the seventh book of his Confessions. From the context one is able to ascertain the true meaning of the "pulchritudo", whether substantial or participated. This distinction is explicitly made in the De 83 quaest. qu.23 PL.40, 16.

[9] De ordine, 2.15.42 PL.32, 1017.

2. NUMBERS AT THE FOUNDATION OF THE ASCENT TO GOD, IN THE DE ORDINE.

In that dialogue, Augustine returned to his former method, because it seemed to be in harmony with St. Paul's teaching. It was the same journey upwards which he had begun while reading the Hortensius[10], longing with an incredible intensity for immortal wisdom[11]. He found and reached it first by faith, then partly by reason in Milan in 386 A.D.[12]. From now on, all his efforts were concentrated more and more on the understanding of wisdom[13]. Since, according to St. Paul, God can be known through His creatures, the consideration of numbers in the things of the senses will constitute a very important step in his ascent to God.

3. THE END OF THE ASCENT.

But, it is natural that in his inquiries concerning the ascent to God, Augustine contemplated first the end to be reached and then the means to be employed, in order to reach that end. Already the first two dialogues, the Contra

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10 Confessiones, 3.4.7 PL.32, 685: "et surgere coeperam ut redirem at Te".

11 Ibidem.

12 Cf. Confessiones, books VI and VII.

13 Contra Academicos, 3.20.42 PL.32, 951.

Academicos and the De beata vita, deal with these two topics[14].

As to the end, Augustine starts with the fact that there is in man an urgent need for happiness[15]. Nothing can satisfy it except an everlasting object. But only God is everlasting[16], being the Immutable Truth[17]. Hence it follows that through the possession of God man acquires true happiness[18]. Now the possession of God takes place when man knows and loves God[19]. This is the true wisdom. In the De libero arbitrio, Augustine expresses it in a short sentence that wisdom is "veritas in qua cernitur et tenetur summum bonum[20]". In the Retractationes, summarizing the De beata vita, he says:

> In quolibro constitit inter nos, qui simul quaerebamus non esse beatam vitam nisi perfectam cognitionem Dei[21].

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[14] The end, wisdom and happiness, is considered in the Contra Academicos, book 1 and in the De beata vita.

[15] Already the Hortensius had drawn Augustine's attention on that fact. Cf. E. Gilson, L'introduction à l'étude de St. Augustin, p. 1-10; P. Alfaric, L'Evolution intellectuelle de St. Augustin, p. 429-432.

[16] De beata vita, 2.11 PL.32, 965.

[17] Ibidem, 4.34 PL.32, 975.

[18] De beata vita, 2.11 PL.32, 965.

[19] De beata vita, 4.35 PL.32, 976.

[20] De libero arbitrio, 2.8.26 PL.32, 1254.

[21] Retractationes, 1.2 PL.32, 588. About themeaning of the "perfecta cognitio Dei" see De quaest 83, 35: "...quid est aliud bene vivere nisi aeternum aliquid cognoscendo habere? Aeternum est enim... quod amanti auferri non potest...

It should be noticed that from the very beginning of the dialogues, the Augustinian God is the Christian God, One in nature and Three in Persons[22], the God who sent His only begotten Son in order that He assume the human nature[23] and become the only Mediator between God and man[24]. For Augustine the man who tends towards God is a man who had lost in Adam the original grace[25], a man redeemed by Christ but with an unbalanced nature because of original sin, more inclined to evil than to good[26]. Only with such a conception of God and man can one become able to understand the true meaning of Augustine's doctrine on the ascent of the soul to God. The Confessions bear witness that before his retreat at Cassaciacum Augustine had already a correct idea about the role of Christ in the history of mankind and about the true sense of concupiscence in man[27].

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quod nihil sit aliud habere quam nosse... Quidquid autem mente habetur, nescendo habetur; nullumque bonum perfecte noscitur, quod non perfecte amatur."

[22] De beata vita, 4.34 PL.32, 975.

[23] Contra Academicos, 3.19.42 PL.32, 956; De musica, 6.4.7 PL.32, 1166; De ordine, 2.9.27 PL.32, 1007; Confessiones 7.20.26 PL.32, 747.

[24] Confessiones, 7.18.24 PL.32, 745.

[25] Retractationes, 1.9.6 PL.32, 589.

[26] Ibidem.

[27] The reading of St. Paul had explained to Augustine the unbalanced nature of man. Confessiones, 7.21.27 PL.32, 748.

This concept of God and man should be emphasized because here lies the root of some Augustinian imprecisions. We often do not know whether in some passages Augustine meant the natural or supernatural order; whether he had in mind the illumination of man as a man or the illumination of faith. The confusion of texts which deal with natural and supernatural knowledge makes the interpretation difficult, especially when Augustine's expressions can be applied at the same time both to the natural and the supernatural order[28].

4. THE MEANS OF THE ASCENT.

As to the means which lead to the ultimate end of human life, Augustine developed in his dialogues the theory that with the help of immutable truths one can demonstrate the One, True, Spiritual, Infinite God, the Illuminator of mind and the Creator both of bodies and souls. He had succeeded in understanding it after reading some Platonic books. There was a time when Augustine was greatly impressed by the arguments of the sceptics for their theory that nothing can be known with certitude. This had instilled into his mind, for a certain time, a kind of despair that he would never solve his problems concerning God and the soul rationally.

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[28] Gilson, L'introduction à l'étude de St. Augustin, p. 311.

Augustine had extricated himself from the snares of the doubt by considering the necessary truths of the liberal disciplines which cannot be questioned. In the Contra Academicos, he appealed to these truths in order to remove from his mind the remnants of scepticism:

> Nondum baptizatus, contra Academicos vel de Academicis primum scripsi, ut argumenta eorum, quae multis ingerunt veri inveniendi desperationem et prohibent cuiquam rei assentiri et omnino aliquid tamquam manifestum certumque sit, approbare sapientem, cum eis omnia videantur obscura et incerta, ab animo meo, quia et me movebant, quantis possem rationibus amoverem. Quod miserante atque adjuvante Domino factum est[29].

5. THE DE ORDINE AS A SKETCH OF A DEMONSTRATION OF GOD.

Standing on the firm ground of immutable truths, Augustine studied in the De ordine the elements of a demonstration of God in accordance with the teaching of St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans. The dialogue exposes the theory of "an order of study by which advance can be made from corporeal things to incorporeal[30]". As in his own experience,

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[29] Retractationes, 1.1.1 PL.32, 585.

[30] Retractationes, 1.3.1 PL.32, 588. The whole proceeding is succinctly described in the De quaest.83, 45: "Mens enim humana de visibilibus judicans, potest agnoscere omnibus visibilibus se ipsam esse meliorem. Quae tamen cum etiam se propter defectum profectumque in sapientia fatetur esse mutabilem, invenit supra se esse incommutabilem veritatem, atque ita adhaerescens post ipsam, sicut dictum est, 'adhaesit anima mea post te'; beata efficitur, intrinsecus invenens etiam omnium visibilium Creatorem atque Dominum; non quaerens extrinsecus visibilia, quamvis coelestia quae autem non inveniuntur, aut cum magno labore frustra inveniuntur, nisi ex eorum quae foris sunt pulchritudine, inveniatur artifex qui intus est, et

after the reading of the Platonic books, so also in the De ordine, Augustine starts with his knowledge of corporeal things with which the liberal disciplines deal[31].

6. THE "TERMINUS A QUO" OF THE ASCENT.

The detailed plan of this advance shows first the "terminus a quo", the "corporalia".

Augustine underlines very strongly the necessity of the study of the liberal disciplines[32] because they prepare and train the mind for the knowledge of God, and they imply and contain the immutable truths. The so-called artes sermocinales [the term is not used by Augustine], grammar, dialectic and rhetoric, deal with auditory signs. In the latter, the mind distinguishes the sounds uttered by man and the value of meaning which the mind attaches to different sounds[33].

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prius in anima superiores, deinde in corpore inferiores pulchritudines operatur".

31 The liberal disciplines deal with the "rationabilia, dicta vel facta" i.e. in words and things. De ordine, 2.12.35 PL.32, 1011-1012.

32 There are many texts in which Augustine emphasizes the necessity and utility of such studies: De ordine, 1.13 PL.32, 979; 1.2.4 PL.32, 980; 1.3.9 PL.32, 982; 1.8.21 PL.32, 987; 1.8.24 PL.32, 988; 2.5.14 PL.32, 1001; 2.16.44 PL.32, 1015; 2.17.45 PL.32, 1016; 2.18.47 PL.32, 1017.

33 De ordine, 2.14.39 PL.32, 1013.

Through its meaning the sound becomes a sign by pointing to the things signified. Among the latter are found the self-evident principles, or immutable truths, the object of dialectic[34]. But before considering them as a means of God's demonstration, the order requires first to dwell on the sounds themselves which exhibit different numbers[35]. These numbers, grasped by the sense of hearing, should be studied in different words and verses. Then, the mind can pass to the artes mathematicales; geometry, arithmetb, astronomy and music. Here, again, the numbers appear in the sensible reality as extended in space and motion.

7. THE "TERMINUS MEDIUS" OF THE ASCENT.

Acquainted with the sensible, concrete numbers, the mind should concentrate on the "terminus medius", or the so-called intelligible numbers.

We find them by analysing our knowledge of the sensible numbers. As at the basis of his judgments about beautiful things, Augustine had discovered the principle that the immutable is better than the mutable, and that he knows in some way the immutable, so also, at the root of his knowledge

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[34] De ordine, 2.13.38 PL.32, 1013.

[35] De ordine, 2.14.39 PL.32, 1013.

of the sensible concrete numbers, he concentrated on principles like these: "duo et quatuor - sex", "unum ad duo, vel duo ad quattuor verissima ratio est"[36]. Now this ratio is immutable:

> Mutabile est enim omne quod semper eodem modo non est. Et semper eodem modo est "duo et quatuor -sex". Item semper eodem modo est quod quatuor habentduo et duo hoc autem non habent duo: duo igitur quatuor non sunt[37]... Est autem ista ratio immutabilis[38].

Beside the immutable truth of the numbers, Augustine understood that without the intelligible numbers we would not be able to understand the sensible numbers[39].

The former are quite different from the latter. Without being in place nor in motion, they are always present in the mind[40]. The role of the sensible numbers is to admonish the soul to contemplate what is spiritual, immutable and necessary. These properties of the intelligible numbers are contrasted with those of the sensible numbers. The latter, as considered for instance in sounds, can be grasped by the sense of hearing. They flow away into the past and are

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[36] De ordine, 2.19.50 PL.32, 1018.

[37] De immortalitate animae, 2.2 PL.32, 1022.

[38] Ibidem.

[39] De ordine, 12.14.41 PL.32, 1014.

[40] "Illud quod mens videt, semper est praesens". De ordine, 2.14.41 PL.32, 1014.

imprinted on the memory[41]. In comparison with the intelligible numbers, they have to be considered as their "vestigia" and "umbrae", therefore, not as the true reality[42]. On the contrary, the intelligible numbers can be grasped by the intellect only. They are eternal and never leave the soul[43]. As such, they aretrue in the highest degree.

All numbers are based on unity. As there are sensible and intelligible numbers, so there is also a sensible and intelligible unum. We cannot find the intelligible unum in the material world[44], in the many. We find it in themind.

8. THE INTELLIGIBLE "UNUM".

The intelligible number forms thepassage to the "terminus ad quem" of the ascent.

We saw that without the intelligible numbers we would not be able to know the material reality[45]. But the

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41 Ibidem.

42 De ordine, 2.15.43 PL.32, 1014.

43 De ordine, 2.15.43 PL.32, 1014.

44 De ordine, 2.15.43 PL.32, 1015. Augstine calls it "illum occultissimum quo numeramus", (Ibidem). Man by his nature is in search of the one: "cum eum [animum] natura sua cogit ubique "unum" quaerere et multitudo invenire non sinit" (De ordine, 1.2.3 PL.32, 980). It is a difficult task to grasp that "unum" (De ordine, 2.15.43 PL.32, 1015).

45 Ibidem.

intelligible number enables us also to know both God and the human soul. For this reason, the intelligible number, the unum, is called by Augustine "the discloser of universal truth - universae veritatis index". It is "simplex verum certumque" [46].

The comparison of the intelligible and sensible numbers[47] enables us to distinguish certain predication proper to the soul and God. These predications are based on the negation of what is proper to the world of the senses, i.e., to the sensible numbers, or to all mutable beings. In the first case we form our idea of the soul; in the second case we form our notion of God. But we should first reduce to this "unum simplex verum certumque"[48] the teachings scattered over so many disciplines. Then we will be able to contemplate and to understand the divine things[49]. It is not enough for this purpose to live a good life; one has to possess certain notions which the liberal disciplines will impart. What are these notions?

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[46] De ordine, 2.16.44 PL.32, 1015. He who knows the "unum" "non temere jam quaerit illa divina, non jam credenda solum, verum etiam contemplanda, intelligenda atque retinenda" (De ordine, 2.16.44 PL.32, 1015).

[47] Ibidem.

[48] De ordine, 2.15.43 PL.32, 1015.

[49] De ordine, 2.16.44 PL.32, 1015.

> Quisquis autem vel adhuc servus cupiditatum, et inhians rebus pereuntibus; vel jam fugiens casteque vivens nesciens tamen quid sit nihil[50], quid informis materia[51], quid formaturum exanime, quid corpus, quid species in corpore, quid locus, quid tempus, quid in loco, quid in tempore: quid motus secundum locum, quid motus non secundum locum, quid stabilis motus, quid sit aevum, quid sit nec in loco esse, nec nusquam; et quid sit praeter tempus et semper, quid sit et nusquam esse et nusquam non esse et numquam esse et numquam non esse. Quisquis ergo ista nesciens non dice de summo illo qui scitur melius nesciendo sed de anima ipsa quaerere ac disputare voluerit, tantum errabit quantum errari plurimum potest: facilius autem cognoscet ista qui numeros simplices atque intelligibiles comprehenderit[52].

One equipped with such notions will be able, with the help of the liberal arts, to approach the most abstruse of problems: concerning things divine:

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[50] The nihil has two meanings for Augustine: first, the negation of being, when Augustine says that all things are created "ex nihilo"; second, the "informis materia": "nihil est omne quod fluit, quod solvitum quod liquescit et quasi semper perit" (De beata vita, 2.8 PL.32, 962).

[51] Augustine mentions it for the first time in his writings. The expression is based on the Bible: "Qui fecisti mundum de materia informi" (Sap. XI,18). Then Augustine developed the idea of "materia informis" in the De Genesi contra Manichaeos, if we take the contemporary writings to the De Magistro into consideration: "Informis ergo illa materia quam de nihilo Deus fecit, appellata est primo coelum et terram" (ibidem, 1.7.2 PL.34, 326). "Hanc autem informem materiam, etiam terram invisibilem atque incompositam voluit appellare" (ibidem, 1.7.12 PL.34, 179). "Haec ergo nomina omnia sive coelum et terra, sive terra invisibilis et incomposita et abyssus cum tenebris, sive aqua super quam spiritus ferebatur, nomina sunt informis materiae" (ibidem). Augustine identifies it also with the greek chaos: De Genesi contra Manichaeos, 1.5.9 PL.34, 178.

[52] De ordine, 2.16.44 PL.32, 1015.

> De rebus autem obscurissimis et tamen divinis quomodo Deus et nihil mali faciat et sit omnipotens et tanta mala fiant; ... et cui bono mundum fecerit, qui non erat indigus; ... et utrum semper fuerit malum aut coeperit tempore - et si semper fuit, utrum sub conditione Dei fuerit; - et si fuit, utrum etiam iste mundus semper fuerit, in quo illud malum divino ordine dominaretur; ... si autem hic mundus aliquando esse coepit, quomodo antequam esset, potestate Dei malum tenebatur et quid opus erat mundum fabricari quo malum quod jam Dei potestas frenabat ad poenas animarum includeretur; ... - si autem fuit tempus, quo sub Dei dominio malum non erat, quid subito accidit, quod per aeterna retro tempora non acciderat? In Deo enim novum extitisse consilium, non dicam impium, ineptissimum est dicere.
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> Si autem importunum fuisse et quasi improbum malum Deo dicimus, quod nonnulli existimant, jam nemo doctus risum tenebit, nemo non succensebit indoctus. Quid enim potuit Deo nocere mali nescio qa illa natura? Si enim dicunt non potuisse, fabricandi mundi causa non erit; si potuisse dicunt, inexpiabile nefas est Deum violabilem credere; nec ita saltem ut vel virtute providerit, ne sua substantia violaretur. Namque animam poenas hic pendere fatentur, cum inter ejus et Dei substantiam nihil velint omnino distare.
>
> Si autem istum mundum non factum dicamus impium est atque ingratum credere, ne illud sequatur quod Deus eum non fabricarit[53].

These are the very questions which had tortured Augustine's mind during his stay in Milan. In his dialogues he intended to give them a rational solution according to the principles which were at the basis of his discovery of truth after the reading of the Platonic books. It should be noticed that for the first time in his writings, Augustine summed up

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[53] De ordine, 2.16.46 PL.32, 1016.

the argument of Nebridius without mentioning his name[54] and that of the Manichaeans. In general, in the dialogues, although Augustine proceeded positively in his arguments, he contemplated the Manichaean doctrine. This he emphasized in the Retractationes:

> Quamvis enim in superioribus libris [prior to the libri duo De genesi adversus Manichaeos] quidquid disputavi, unde ostenderem Deum summe bonum et immutabilem creatorem esse omnium mutabilium creaturarum nec ullam esse naturam malam sive substantiam in quantum natura est atque substantia, adversus manichaeos nostra invigilaret intentio[55].

How he dit it by means of the immutable truths of the liberal disciplines and he stressed the necessity of this method:

> Ad istarum rerum cognitionem neminem aspirare debere sine illa quasi duplici scientia bonae disputationis, potentiaeque numerosum. Si quis etiam hoc plurimum putat, solos numeros optime noverit, aut solam dialecticam. Si et hoc infinitum est, tantum perfecte sciat quid sit unum in numeris quantumque valeat, nondum in illa summa lege summoque ordine rerum omnium, sed in iis quae cotidie passim sentimus atque agimus[56].

This "unum" which we face in everyday life is not the "unum verum simplex certumque". The former only prepares the mind for the latter. With the true "unum", Philosophy has to deal:

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[54] The argument of Nebridius without mentioning his name was often advanced by Augustine in his discussions with the Manichaeans: De moribus Manichaeorum, 12.25-26; Contra Epistolam Fundamenti, 12.15; Contra Fortunatum, 1; etc.

[55] Retractationes, 1.10.1 PL.32, 599.

[56] De ordine, 2.18.47 PL.32, 1017.

> Excipit hanc eruditionem jam ipsa philosophiae disciplina et in ea nihil plus invenit quam quid sit unum sed longe altius longeque divinius[57].

9. THE SOUL IN THE LIGHT OF THE INTELLIGIBLE "UNUM".

From this intelligible "unum", Augustine makes his ascent. He starts first with his soul:

> ... primo seipsam [animam] inspicit et cui jam illa eruditio persuasit aut suam aut seipsam esse rationem, in ratione autem nihil esse melius et potentius numeris aut nihil aliud quam numerum esse rationem[58].

"By some kind of inner and hidden activity of mine, I am able to analyse and synthetize the things that ought to be learned; and this faculty of mine is called reason[59]." This means that the things to be analysed are reputed to have unity, but either have no unity whatever, or have less of it than they are believed to have. Likewise, when we synthesise we do it in order that the thing become one in so far as it is capable:

> Quid autem discernendum est nisi quod aut unum putatur et non est, aut certe non tam unum est quam putatur. Item cur quid connectendum est, nisi ut unum fiat quantum potest. Ergo et in discernendo et in connectendo unum volo et unum amo. Sed cum discerno purgatum, cum connecto integrum volo. In illa parte vitantur aliena in hac propria copulantur ut unum aliquid perfectum fiat[60].

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57 Ibidem.

58 De ordine, 2.18.48 PL.32, 1017.

59 Ibidem.

60 Ibidem.

If in all our judgments, either true or false, we seek unity, the intelligible number, or the intelligible "unum", must be deeply rooted in our soul or even constitute its essence.

But what should be the relation of such a soul to the body? The soul is immortal because the ratio is immortal, but the body is mortal:

> Quomodo igitur immortalis est ratio et ego simul et rationale et mortale quiddam esse definior? An ratio non est immortalis? Sed unum ad duo, vel duo ad quatuor, verissima ratio est: nec magis heri fuit ista ratio vera quam hodie; nec magis cras quam post annum erit vera; nec si omnis iste mundus concidat, poterit ista ratio non esse. Ista enim semper talis est; mundus autem iste nec heri habuit, nec cras habebit quod habuit hodie, nec hodierno ipso die, vel spatio unius horae eodem loco solam habuit; ita eum in eo nihil manet, nihil vel parvo pretio temporis habet eodem modo.
>
> Igitur si immortalis est ratio et ego ista omnia vel discerno vel connecto, ratio sum, illud quo mortale appellor non est meum.
>
> Aut si anima non est id quod ratio et tamen ratione utor, et per rationem melior sum, a deteriore ad melius, a mortali ad immortale fugiendum est[61].

This Augustinian attitude concerning the relation of body and soul taken already at Cassaciacum should be stressed if we remember that as a Manichaean he saw a radical opposition between body and soul.

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[61] De ordine, 2.19.50 PL.32,1018.

10. THE ASCENT FROM THE "UNUM" IN THE SOUL TO THE "UNUM IN ILLO SUMMO ORDINE RERUM".

From his soul, or rather, from the "unum longe altius longeque divinius" and the immutable truth of mathematical principles, Augustine directed the eye of his mind to its ultimate source.

He understood that God must be the beginning of all things without Himself having a beginning and that there must be an intellect in God in which all things are, or rather, which is Himself the sum total of all things. Although all things proceed from God, this does not imply in God any deterioration whatsoever: This is the teaching of the true and genuine philosophy.

> Nullumque alium habet negotium quae vera et ut ita dicam germana est philosophia quam ut doceat quod sit omnium rerum principium sine principio, quantusque in eo maneat intellectus[62]... in quo universa sunt vel ipse potius universa[63]... quidve inde in nostram salutem sine ulla degeneratione manaverit[64].

The Divine Intellect "in quo universa sunt vel ipse potius universa" was for Augustine the Second Person of God, the Word of God: "... per quem omnia facta sunt. - Quod factum est in illo vita est[65]." All things before being created had

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[62] De ordine, 2.5.16 PL.32, 1002.

[63] De ordine, 2.9.26 PL.32, 1007.

[64] De ordine, 2.5.16 PL.32, 1002.

[65] Confessiones, 7.9.13 PL.32, 740.

their life and have their life in the Word of God: "... vidi tibi debere quia sunt et in te cuncta finita, sed aliter non quasi in loco, sed quia tu es omnitenens manu veritatis[66]." This "omnitenens Veritas" is the Second Person. Augustine was certain that the beginning of the Gospel of St. John was contained in the "libri platonicorum". "Et ibi legi non quidem his verbis sed hoc idem omnino multis et multiplicibus quod in principio erat verbum etc[67]". The Second Person is the Plotinian NOVS, the "locus idearum". In the De ordine, Augustine does not use the expression "ideae", but the text quoted - "... in quo universa sunt et ipse potius universa" - exhibits the same meaning.

God made all things by His divine ideas or by His Word, Who is equal to God. This Augustine thought also to be the doctrine of the Platonic books:

> Indagavi quippe in illis litteris varie dictum et multis quod sit Filius in forma Patris non rapinam arbitratus esse aequalis Deo quia naturaliter idipsum est[68]. ... Quod enim ante omnia tempora et supra omnia tempora incommutabiliter manet unigenitus filius tuus coaeternus tibi ... est ibi[69].

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66 Confessiones, 7.15.21 PL.32, 744.

67 Confessiones, 7.9.13 PL.32, 740.

68 Confessiones, 7.9.14 PL.32, 741.

69 Ibidem.

God is not only the Maker of all things but also the Light of man: "Et vita erat lux hominum". The divine things which live in God, or the divine ideas, are for man the source of his knowledge. This Augustine found also in the Platonic books in accordance with the teaching of St. John: "Et quia de plenitudine ejus accipiunt animae ut beatae sint et quia participatione manentis in se sapientiae renovantur ut sapientes sint, est ibi[70]." Augustine speaks here of perfect knowledge in its fullness, which includes the most initial knowledge of truth. On the contrary, in the Divine Intellect he sees the source - "fontem unde manat omne verum..." The divine ideas constitute an "altam quamdam et a multitudinis vel suspicione remotissimam disciplinam[71]". This discipline is the highest law of our knowledge and of our living:

> Haec autem disciplina ipsa Dei lex est, quae apud eum fixa et inconcussa semper manens in sapientes animas quasi transcribitur ut tanto se sciant vivere melius tantoque sublimius quanto et perfectius eam contemplantur intelligendo, et vivendo custodiunt diligentius. Haec igitur disciplina eis qui illam nosse desiderant simul geminum ordinem sequi jubet: cujus una pars vitae altera eruditionis est[72].

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[70] Confessiones, 7.9.14 PL.32, 744.

[71] De ordine, 2.7.24 PL. 32, 1006.

[72] De ordine, 2.8.25 PL.32, 1006.

One should first follow the precepts of the good life and then pursue his intellectual formation. This takes place in the beginning by means of authority, and then by means of reason. The truths taught by authority and the life according to moral precepts both prepare the mind for a higher knowledge. The latter is obtained when one understands how reasonable were the precepts which man followed without having understood them; and then what reason is[73] in man which he follows after having obeyed authority alone[74]. This will lead man to the understanding "quid sit ipse intellectus, in quo universa sunt vel ipse potius universa et quid praeter universa universorum principium[75]."

11. THE CLIMAX OF THE ASCENT - "VISIO DEI".

This is the very ascent from sensible numbers to the intelligible numbers and from the latter to God.

Augustine conceived this spiritual process at the end of his De ordine in the following words:

> Cum autem se compsuerit et ordinaverit ac concinnam pulchramque reddiderit audebit jam Deum videre atque ipsum fontem, unde manat omne verum ipsumque Patrem veritatis[76].

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[73] De ordine, 2.19.51 PL.32, 1019.

[74] De ordine, 2.9.26 PL.32, 1007.

[75] De ordine, ibidem.

[76] De ordine, 2.19.51 PL.32, 1019.

In this way, one can arrive at distinguishing two worlds:

> Hic est ordo studiorum sapientiae per quem fit quisque idoneus ad intelligendum ordinem rerum id est ad dignoscendum duos mundos et ipsum parentem universitatis cujus nulla scientia est in anima nisi scire quomodo eum nesciat[77].

The universe, according to Augustine, is composed of two worlds: the sensible and the intelligible world. The intelligible world means the things which live in God - "quod factum est in ipso vita erat", or God's ideas. Augustine was of the opinion that Plato located the world of ideas in God's mind: "Plato was really not in error just because he affirmed the existence of an intelligible world. The eternal and unchangeable Wisdom Itself by which God made the world - that He called the intelligible world. Now if any one denies the existence of this eternal Wisdom, then logically - if a plan of creation was not present to God - he must hold that without any plan God had made what He made, or thateither when He made it or before He made it, He did not know what He made or would make. However, if a plan was with God, as indeed it was, then Plato seems to have called that the intelligible world[78]." This is the first meaning of this word. But the same term is also applied to the soul and all other objects perceived by the mind only. In this manner, for instance,

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[77] De ordine, 2.18.47 PL.32, 1017.

[78] Retractationes, 1.3.2 PL.32, 588-589.

Augustine speaks of the intelligible numbers which are in the intellect.

On the other side is the sensible world perceived by the senses. The intelligible world taken as God's ideas contains examplars in God's mind both of the intelligible and of the sensible things. In order to get a better notion of this intelligible world one has to proceed by way of negation of what we perceive in the sensible world because God is better known by what He is not:

> In hoc enim sensibili mundo vehementer considerandum est quid sit tempus et locus; ut quod delectat in parte sive loci sive temporis intelligatur tamen multo esse melius totum cujus illa pars est et rursus quod offendit in parte perspicuum sit homini docto, non ob aliud offendere nisi quia non videtur totum. In illo vero mundo intelligibili quamlibet partem tamquam totum pulchram esse atque perfectam[79].

It would be a mistake to think that the universe is confined to the sensible world only. If we consider it from this standpoint, we do not see the whole, but the part only. No wonder that without embracing the whole we are not rightly able to judge how the parts harmonize with the whole[80]. But this can be seen, if one remembers that the sensible world is a vestige or a shadow of the intelligible world, where all things live without space and time, and where all parts are

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[79] De ordine, 2.19.51 PL.32, 1019.

[80] Augustine illustrates it on an example, cf. De ordine, 1.1.2 PL.32, 979.

as beautiful and perfect as the whole[81]. The things of the sensible world are beautiful because they imitate the beauty of the intelligible world. But if we compare them with the beauty of their examplar, they appear ugly: "To us is promised a vision of beauty, the beauty through whose imitation all other things are beautiful and by comparison with which all other things are sightly[82]." The whole universe, i.e. the intelligible and the sensible world, proceeds from one parent who is the creator of the sensible world and the "pater veritatis" of the intelligible world of the Divine Intellect.[83]

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81 De ordine, 2.19.51 PL.32, 1019.

82 Ibidem.

83 Ibidem.

CHAPTER V

THE ASCENT TO GOD AND THE DE MAGISTRO

1. THE LIBERAL DISCIPLINES ON TWO LEVELS.

In the De ordine, the liberal disciplines appear as an efficient method of knowing God through reason, in harmony with the teaching of the Bible that God can be known by means of His creatures. It remained to show how this could be done with the help of particular disciplines.

After the exposition of the general plan in the De ordine, Augustine developed his ideas in the Soliloquies and the De immortalitate animae. The "unde" and "quomodo" of our knowledge of immutable truths is explained more and more. Although these two writings are not a classwork like the Contra Academicos or the De beata vita, they had been inspired by conversations with Augustine's pupils. The ideas contained in them will be considered in the discussion on different problems in the De Magistro. Likewise, the first two dialogues have to be exploited on this occasion.

It is striking that the topic so much investigated by Augustine before his conversion - namely the Pauline approach to God - later discussed in the De ordine, - had again been taken up into consideration after Augustine's return from Cassaciacum to Milan in the early spring of 387 A.D.

> Per idem tempus quo Mediolani fui baptismum perceepturus etiam disciplinarum libros conatus sum scribere interrogans eos qui mecum erant atque ab hujusmodi studiis non abhorrebant, per corporalia cupiens ad incorporalis quibusdam quasi passibus pervenire vel ducere[1].

The study of liberal disciplines received a new purpose in Augustine's mind and practice. The course of arts should be exposed on two levels. On the lower level the student ought to be acquainted with the elements of all disciplines according to the practice of the Roman schools. On the higher level the student, already well trained in the elements of the arts, should reflect on his own intellect by means of which he judged the sensible world. This would enable him to discover in the soul the "intelligibilia" and the immutable truths which should lead him to God.

At Milan, Augustine succeeded in designing the beginnings of some arts without showing how the mind could be led by them to God[2].

This is, to a certain extent, compensated by the De quantitate animae, written in Rome in 388 A.D.[3]

Although this dialogue does not belong formally to the cycle of the liberal disciplines, de facto, its structure

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[1] Retractationes, 1.6 PL.32, 591.

[2] Ibidem.

[3] Retractationes, 1.8.1 PL.32, 594.

is based on the principle of Augustine's new method of teaching. The recently baptised convert wanted to show that the greatness of the soul is not of a corporeal nature: "... quanta sit anima non spatio loci, ac temporis, sed vi ac potentia[4]." Now, it is geometry which deals with dimensive quantity. For this reason, Augustine starts his discussion with the notions of lines and geometrical figures[5]. From the dimensive quantity, which cannot be found in the soul, Augustine gradually passes to the virtual quantity, without length, width and thickness[6]. It consists in the power of the soul, a power which is exercised by the soul in its relation to its body, in the soul itself and in relation to God[7].

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[4] De quantitate animae, 32.69 PL.32, 1037.

[5] De quantitate animae, chapters 5-12.

[6] "Neque illam [animam] longam esse, nec latam, nec robustam, neque aliquid horum quae in mensuris corporum quaero possunt" (De quantitate animae, 3.4 PL.32, 1037).
The lack of physical dimensions does not mean that the soul is nothing. Justice is without dimensions and yet it is a reality. There are in our memory images of bodies and abstracted measurements without three dimensions and nobody will deny their reality. De quantitate animae, 4.6 - 15.25 PL.32, 1038-1049.

[7] By this Augustine meant the seven degrees of the life of the soul. De quantitate animae, 33.70-76 PL.32, 1073-1077. See Sister M. Patricia Garvey, St. Augustine Christian or Neoplatonist, p. 147-152; St. Bonaventure, Itinerarium mentis ad Deum, in Tria Opuscula ad Theologiam spectantia, Quaracchi, Colleg. S. Bonav., 1938, cap.1-7, p. 294-348.

2. THE "DE MUSICA" AS AN ASCENT TO GOD FROM THE SENSIBLE NUMBERS OF WORDS.

The dialogue De musica[8], in six books, exhibits the best illustration of Augustine's methods.

Since he intended to lead his pupil from corporeal things to incorporeal, his first task was, as in the De ordine to study the mutable numbers in words and verses. But, in the sixth book, composed in 389 -

> ... consideratio quibusdam quasi gradatis itineribus nititur ad suprema itinera veritatis, in quibus viis ostendit se sapientia hilariter et in omni providentia occurrit amantibus[9].

The first books follow the usual way of teaching the quantity of syllables in different verses. This, however, should be considered as a preparation for the sixth book, "ubi est fructus caeterorum[10]". When the student has become used to examining and to watching the concrete numbers in different words, he will apply himself more easily to the study of the movements of other bodies, for instance, of the stars: "In omnibus rerum motibus quid numeri valeant facilius consideratur in vocibus[11]." This will enable the student to

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8 PL.32, 1309-1370.

9 Ep. 101.3 PL.33, 369.

10 Ep. 101.4 PL.33, 369; De musica, 6.1.1 PL.32,1163.

11 Ep. 101.3 PL.33, 369.

distinguish the so-called spiritual numbers in the mind, physically not connected with corporeal things.

Augustine was well aware that the first five books of the De musica may appear, in comparison with the sixth book, as being without great value and that much time must be spent in order to understand them:

> Difficillime quippe intelliguntur in eo [opusculo De musica] quinque libri, si non adsit, qui non solum disputationum possit separare personas, verum etiam pronuntiando sonare morulas syllabarum ut eis exprimantur sensumque aurium feriant genera numerorum: maxime quia in quibusdam etiam silentiorum dimensa intervalla miscentur quae omnino sentiri nequeunt nisi auditorum pronuntiata informent[12].

No wonder that Augustine tried to excuse himself for having paid so much attention to things seemingly useless.

> We have delayed long enough and very childishly, too, through five books, in those number-traces belonging to time intervals. And let's hope a dutiful labour will readily excuse our triviality in the eyes of benevolent men. For we only thought it ought to be undertaken so adolescents or men of any age God has endowed with a good natural capacity might with reason-guiding be torn away not quickly, but gradually, from the fleshy senses and letters, it is difficult for them not to stick to, and adhere with the love of unchangeable truth to one God and Master of all things, Who with no mean term whatsoever directs human minds...[13]

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[12] Ep. 101.3 PL.33, 369.

[13] De musica, 6.1.1 PL.32, 1162: "... atque uni Deo et omnino rerum omnium qui humanis mentibus nulla natura interposita praesidet incommutabilis amore veritatis adhaerescent."

The first five books should be considered as means to the end: "whoever reads those first books will find us dwelling with grammatical and poetical minds, not through choice of permanent company, but through necessity of wayfaring[14]." The end of this wayfaring is "ut a corporeis ad incorporea transeamus[15]".

The value of the first books will be understood during the study of the sixth book: "When he [the reader] comes to this book, if, as I hope and pray, one God and Lord has governed my purpose and will and led it to what it was intent upon, he will understand this trifling way is not of trifling value this way we too, not very strong ourselves, have preferred to walk in company with lighter persons rather than to rush with weaker wings through the free air[16]."

3. THE DE MAGISTRO AS AN ASCENT TO GOD FROM THE MEANING OF WORDS.

The De musica is a typical illustration of Augustine's ascent to God with the help of numbers.

In this regard it is representative of the mathematical liberal disciplines which deal with numbers in movements.

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[14] De musica, 6.1.1 PL.32, 1162.

[15] Ibidem.

[16] De musica, 6.2.2 PL.32, 1163.

But even the artes sermocinales cannot escape its domain[17]. Grammar, dialectic, rhetoric deal all with human speech, although each art does it from a different standpoint. Yet, the De musica, as dealing with the numbers in movements, embraces also in its subject the words uttered by voice, and concentrates on the numerical element of sound.

But, as yet, the meaning of words or of the language has not been considered by Augustine.

It is the rational and social factor in man which has created the human language by attaching meaning to the sounds of the voice.

> Namque illud quod in nobis est rationale, id est, quod ratione utitur, et rationabilia vel facit vel sequitur, quia naturali quodam vinculo in eorum societate astringebatur cum quibus illi erat ratio ipsa communis, nec homo homini firmissime sociari posset, nisi colloquerentur, atque ita sibi mentes suas cogitationesque quasi refunderent, vidit esse imponenda r rebus vocabula id est significantes quosdam sonos; ut quoniam sentire animos suos non poterant, ad eos sibi copulandos sensu quasi interprete uterentur[18].

The words are, therefore, "significantes quidam soni"[19]. Their role is to pour, so to speak, the thoughts and contents

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[17] This is demonstrated by Augustine in the De ordine, 2. capita 12 and 13.

[18] De ordine, 2.12.35 PL.32, 1011.

[19] Ibidem, 2.15.35 PL.32, 1011. Cf. the notion of sign in Augustine's De doctrina christiana, 2.1.1 PL.32, 35: "Signum est enim res, praeter speciem quam ingerit sensibus, aliud aliquid a se faciens in cogitationem venire."

back and forth to one another. The word is a sign of our thoughts which we want to have understood by the listener: "Qui enim loquitur suae voluntatis signum foras dat per articulatum sonum[20]." To be a word it must be uttered in an articulate vocal sound which has some meaning[21]. It is clear that there are two elements in the word and in the language in general: "The sound and the signification. We certainly perceive the sound not by the sign but by the simple fact that the sound strikes the ear. We learn the signification, however, by seeing the reality which is signified[22]."

It is the De Magistro that deals with the meaning or signification which is "hidden in the sound[23]". The relation of the meaning to the sound can be compared with that of the soul to the body: "Since a word consists of sound and meaning and the sound has to do with the ears and the meaning with the mind, do you not think," asks Augustine of his interlocutor, "that in a word just as in some living being the sound

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[20] De magistro, 1.2 PL.32, 1145.

[21] De magistro, 4.8 PL.32, 1199.

[22] De magistro, 10.34 PL.32, 1214: "In quo tamen signo cum duo sint, sonus et significatio, sonum certe non per signum percipimus, sed eo ipso aure pulsata; significationem autem re, quae significatur aspecta."

[23] Ibidem.

is the body and the meaning is as it were the soul?[24]" The meaning is nothing else than the things which the speaker has in mind or his thoughts which he exteriorizes by words.

4. THE PROBLEM OF THE "UNDE ET QUOMODO" OF THE TRUE JUDGMENT IN THE DE MAGISTRO.

When we speak we shape our thoughts in different judgments. In the De Magistro, Augustine is interested in the immutable truth of the liberal disciplines. As in his former experiences, so in the De Magistro, he tries to show the "unde" and the "quomodo" of certain and true judgments.

As to the "unde", the source of the truth of such judgments is not in man but in God only.

It is not in man: the teachers think that by speaking they transmit the branches of learning and even the science of wisdom and virtue to the mind of the pupils.

> Num hoc magistri profitentur, ut cogitata eorum ac non ipsae disciplinae quas loquendo se tradere putant percipiantur ac teneantur[25].

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[24] De quantitate animae, 32.66 PL.32, 1072: "Cum ergo nomen ipsum sono et significatione constet, sonus autem ad aures, significatio ad mentem pertineat, nonne arbitraris in nomine, velut in aliquo animante, sonum esse corpus, significationem quasi animam esse soni?"

[25] De magistro, 14.45 PL.32, 1219.

This also seems to be the impression of the average man who perceives the reaction of the pupil to the teacher's words. There is generally no interval between the time of speaking and the time of knowing. The pupils are quick to learn internally, following the words of the teacher. For this reason one is inclined to think that it is the teacher who communicates knowledge to the mind of the student[26].

God alone is the true Teacher. People, therefore, deceive themselves in attributing to man this role[27].

> De universis autem quae intelligimus non loquentem qui personat foris, sed intus ipsi menti praesidentem consulimus veritatem. Hic autem qui consulitur docet qui in interiore homine habitare dictus est Christus, incommutabilis Dei Virtus atque sempiterna Sapientia[28].

As to the "quomodo" of our knowledge, Augustine maintains in the De Magistro that the things of the mind present in the soul are seen in the interior light of truth:

> Cum vero de iis agitur quae mente conspicimus id est intellectu atque ratione ea quidem loquimur quae praesentia contuemur in illa interiore luce veritatis qua ipse qui dicitur homo interior illustratur et fruitur[29].

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[26] Ibidem.

[27] Ibidem.

[28] De magistro, 11.38 PL.32, 1216.

[29] De magistro, 12.40 PL.32, 1217.

5. AUGUSTINE'S THESIS OF THE DE MAGISTRO IN THE INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

Already in the introductory chapter of the De Magistro, Augustine explains why man through his speech cannot be a true teacher of another man. At the same time he anticipates the statement that Christ is the only teacher of man.

The analysis of what happens in the mind of the listener when somebody speaks to him leads to the conclusion that the so-called teaching by means of words communicates nothing new. It only awakens the "res" already present in the mind.

There are words which we utter externally. These words strike the sense of hearing and are imprinted in the memory. Although external words, the "verba sonantia", pass away, their traces remain in the memory. When we ponder and think about these words, they associate themselves with the things signified which are already in the mind. This applies to the things perceived both by the senses and the intellect:

> Simul enim te credo animadvertere, etiamsi quisquam contendat, quamvis nullum edamus sonum, tamen quia ipsa verba cogitamus, nos intus apud animum loqui, sic quoque locutione nihil aliud agere quam commonere, cum memoria cui verba inhaerent ea revolvendo facit venire in mentem res ipsas quarum signa sunt verba[30].

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[30] De Magistro, 1.2 PL.32, 1195-1196.

Whether somebody else speaks to us or we speak to ourselves, as it happens for instance in prayers, there is no such a thing as teaching by words. Based on the analysis of the mental process which accompanies the act of speaking, Augustine advanced in the beginning of his De Magistro the statement that the end of speaking is not to teach but to remind, or to teach by reminding:

> At ego puto esse quoddam docendi genus per commemorationem, magnum sane quod in nostra had sermocinatione res ipsa indicabit[31].

By means of words the soul is reminded of the things perceived by the senses or by the intellect. Where did they come from? Augustine is here not interested in the origin of the things of the senses. His problem are the things of the mind; such, for instance, as implied in the Lord's Prayer which contains the doctrine of "to whom to pray and what to pray". Already from the very beginning of the dialogue, Augustine's interlocutor, Adeodatus, is well aware that the role of Christ's words is different from that of other men. The latter do not teach from within; they do not infuse the things themselves as known by the mind. But Christ, by His words, teaches the realities themselves.

> Non te ergo movet [says Augustine to his pupil] quod summus Magister cum orare doceret discipulos verba quaedam docuit: in quâ nihil aliud videtur fecisse, quam docuisse quomodo in orando loqui

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31 De Magistro, 1.1 PL.32, 1195.

> oporteret? — Nihil me omnino istud movet, [replies Adeodatus] non enim verba, sed res ipsas eos verbis docuit quibus et seipsi commonefacerent, a quo et quid esset orandum cum in penetralibus, ut dictum est, mentis orarent[32].

One can see that the things taught by Christ are certain principles or truths of our spiritual life concerning God and ourselves. They belong to the science of wisdom and virtue.

But, what is the real purpose of the whole discussion in the De Magistro, if Adeodatus does not need to be instructed about the role of Christ as the only Teacher of man? His answer seems to indicate that he knew it already. Yet, he knew it by faith only: this did not satisfy Augustine. "We should no longer merely believe, but also begin to understand how truly it has been written, on divine authority, that we should not call anyone on earth a teacher, since there is one in heaven Who is the teacher of all[33]."

6. THE THESIS EXPOSED ON TWO LEVELS.

How does Augustine proceed to make Adeodatus understand this teaching of the Bible? - In the same way he did in the De musica.

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[32] De Magistro, 1.2 PL.32, 1195.

[33] De Magistro, 14.46 PL.32, 1220.

There he had concentrated, in the beginning, on the sensible numbers of words and verses perceived by hearing, and then he passed on to intelligible numbers and from them to God.

Here in the De Magistro, Augustine also considers the words but not the numerical or measurable element of the sound. The word is considered as a word, i.e. as a sign. Now the sign points to the things signified. The word is a word because of its relation to the thing signified which is perceived by the senses or by the mind. This indicates two sections in the De Magistro: one - on the signs; the other - on the things signified, as perceived by the mind. Of course, there cannot be a clear-cut division between the consideration of the sign and the thing signified. In order to understand the sign, one has first to know the thing signified. For this reason when one deals with the former, one cannot ignore the latter.

7. THE EXPOSITION ON THE LOWER LEVEL.

The consideration of the sign was necessary for Augustine's purpose.

He wanted first to show that man, by his words, does not teach but only reminds others of things already known. This has been made clear in the introductory chapter by the short analysis of words as signs which, as soon as they are

heard by the listener, make the things hidden in the soul appear in his consciousness. It would be enough for the purpose of the thesis to illustrate the notion of the sign by concrete examples of what happens in the soul of the listener when he hears the words of the speaker.

But in his development, Augustine exceeds by far the requirements of the thesis itself by discussing different problems concerning signs which divert the attention of the pupil from the main subject and end of the dialogue.

So, after the introductory chapter, Augustine's first problem is whether all words which we use in speaking always signify something. The discussion bears on each word or the verse: "Si nihil ex tanta superis placet urbe relinqui[34]." It is the purpose of grammar to determine the meaning and function of a word in a sentence and especially of such words as "si" or "ex". And it belongs to philosophy to explain how the "nihil" can be a sign of that which is not. These questions contribute nothing to the elucidation of Augustine's main problem.

Without giving a clear solution to the difficulties, Augustine passes to a new problem: whether in teaching the use of signs is absolutely necessary. Is it possible to teach by the reality itself? It seems that those things can

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[34] De Magistro, 2.3-4 PL.32, 1196-1197.

be manifested without any signs which we are not in the act of doing when we are asked about them, but which we are able to do after we have been asked about them; for instance, if somebody asks me what walking means, I walk[35]. However, Augustine will later retract his provisional statement: "It has been settled then that there is no teaching without signs[36]."

And now Augustine dwells "per longum et latum" on the signs themselves from the standpoint of their objects. There are signs which signify other signs either reciprocally or not reciprocally; and there are signs which signify realities that are not signs[37]. Augustine concentrated especially on the first kind of signs.

All these questions occupy nearly a half of the De Magistro from chapter 2 to 7.[38] Chapter 7 gives a summary of the discussion[39].

Augustine was well aware of the fact that his discussion about signs did not at all advance in Adeodatus the

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[35] De magistro, 3.5-6 PL.32, 1197-1198.

[36] De magistro, 10.29 PL.32, 1212.

[37] De magistro, chapters 4-6 PL.32, 1198-1205.

[38] De magistro, PL.32, 1198-1207.

[39] De magistro, 7.19020 PL.32, 1205-1207.

understanding of what he believed: that no man is the teacher of man but Christ alone. Especially the chapters on the signs which signify other signs must have been confusing. Adeodatus seemed to have lost sight of the proper end of the conversation. For this reason Augustine tried to excuse himself as he did in the De musica: "It is difficult at this point to say just where I am striving to lead you by so many circumlocutions[40]." Adeodatus could easily have received the mistaken impression that the whole talk was a childish play rather than a serious inquiry into important matters: "For it may seem that we are quibbling and so diverting the mind from earnest matters with naive questions[41]."

Nevertheless, Augustine's discussion on the above-mentioned questions was according to the plan conceived already in Italy. The De Magistro should not be considered as a scholastic and systematic treatise. It was a real discussion between the teacher and the pupil; it was a classwork. These existential circumstances should not be forgotten. As in the De musica, so in this dialogue Augustine combined the two levels of teaching. He had before his eyes the highest end which he intended to reach:

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[40] De magistro, 8.12 PL.32, 1207.

[41] De magistro, 8.21 PL.32, 1207.

> Et tamen si dicam vitam esse quamdam beatam, eamdemque sempiternam quo nos Deo duce, id est, ipsa veritate gradibus quibusdam infirmo gressui nostro accomodatis perduci cupiam, vereor ne ridiculus videar qui non rerum ipsarum quae significantur sed consideratione signorum tantam viam ingredi coeperim[42].

Certainly, the consideration of signs which signify other signs is not the proper means of reaching God by reason and will. This end can be obtained by the study of the things signified, namely, the things perceived by the intellect (the immutable truths). But it does not mean that the former study is useless and without any relation to the ultimate end. The knowledge of God through truth is difficult. Therefore, the mind should approach the highest and by degrees: "gradibus quibusdam infirmo gressui nostro accomodatis". Although the section of the De Magistro about the signs of the signs is not related directly to the subject intended, nevertheless, it prepares the mind for the understanding of the most sublime things; it trains the power and keenness of the mind:

> Dabis igitur veniam, si praeludo tecum non ludendi gratia, sed exercendi vires mentis et aciem, quibus regionis illius, ubi beata vita est calorem ac lucem non modo sustinere verum etiam amare possimus[43].

From this, Augustine's procedure in the De Magistro becomes clear. He intends to show that man is not a true

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[42] De magistro, ibid.

[43] De magistro, 8.22 PL.32, 1207.

teacher but God only. The truth of the first part of the thesis is evident if we analyse the psychology of understanding the sign. When the listener hears the words of the speaker, the things signified, which are present in the memory of the listener, associate themselves with the words heard. The actual knowledge of the things signified takes place at this moment, and at the same time the understanding of the words becomes a fact. The speaker did not infuse by his words the things signified; he only encouraged the hearer to draw out from his memory the things already stored in it. The demonstration of the truth of the second thesis starts with the "terminus ad quem" of the first thesis, namely, with the things signified. But not all things signified can serve as a medium of demonstrations. This is reserved to the things perceived by the intellect only. As we shall see, Augustine meant by this expression especially the immutable truths. Their properties indicate their source. God alone can teach immutable truths.

As yet, after the short introduction, neither the first nor the second thesis has been treated by Augustine. His main task was to prepare Adeodatus for the exposition and demonstration of his doctrine. The knowledge of liberal disciplines was considered by Augustine at this time as a necessary condition for the approach to God by reason. That is why Augustine had devoted so much time to the study of numbers

in the five books of the De musica. Even in the sixth book of the same dialogue, he dwelt on the different kinds of sensible numbers before his ascent to the perfect unity which is God. It is a mistake to object to Augustine's many-sided development concerning the signs of signs. This method of procedure was rooted in the Christian teacher's deep conviction about the necessity of the liberal disciplines for a Christian intellectual formation. The De magistro is and intends to be a record of Augustine's class exercises with his students. On the lower level, semasiological problems raised and discussed in a considerable part of the De Magistro had to prepare the student for the direct treatment of the thesis on a higher level just as in the De musica.

8. THE ANALYSIS OF THE SIGN FROM THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STANDPOINT.

The exposition of the thesis on a higher level begins with Chapter VIII, nr. 22: "Age jam ergo illam partem consideremus, cum signis non alia signa significantur, sed ea quae significabilia vocamus[44]."

Augustine first considers the signs in relation to things signified in order to show that man cannot be a true teacher of another man.

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[44] De magistro, 8.22 PL.32, 1207.

This part constitutes nothing else than a development and illustration of the psychology of understanding the speaker's language by the hearer. Such a psychology has been already designed by Augustine in a short sketch in the introductory chapter.

1. First, we should remember that there is a "law of reason itself imparted to our mind[45]" according to which, when signs are heard, we reflect on the thing signified, unless the context itself or the circumstances suggest that we should concentrate on the sign. When somebody, for instance, says: "Man is a noun", we know that the term "man" has to be taken as a sign and not as a rational animal[46].

2. Since signs are for the sake of things, the knowledge of things is more valuable than the signs[47].

3. The knowledge of things precedes the knowledge of signs. For this reason the words cannot impart the knowledge of things.

In number 33[48], Augustine illustrates by examples his analysis of what happens in the mind of man when he hears the words of the speaker.

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[45] De magistro, 8.24 PL.32, 1207.

[46] De magistro, 8.21-24 PL.32, 1207-1209.

[47] De magistro, 9.27 PL.32, 1211.

[48] De magistro, 9.33 PL.32, 1214.

He now formulates it in a general law:

> Is me autem aliquid docet qui vel oculis vel ulli corporis sensui vel ipsi etiam menti praebet ea quae cognoscere volo. Verbis igitur nisi verba non discimus, immo sonitum strepitumque verborum; nam si ea quae signa non sunt verba esse non possunt quamvis jam auditum verbum nescio, tamen verbum esse donec quid significet sciam[49].

Teaching in the strict sense, according to Augustine, takes place when the things are made present either to the senses or to the mind. The words of the speaker do not make present the things which they signify. Even if the sound of the word had already struck our ears, we do not know whether it was a word unless its meaning becomes known to us.

> Rebus ergo cognitis verborum quoque cognitio perficitur. Verbis vero auditis nec verba discuntur. Non enim ea verba quae novimus discimus aut quae non novimus didicisse nos possumus confiteri nisi eorum significatione percepta quae non auditione vocum emissarum sed rerum significatarum cognitione contingit[50].

Through the things known we arrive to the knowledge of the signs. The words heard by themselves are not known as words, except through the knowledge of their meaning.

There are two eventualities: when we hear some words, we either know their meaning or we do not. In the first case, we are reminded of the things. In the second case, we are not even reminded of them although we may be admonished to seek

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[49] De magistro, 11.36 PL.32, 1215.

[50] Ibidem.

the meaning of the words.

> Verissima quippe ratio est, et verissime dicitur, cum verba proferuntur aut scire nos quid significent aut nescire: si scimus commemorari potius quam discere; si autem nescimus ne commemorari quidem, sed fortasse ad quaerendum admoneri[51].

Neither the things which we know by our senses nor which we perceive by our intellect can be imparted by words. If we understand the speaker, it is because the things are present to the cognitive power. The words then "serve merely to suggest that we look for realities, but they do not communicate knowledge: - verba... quibus ut plurimum tribuam admonent tantum ut quaeramus res, non exhibent ut noverimus[52]."

9. THE EXPOSITION ON THE HIGHER LEVEL.

The understanding of the words presupposes the presence in the soul of the things signified.

Concerning the things of the senses, they can be present either to the external senses when we perceive them actually, or to the memory when we have perceived them in the past.

The first case takes place, for instance, 'when we are looking at a new moon and are asked what sort of a thing it is. - In this case if the one who puts the question does

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[51] Ibidem.

[52] De magistro, 9.36 PL.32, 1215.

not see the object, he believes words and often he does not believe them, but learn he does not at all unless he himself sees what is spoken about; and in that case he learns not by means of spoken words but by means of the realities themselves and his senses. For the words have the same sound for the one who sees the object as for the one who does not see it[53]."

In the second case, when a question is asked regarding the things of which we had sense knowledge in the past, "we express in speech not the realities themselves but the images impressed by them on the mind and committed to memory[54]."

In one sense, these images are false[55]; in another, they are true. They are false because they do not represent what we actually see. They are true because we report them as things we have seen and perceived. As such, they are like documents which we bear in the depths of memory. These documents are reliable only for us, not for other people. If I speak about things which my internal documents attest, the listener does not learn from me. If he had personally perceived them by his senses, he relies on the images stored in his own memory. If he had had no sense knowledge of them, he

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[53] De magistro, 12.39 PL.32, 1216.

[54] Ibidem.

[55] Ibidem.

is not taught by my words; he only believes them[56].

Concerning the things perceived by the intellect, they are also present in the memory. From the very beginning of the dialogue, Augustine had announced that he would deal in the De Magistro with a certain kind of reminding[57] and that

> ... nos locutione nihil aliud agere quam commonere cum memoria cui verba inhaerent ea revolvendo facit venire in mentem res ipsas quarum signa sunt verba[58].

The words are deposited in the memory, and while they are internally spoken, they also make appear the things themselves, namely, the principles or the doctrine expressed in the Lord's Prayer. As the external words remind us of the words which are in the memory, so also the internal words remind us of the intelligible things stored in the mind.

When Augustine speaks in the De Magistro of the things perceived by the mind "quae mente conspicimus, i.e. intellectu atque ratione"[59], he means the truth of evident judgments. Such truths are taught in the liberal disciplines by teachers. But in reality, the teachers do not infuse the truth and its knowledge into the mind of the pupils. The latter, when the

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[56] De magistro, 12.39 PL.32, 1216.

[57] De magistro, 1.1 PL.32, 1195.

[58] De magistro, 1.2 PL.32, 1196.

[59] De magistro, 12.40 PL.32, 1217.

teachers speak, find the truth in themselves:

> At istas omnes disciplinas quas se docere profitentur ipsiusque virtutis atque sapientiae, cum verbis explicaverint tum illi qui discipuli vocantur utrum vera dicta sint, apud semetipsos considerant... Tunc ergo discunt: et cum vera dicta esse invenerint, laudant nescientes non se doctores potius laudare quam doctos si tamen et illi quod loquuntur sciunt[60].

To the category of truths perceived by the mind pertains the very thesis of the De Magistro "that we should not call anyone on earth a teacher, since there is one in heaven who is the Teacher of all[61]." Here we should also list the arguments for the immortality of the soul[62], or as mentioned above, the doctrine contained in the Lord's Prayer, or the statement "that nothing can be taught by means of words[63]". In the previous dialogues, Augustine enumerated the different evident judgments of the liberal disciplines[64]. There was no need to mention them again. Augustine makes only an allusion to them by maintaining that the truth of the doctrine of the sciences (i.e., of the liberal disciplines), even of the science of virtue and wisdom, is contemplated within[65]. In

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60 De magistro, 14.45 PL.32, 1220.

61 De magistro, 12.46 PL.32, 1220.

62 De magistro, 13.41 PL.32, 1218.

63 De magistro, 12.40 PL.32, 1217.

64 Contra Academicos, 3.11.24-25 PL.32, 946; 3.12.27 PL.32, 948; 3.13.29 PL.32, 949.

65 Retractationes, 1.12 PL.32, 602.

his Retractationes, Augustine sums up all these truths in the word "science" - "magistrum non esse qui docet hominem scientiam[66]". Those teachers who teach the sciences or liberal disciplines are not true teachers.

10. THE ASCENT FROM THINGS SIGNIFIED TO THE DIVINE TEACHER.

From the evident truths perceived by the mind and in the mind, Augustine ascends immediately to God, to the "unde" and "quomodo" of intellectual knowledge.

We would expect him to concentrate first on the properties of these truths, especially on their feature of immutability which requires an immutable source. But Augustine does not do it in the De Magistro. Probably Adeodatus was very familiar with this character of certain truths of the liberal disciplines. It was not necessary for Augustine to stress it again. The immutability of truth was one of the most important things by which Augustine was struck in his spiritual evolution. The whole structure of Augustine's thinking is based on the immutable truths discovered in the mind. To the immutability of truth, Augustine had appealed in his earliest dialogues.

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[66] Retractationes, 1.12 PL.32, 602.

It was, therefore, very natural to pass from them immediately to God as the source of truth. When we make true statements we do not teach the listener because he contemplates the truth within himself and would be able to express it before our teaching had started. It is God Himself Who teaches him internally by the things themselves:

> Ergo ne nunc quidem doceo vera dicens, vera intuenêem; docetur enim non verbis meis sed ipsis rebus, Deo intus pandente manifestis; itaque dé his etiam interrogatus respondere posset. Quid autem absurdius quam eum putare locutione mea docere qui posset antequam loquerer ea ipsa interrogatus exponere[67].

God teaches the soul, because He is "the one God and Lord of all things who presides over human minds, without the intervention of any nature[68]." "It is Truth that presides within over the mind itself[69]." - "He alone teaches who when He spoke externally reminded us that He dwells within us[70]." He is the "secretum oraculum" of the soul[71].

This internal Truth illuminates the mind. We have only to turn to it in order to be instructed[72]. The knowledge

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[67] De magistro, 12.40 PL.32, 1217.

[68] De musica, 6.1.1 PL.32, 1162.

[69] De magistro, 11.38 PL.32, 1276; Confessiones, 10. 26.37 PL.32, 795; De vera religione, 39.72 PL.34, 154; De div. quaest.83, 79 PL.34.

[70] De magistro, 14.46 PL.32, 1220.

[71] De magistro, 14.46 PL.32, 1220.

[72] De magistro, ibidem.

of the "intelligibilia" takes place in a similar way as that of the "sensibilia". "Regarding colours we consult light and regarding the other sensible objects we consult the elements of this world constituting the bodies of which we have sense experience and the senses themselves which the mind uses as interpreters to know such things[73]." But "regarding those things which are the object of intelligence, we consult the truth within us through reasoning[74]." "He who is consulted, He who is said to dwell in the inner man, He it is who teaches - Christ - that is the unchangeable Power of God and everlasting Wisdom. This Wisdom every rational soul does in fact consult[75]." No wonder that the pupils can judge the statements of their teachers and know whether what has been said is true. "This they do by gazing attentively at the interior truth so far as they are able[76]. Then it is that

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[73] De magistro, ibidem.

[74] "De his autem quae intelliguntur, interiorem veritatem ratione consulimus" (De magistro, 12.39 PL.32, 1216).

[75] De magistro, 11.38 PL.32, 1216. Cf. Jansen, Zur Lehre des hl.Augustinus von dem Erkennen der Rationes aeternae p. 125.

[76] Ibidem. Cf. also Augustine's letter to Gajus. It was written about the year 390. Augustine sent him some of his writings and encouraged him to attribute the truth found there to God: "...quae tamen si lecta probaveris et vera pervideris, nostra esse non putes, nisi quia data sunt, eoque te convertas licet, unde tibi quoque est ut ea probares datum. Nemo enim quod legit in codice ipso cernit verum esse, aut in eo qui scripserit, sed in se potius, si ejus menti quoddam non vulgariter candidum, sed a faece corporis remotissimum lumen veritatis impressum est. Quod si falsa aliqua atque improbanda compereris, de humano nubilo irrorata scias et ea vere nostra esse deputes" (Ep.19, 1 PL.33, 86).

they learn; and when within themselves they find that what had been said is true they give praise, not realizing that they are praising not so much teachers as persons taught, provided that the teachers know what they are saying[77]." If, therefore, the student perceives by his mind the truth of the statements of the teacher "he is in his innermost a pupil of truth and outside himself a judge of the speaker, or rather of what he says[78]."

There is a difference between gazing and learning; between "considerare" and "discere". Learning appears as a certain result of gazing:

> Cum vero de iis agitur quae mente conspicimus id est intellectu atque ratione ea quidem loquimur quae praesentia contuemur in illa interiore luce veritatis qua ipse qui dicitur homo interior illustratur et fruitur: sed tunc quoque noster auditor si et ipse illa secreto ac simplici oculo videt novit quod dico sua contemplatione, non verbis meis[79].

To gaze, "considerare", does not necessarily mean to see, "mente conspicere". The "considerare" is an act which can be followed by illumination of the interior man by the interior light of Truth. Only then we see the things of the mind - "ea quidem loquimur quae praesentia contuemur in illa

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[77] De magistro, 14.46 PL.32, 1220.

[78] De magistro, 13.43 PL.32, 1218.

[79] De magistro, 12.40 PL.32, 1217.

interiore luce veritatis[80]."

11. THREE KINDS OF LEARNING FROM THE DIVINE TEACHER.

Although God presides over the human mind without any intermediary, and every rational soul consults the internal teacher, learning does not always follow.

It is common and proper to all men who have the use of reason to see immediately, without any effort, the truth of self-evident principles and of the conclusions which immediately follow from them.

But there are also truths which are only remotely contained in or implied by the immutable truths. The immutability, for instance, of true statements implies the existence of an immutable source of truth, or God. It implies also that God is the Illuminator of the mutable mind and the Creator of all mutable things. We saw in the first part of this dissertation that such was the reasoning of Augustine.

Now, we certainly find people who are able to see the things of the mind contained remotely in, or implied by, the immutable principles. But on the other hand, we often meet people who are not able to see them. In the latter case, if

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[80] Ibidem. In what sense the text is to be understood will be seen later in the chapter about the union of the mind with God's ideas.

they hear some statements whose truth seems to exceed the capacity of their understanding, it is useful to believe it.

> Quamobrem in iis etiam quae mente cernuntur frustra cernentis loquelam audit quisquis ea cernere non potest, nisi quia talia quae ignorantur utile est credere; quisquis autem cernere potest intus est discipulus veritatis, foris judex loquentis vel potius ipsius locutionis[81].

Augustine indicates another reason for the lack of learning. The eternal Wisdom is consulted by every rational soul, "but to each one only so much is manifested as he is capable of receiving because of his own good or bad will[82]." From this it follows that the knowledge of some truths depends on the moral disposition of the will.

But in his De Magistro, Augustine stresses the necessity of God's illumination for our knowledge of what is true and certain in the liberal disciplines and in the science of virtue and wisdom. Yet it is a well-known fact that moral goodness does not guarantee the acquisition of true knowledge in the liberal arts. However, one has to remember that St. Augustine envisaged the liberal arts as a means to know and to love God. From this standpoint, knowledge can be imperfect or perfect. It is perfect in as far as it makes one know and

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[81] De magistro, 13.41 (PL.32, 1218.

[82] De magistro, 11.38 PL.32, 1216.

love God. It is imperfect, in as far as it does not reach this end.

The perfect knowledge is a sapiential knowledge. It is enough for its purpose to know the most simple immutable truths, but at the same time one has to see their connection with the Immutable Truth which is God in such a way that one is moved towards God[83]. The imperfect knowledge starts with the first principles; it can also proceed, by logical inference, to necessary conclusions without considering the immutability of the true statements as derived from the Immutable Truth.

Half way between these two attitudes of the mind is the third one, the beginning of sapiential knowledge, when the immutability of truth is considered in its relation to God, but purely theoretically.

By means of these distinctions we can understand in what sense the incapacity of the intellect and the lack of moral disposition impede learning from the inner teacher. This should be considered in a man who has the use of his reason.

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[83] See Augustine's notion of the perfect knowledge in the De Div. quaest.83, 35.1 and 2: "... bonum quod non amatur, nemo potest perfecte habere vel nosse. Quis enim potest nosse quantum sit bonum, quo non fruitur? Non autem fruitur si non amat, nec habet igitur quod amandum est, qui non amat: etiam si amare possit, qui non habet. Nemo igitur beatam vitam novit et miser est: quoniam si amanda est, sicuti est, hoc est eam nosse quod habere."

Concerning the non-sapiential knowledge of the liberal disciplines as exposed above, he who has the use of reason always possesses the capacity to see the truth of the immutable, self-evident first principles and their immediate conclusions. When Augustine speaks of the pupils who, while listening to their teachers, "gaze attentively at the interior truth so far as they are able and judge the statements of the teachers", he does not mean by these statements the absolutely first principles. It is in the light of the self-evident truths that the teaching of the teachers is judged by the pupils. Concerning first principles God's illumination followed not only by gazing at the interior Truth, but also by seeing the truth of such principles. Against the sceptics, Augustine appealed to the self-evident truths which cannot be doubted:

> Si quatuor in mundo elementa sunt non sunt quinque. Si sol unus est non sunt duo. Non potest una anima et mori et esse immortalis. Non potest homo simul et beatus et miser esse. Non hic est sol lucet et nox est. Aut vigilamus nunc aut dormimus. Aut corpus est quod mihi videre videor, aut non est corpur. Haec et alia multa quae commemorare longissimum est per istam [dialecticam] didici vera esse quoquo modo se habeant sensus nostri, in se ipsa vera[84].

In the knowledge of such truths there is involved neither the incapacity of the intellect nor the lack of moral

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[84] Contra Academicos, 3.13.29 PL.32, 949.

disposition. It is proper to man, as a rational animal (it does not matter whether he has a good or bad will), to see the truth of such statements, immediately.

But, there are truths which are not seen immediately. Here people should "gaze attentively at the interior Truth so far as they are able[85]". The capacity to see the truth of such statements is not equal in everybody. Some people can see it by themselves while consulting the interior teacher, although not without effort. Other people need help from the external teacher who by questioning contributes to the understanding of truth. Again, the greater or lesser ability in the discourse of reason does not depend on the moral qualities of the searcher.

The reason why some people have to be helped in understanding the truth of some statements is the weakness of their vision which does not permit them to consult that internal light regarding the matter as a whole. No wonder that one and the same man first denies something when he is asked about it, but later, with the help of the right questions he comes to the opposite conclusion. This happens because the questions are so shaped as to make him consult the internal teacher, not about the whole problem, but about the parts of which it is composed. If he then gives the right answer,

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[85] De magistro, 11.38 PL.32, 1216.

truth has not been imparted by words of the questioner. The questions were proportioned to his capacity for learning internally:

> Nam quod saepe contingit, ut interrogatus aliquid neget atque ad id fatendum aliis interrogationibus urgeatur, fit hoc imbecillitate cernentis qui de re tota illam lucem consulere non potest; quod ut partibus faciat admonetur cum de iisdem istis partibus interrogatur quibus illa summa constat quam totam rem cernere non valebat. Quo si verbis perducitur ejus qui interrogat, non tamen docentibus verbis, sed eo modo inquirentibus, quo modo est ille a quo quaeritur intus discere idoneus[86].

Augustine gives an illustration of this method of learning in the light of interior truths on the very topic discussed in the De Magistro: "Whether it is true that nothing can be taught by means of words".

In the first moment, he who is not able to embrace the whole considers the question as absurd. For this reason, the problem should be adapted to his capacity for learning from the interior light, i.e. it should be divided in its parts. The next question would be: "Those things which I stated and you granted as true... where did you learn them?"

The answer to be expected is: "You have taught them to me". This is followed by the next question: "Let us suppose I told you that I saw a man flying. Would my words give

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[86] De magistro, 12.40 PL.32, 1217.

you the same certitude as if you heard that wise men are superior to fools?"

In this case, the answer would be negative: "I do not believe the former statement, but I know the other statement to be absolutely certain."

This would mean the admission of the entire proposition which had been denied, because one knows now what it implies: "that whatever we say, the hearer either does not know whether it is true, or knows that it is false, or knows that it is true.

> In the first of these three cases, he either believes, or has an opinion, or is in doubt. In the second, he opposes and rejects the statement. In the third case, he bears witness to the truth. In none of the cases, therefore, does he learn. The obvious reason is that the one who on hearing my words does not know the reality and the one who knows that what he has heard is false and the one who, if he were asked, could have answered precisely what was said, demonstrate that they have learned nothing from my words[87].

These are the two kinds of learning from the internal teacher who illuminates the mind of man so that the latter knows with certitude not only the truth of the self-evident principles, but also of the necessary conclusions. Such knowledge is proper to man as a rational animal, regardless of his good or bad will.

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[87] De magistro, 12.40 PL.32, 1217.

The perfect knowledge, or perfect learning, from the internal teacher, takes place when man becomes aware that the truth which he knows comes from God Who is both the Illuminator and the Creator of man, and therefore, his ultimate End. The love of the Supreme Good should accompany such a knowledge. This is the purpose of Augustine's rational procedure.

> ... dicam vitam esse quamdam beatam eamdemque sempiternam quo nos Deo duce, id est ipsa veritate gradibus quibusdam infirmo gressui nostro accomodatis perduci cupiam[88].

The knowledge is vain, if it is not ordained to union with God. It should at least prepare the mind for it and exercise the powers of the mind:

> Si praeludo tecum non ludendi gradia, sed exercendi vires et mentis aciem quibus regionis illius ubi beata vita est calorem ac lucem non modo sustinere verum etiam amare possimus[89].

Adeodatus was well aware of the end of the discussion. While summing up the result of the conversation, he did not forget that knowledge should lead him to the love of God:

> Ego vero didici admonitione verborum tuorum nihil aliud verbis quam admoneri hominem ut discat, et perparum esse quod per locutionem aliquanta cogitatio loquentis appareat: utrum autem vera dicantur, eum docere solum qui se intus habitare cum foris loqueretur admonuit; quem jam favente ipso tanto ardentius diligem quanto ero in discendo provectior[90].

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88 De magistro, c.21 PL.32, 1207.

89 De magistro, ibidem.

90 De magistro, 14.46 PL.32, 1220.

This kind of procedure from the knowledge of the truth of judgment to the knowledge of truth which is God, a knowledge accompanied by love, was Augustine's great experience after the reading of the Platonic books[91]. This was precisely an experience of the happy end - "quem diligere ac nosse beata vita est[92]". The loving knowledge by its very nature implies the good will[93]. This is the true wisdom[94].

Whenever, therefore, Augustine speaks of the illumination or learning from the divine Interior Master, he means learning either in its initial stage or in its perfection. There cannot be a loving knowledge of Truth - God, without a good will. But there is an illumination common to all men, good and bad, who utter true judgments.

With this distinction in mind, Augustine had corrected the following sentence in his Retractationes which could be misunderstood: "O God, Who has willed that none save the pure should know the truth[95]". - "It might be retorted", says

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91 Confessiones, 7.10.16 PL.32, 742.

92 De magistro, 14.46 PL.32, 1220.

93 Augustine's discovery of truth as described in the seventh book of his Confessions was accompanied by a love of God. Confessiones, 7.10.28 PL.32, 795.

94 "Nemini dubium est, tunc est animus sapientissimus, cum veritatem, quae semper eodem modo est, intuetur, eique immobilis inhaeret divino amore conjunctus" (De immortalitate animae, 11.18 PL.32, 1030).

95 Soliloquia, 1.1.2 PL.32, 870.

Augustine, "that there are many, even of those who are not pure[96], who know many truths. For no definition was given here of that truth which only the pure can perceive and the nature of knowing [scire] was left undefined[97]." Certainly Augustine meant the Truth which is God known through the truth of judgment and God loved by the will, but for the average reader this meaning was not obvious.

For a certain time, he considered knowledge of God by means of the truth of judgment as necessary for true happiness during this life[98]. That is why he insisted so much on the study of the liberal disciplines. Of course, neither faith nor love can be excluded from the true wisdom. Later Augustine came to the conclusion that the method of introspection used in the knowledge of God by means of the comparison of the

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[96] The meaning of the pure or of the "to be pure" is given in the De beata vita, (3.18 PL.32, 969): "Ille est vere castus qui Deum attendit et ad eum ipsum solum se tenet."

[97] Retractationes, 1.4.2 PL.32, 584. In the De immortalitate animae, (6.11. PL.32, 1025), Augustine gave a threefold meaning of the term "verum": "Quare ista conjunctio intuentis animi et ejus veri quod intuetur, aut ita est, ut subjectum sit animus, verum autem illud in subjecto aut contra subjectum verum et in subjecto animus aut utrumque substantia". These three kinds (true) of true will be discussed in the last chapter of the dissertation.

[98] For this reason, Augustine dwelt per longum and latum on the study of liberal disciplines.

sensible things with the intelligible is not necessary for spiritual life. Many saints were not at all acquainted with the liberal disciplines, and some people conversant with the arts were not saints:

> Verum et in his libris [says Augustine of his theory of the ascent to God exposed in the De ordine] displicet mihi quod multum tribui liberalibus disciplinis quas multi sancti multum nesciunt; quidam etiam qui sciunt eas sancti non sunt[99].

There are people who have not the necessary capacity for the ascent from the corporeal and spiritual (in the imagination) numbers to the immutable numbers which are in the Immutable Truth, in order to see the invisible things of God by those made by Him. Nevertheless, such persons can reach, after their death, a higher degree of happiness and certitude in contemplating God's "invisibilia" if they had lived from their faith in Christ. This was Augustine's opinion expressed in the Retractationes when he had censured his book De musica, in which he explained:

> Quomodo a corporalibus et spiritualibus sed mutabilibus numeris perveniatur ad immutabiles numeros qui jam sunt in ipsa immutabili veritate, et sic invisibilia Dei, per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciantur. Quod qui non possunt et tamen ex fide Christi vivunt ad illa certius atque felicius conspicienda post hanc vitam veniunt[100].

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[99] Retractationes, 1.11.1 PL.32, 600-601.

[100] Ibidem.

Lastly there is a knowledge of God which resembles the light without warmth, a knowledge merely theoretical, non-animated by faith and love.

Augustine was impressed by the words of St. Paul about those who know God through His creatures, but do not glorify Him.

He was also aware that some people come to know God without the faith of Christ, by considering the immutable truths purely rationally. Among them was, for instance, Plotinus[101] and Porphyry[102]. While still in Milan, Augustine had

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101 At Cassaciacum, Augustine was not quite sure whether Plotinus and Plato's knowledge of God was properly speaking a science: "Nunc illud responde: si ea quae de Deo dixerunt Plato et Plotinus vera sunt, satis ne tibi est ita Deum scire, ut illi sciebant? Non continuo, si ea quae dixerunt vera sunt, etiam scisse illos ea necesse est. Nam multi copiose dicunt quae nesciunt, et ego ipse omnia quae oravi me dixi scire cupere, quod non cuperem, si jam scirem: num igitur eo minus ea dicere potui? Dixi enim non quae intellectu comprehendi, sed quae undequaque collecta memoriae mandavi, et quibus accommodavi quantum potui fidem; scire autem aliud est" (Soliloquia, 1.4.9 PL.32, 874).

In other words, objectively true does not necessarily exhibit in the mind of the teacher the characteristic feature of science, namely, the absolute certitude based on understanding. We often are able to know with absolute certitude whether a doctrine exposed by a lecturer is true, but we cannot know with the same certitude that the lecturer has a "science" of what he says. In this sense the pupil can judge the sayings of the teacher; so he is "foris judex loquentis, vel potius ipsius locutionis", but "intus est discipulus veritatis" (De magistro, 13.41 PL.32, 1218). Augustine illustrates it on a concrete example: De magistro, 13.41-42 PL.32,1218.

102 Probably among the Platonic writings read by Augustine before his conversion were those of Porphyry De regressu animae. In the De civitate Dei, Augustine blames Porphyry for having refused "to recognize that Christ is the Principle by whose Incarnation we are purified. Indeed, he despised Him, because of the flesh itself which He assumed" (10.24 PL.41,301).

heard from Simplicianus that a certain contemporary Platonist was in the habit of saying that the opening passage of the Gospel of St. John "should be written in letters of gold and hung up in all churches in the most conspicuous place. But the proud scorn to take God for their Master because the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us[103]." Such knowledge of God without vivifying faith in Christ is of no help to eternal salvation.

> Qui autem possunt [ascendere ad immutabiles numeros per ea quae facta sunt] si desit eis fides Christi qui unus mediator est Dei et hominum cum tota sapientia sua pereunt[104].

12. THE ASCENT IN THE "DE MUSICA" AND THE "DE MAGISTRO" COMPARED.

What had been said of the ascent to God by means of numbers applies also to the ascent by means of signs.

Both the De Musica and the De Magistro consider the words themselves. The De Musica concentrates on them from the point of view of sensible numbers; the De Magistro from the standpoint of their function as signs.

Such a consideration would not be possible without a due proportioning of the mind to the thing known.

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[103] De civitate Dei, 10.29 PL.41, 307.

[104] Retractationes, 1.11.1 PL.32, 601.

In order to grasp the sensible numbers, the mind must be equipped with intelligible numbers.

In order to grasp the sound of words in its function as a sign, the mind must be equipped with the thing signified. As through the knowledge of the intelligible number, one can reach the knowledge of the sensible numbers, so also through the knowledge of the thing itself the word is known as a sign. At the basis of our knowledge of the things of the senses lies the intelligible number. The thing signified constitutes also the foundation of understanding the sign as a sign.

The thing of the sensible order by itself cannot, in Augustine's philosophy, evoke the act of understanding which belongs to the intelligible order. Neither is there produced the intelligible number by the sensible reality. In comparison with the intelligible numbers, the sensible number is a shadow only of the true reality which is simple and immutable. But there is a certain natural connection between the intelligible number and its shadow, since the latter is produced by means of the former. The sensible reality becomes a "rationabile", because the "ratio", either human or divine, impresses numbers, the principles of order, upon matter. These numbers are inherent in the natural bodies or the things of human art. There is no such a connection between the intelligible thing signified and its sign. The meaning is attached to sounds or other sensible things merely externally. It is

not rooted in the sign like the sensible number in the material thing. For this reason, the words by themselves do not lead the listener to things signified. The things signified pertaining to the liberal disciplines, i.e. the immutable truths, are implanted in the minds of all men, but not the words. They have been imposed arbitrarily and their value depends for the most part on authority and usage. This is the reason for the diversity in tongues, but there cannot be a diversity in the truth about the things:

> Non enim ut de rebus ad disciplinam pertinentibus ita de nominibus possumus respondere interrogati: propterea quia res omnium mentibus communiter sunt insitae: nomina verum, ut cuique placuit imposita quorum vis auctoritate atque consuetudine maxime nititur: unde etiam esse linguarum diversitas potest rerum autem in ipsa veritate constitutarum profecto non potest[105].

Although the words, as words, and the visible reality are differently united to the "intelligibilia", both have the same function: they remind us of truth.

> Jam necessitate per hos oculos et per has aures de ipsa veritate admonemur et difficile est resistere phantasmatibus quae per istos sensus intrant in animam, quamvis per illos intrat etiam ipsa admonitio veritatis[106].

Both in the De musica and in the De Magistro we arrive "per corporalia ad incorporalia" by way of reminding. From

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105 De musica, 3.2.3 PL.32, 1116.

106 De Genesi contra Manichaeos, 2.20.30 PL.34, 211-212.

the truth discovered in the mind, the ascent can be made to the divine teacher. God illuminates the soul and teaches whenever it knows the truth. But such knowledge should develop into wisdom[107].

13. THE PROBLEMS TO BE DISCUSSED.

Three years after his conversion, Augustine gave in the De Magistro a rational justification of the doctrine that Christ is the only teacher of man and nobody else[108]. It was

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[107] Contra Academicos, 2.1.1 PL.32, 919. De facto it seldom grows into wisdom. Augustine indicates the reasons of it: "Sed quia sive vitae hujus multis variisque jactationibus, Romaniane, ut in eodem te probas, sive ingeniorum quodam stupore, vel socordia vel tarditate torpentium, sive desperatione inveniendi; quia non quam facile oculis ista lux, tam facile mentibus sapientiae sidus oboritur; sive etiam qui error omnium populorum est, falsa opinione inventae a se veritatis, nec diligenter homines quaerunt, et a querendi voluntate avertuntur, evenit, ut scientia raro paucisque proveniat" (ibidem).

[108] Augustine has proved that man is not a teacher in the strict sense of another man. However, one could raise the problem whether the higher powers would be able to teach man or at least exert their influence on the human mind. Augustine's friend Nebridius raised this problem.(Ep. 8.1 PL.33,71) Nebridius seems to reduce the nature of knowledge to making pictures: "animumne nostrum (superiores potestates) per cogitationem suas impellunt, ut nos etiam ea cogitando imaginemur? An ipsa in suo corpore, vel in sua phantasia, facta nobis offerunt et ostendunt."

Since at that time Augustine considered the higher powers as endowed with aerial or ethereal bodies, he solved the problem of the communion of the minds, human and supra-human, according to the same principle which he had applied in the De magistro. There is no communion of ideas without signs, natural or conventional. While in exchanging ideas among human beings the (natural signs prevail) conventional signs prevail, the superior powers avail themselves of natural signs which accompany our thinking and feeling: "Arbitror enim omnem motum animi aliquid facere in corpore. Id autem usque ad

the "fides quaerens intellectum"[109] that had compelled Augustine to inquire into the rational foundations of certain articles of faith diametrically opposed to the Manichaean creed. He had understood that the immutability of God excludes Manichaean dualism on the one hand, and implies God's spirituality on the other. The immutability of true judgments had confirmed Augustine in his belief that his soul was neither a particle of God nor the source of truth. The immutable and spiritual God is the Illuminator of the human mind and at the same time the Creator of man and of all mutable beings.

In the De Magistro, Augustine continued to study the enigma of the immutable truth known by the human mind: the "unde" and the "quomodo" of its knowledge. The inquiry is made on the rational level, although inspired by the Bible. But it is neither systematic nor comprehensive. Augustine's early writings constitute a gradual development and solution of the problems connected with the Bible and his former Mani-

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nostros exire sensus... cum sunt majores animi motus, velut cum irascimur, aut tristes aut gaudentes sumus. Ex quo licet conjicere, cum etiam cogitamus aliquid, neque id nobis in nostro corpore apparet, apparere tamen posse aeriis aetheriisve animantibus, quorum et sensus acerrimus, et in cujus comparatione noster ne sensus quidem putandus est. Igitur ea quae, ut ita dicam, vestigia sui motus animus figit in corpore, possunt et manere, et quemdam quasi habitum facre, quae latenter cum agitata fuerint et contrectata secundum agitantis et contrectantis voluntatem ingerunt nobis cogitationes et somnia, atque id fit mira facilitate" (Ep. 9.3).

109 Contra Academicos, 3.20.30

chaean convictions. At the same time, as class discussions they intended to pursue the religious education of his pupils and readers. No wonder that the De Magistro cannot be considered as a complete exposition of the doctrine about the interior teacher. The missing elements have to be gathered from his previous and his contemporary writings and then incorporated into the schema of the dialogue.

As a rational investigation, the De Magistro shows, by means of a psychological analysis of the understanding of words, that the things taught by the teacher were already in the mind of the pupil before the teaching had started. The role of so-called teaching is only to be a reminder of these things. In other words, there is a certain memory in man in which knowledge is stored. Actual knowledge means nothing more than paying attention to what is already known, as we would say, habitually. This kind of memory should be examined since prima facie it recalls the Platonic theory of reminiscence with which Augustine had been acquainted during the reading of the Hortensius. Did Augustine espouse this doctrine after the reading of the Platonic books?[110] This will be discussed in a special chapter on the Augustinian theory of memory.

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[110] Confessiones, 7.10.16 PL.32, 742.

The analysis of the notion of signs resulted in the conclusion that the knowledge of things which are in the mind is a "conditio sine qua non" of the understanding of signs. This is sufficient to demonstrate the impossibility of teaching by means of words. Therefore, man is not the teacher of the things perceived by the mind or by the senses[111]. Now, Augustine concentrated on the things perceived by the mind in order to show their origin. For this reason he should have studied the properties of these things in as far as they lead to the conclusion that only God can be their teacher. In this regard, there is a gap in the De Magistro which should be filled out by means of other writings. This will be done in another chapter on the meaning of the things in the mind.

From the immutability of the truths discovered in the mind or in the memory, Augustine ascended to the interior teacher. He concludes that man is taught by God: "docetur... ipsis rebus Deo intus pandente manifestis[112]." This teaching takes place by way of illumination "qua interiore luce veritatis... ipse qui dicitur homo interior illustratur et fruitur[113]." Augustine knew from his faith that this interior

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111 De magistro, 12.40 PL.32, 1217.

112 Ibidem.

113 Ibidem.

light of truth is Christ, the "unchangeable Power of God and everlasting Wisdom[114]." This Truth presides within and over the human mind[115]. What is the meaning of all of these expressions? Do they mean that man cannot know the immutable truths by the light of his own intellect but needs a special light in order to balance the disproportion between the mutability of his intellect and the immutability of truth? If, according to Augustine, a special light is required for this purpose, a new problem arises whether it is created or uncreated. The chapter on the nature of God's Illumination will discuss all these problems. This will be done in an analysis of the most important passages of the dialogues according to their chronological order. All these texts describe Augustine's ascent from the immutable truths to the Immutable Truth. From the intellectual standpoint it is a God's demonstration which culminates in God's Ideas by which God is the Creator of all things and the Illuminator of the minds. From the religious standpoint it is a perfect knowledge, that which results in wisdom because God known becomes the object of love.

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[114] De magistro, 11.38 PL.32, 1216.

[115] De magistro, 11.46 PL.32, 1220.

The last chapter will describe the union of the human mind with God's Ideas. It is rather a descent from God's Ideas to the human mind. Augustine says often that God presides immediately over the human mind. On the one hand, the role of God's Ideas in the human soul should be more determined and on the other hand the relation of the human mind towards the "rationes sempiternae" ought to be more deeply studied. It will be shown that due to the influence of God's Ideas a threefold kind of union of the human mind with the true is accomplished.

CHAPTER VI

AUGUSTINE'S THEORY OF REMINISCENCE[1]

1. A TYPE OF TEACHING THROUGH REMINDING.

From the very beginning of the De Magistro, Augustine had advanced the thesis that there is a certain kind of teaching by reminding:

> At ego puto esse quoddam genus docendi per commemorationem, magnum sane, quod in nostra sermocinatione res ipsa indicabit[2].

Although Augustine's main purpose in the De Magistro was to show that Christ is the only teacher of man, the first step to this demonstration consisted in making evident that man is unable to teach by means of his words. This has been done by showing that the understanding of words presupposes in the listener a knowledge of things sfgnified by the words. We understand the words of a man speaking to us because the things expressed by them are already in our mind. If he teaches certain truths based on evident premises, we agree with him because we already know them to be true.

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[1] The passages on memory are numerous in Augustine's writings. We confine ourselves to those of the early writings, prior or contemporary to the De Magistro.

[2] De magistro, 1.1. PL.32, 1020.

> Omne autem quod scit animus in sese habet nec ullam rem scientia complectitur nisi quae ad aliquam pertinet disciplinam[3].

Consequently, the teachers do not infuse into the mind of their pupils the sciences which they seem to teach. There is no such a thing as the migration of ideas or truths from one mind to another. This would mean that the teacher while teaching is deprived of the content of his teaching which passes to the mind of the pupil:

> Si vero ars de animo ad animum transit in illo mansura deserens istum, nemo autem docet nisi amittendo aut etiam nonnisi docentis oblivione fit aliquis peritus sive morte. Quae absurdissima et falsissima sunt[4].

By Art, Augustine means either a certain collection of principles (rationes), or even one principle[5]. The characteristic feature of art in this sense is its immutability[6]. It is a fact of our consciousness that in the process of teaching we do not lose our knowledge. One should not imagine that the acquisition of knowledge on the part of the pupil is possible when the art, or the rationes principales, are either neglected by the teacher, through his forgetting, or deserted,

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3 De immortalitate animae, 1.1 PL.32, 1024.

4 De immortalitate animae, 4.5 PL.32, 1024.

5 Ibidem.

6 Ibidem.

through his death. The intelligible realities are not similar to individual things possessed by the owner. They constitute the common good of all rational beings and are inseparably united with the mind[7]. Neither death nor oblivion separates them from the minds of men. The "ratio", taken objectively, is the true itself which the mind beholds[8]. But in itself the mind could not behold it, except through some kind of connection with the true. For all that we contemplate or grasp by cogitation, we perceive either through the senses or through the intellect. And it is affirmed that "all things perceived through one of the senses are sensed as existing outside of us and are contained in space from which they cannot be withdrawn by perception[9]. But those things, however, that are comprehended by the intellect are comprehended as existing nowhere else but in the comprehending mind itself, and at the same time, as not contained in place[10]."

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[7] De immortalitate animae, 4.5 PL.32, 1024.

[8] De immortalitate animae, 6.10 PL.32, 1026.

[9] De immortalitate animae, 6.10 PL.32, 1025. The Latin text (in Migne) reads as follows: "Sed ea quae sensu capiuntur, extra etiam nos esse sentiuntur, et locis continentur, unde nec percipi quidem posse affirmantur". The "nec percipi" should not be corrected in percipi. The union of the sensible object with the sense is imperfect when considered in comparison with that of the intelligible object in relation to the intellect.

[10] De immortalitate animae, 6.10 PL.32, 1025.

2. THE ATTITUDE OF THE SOUL TOWARDS THE THINGS OF THE MIND.

Towards the things which are in the mind, a twofold attitude can be taken: either one actually thinks of them, or he does not.

It would be a mistake to imagine that these things are present in the mind only when we think of them in one way or another:

> Quis audeat dicere... artem non esse in artifice etiam cum eam non exercet[11]... Aut est aliquid in animo quod in praesente cogitatione non est aut non est in erudito animo ars musica cum de sola geometria cogitet: hoc est falsum, illud igitur verum[12].

We know by our consciousness that, if we are trained in the art of music, we still keep it in our mind, even when our thoughts are occupied with geometry. Therefore, it is true that a thing can be in the mind without being actually thought of.

More than that: "Potest igitur esse in animo quod esse in se animus non sentit[13]." This is the case with infants who have not the use of reason[14]. The "intelligibilia" are in

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11 De immortalitate animae, 4.5 PL.32, 1024.

12 Ibidem.

13 Ibidem.

14 De immortalitate animae, 20.34 PL.32, 1054-1955.

their minds, according to Augustine, and yet the infants live in the night of complete ignorance[15].

The reason for not thinking of an object which is in the mind can also be, besides ignorance or a preoccupation with other things, the fact of forgetting.

Oblivion takes place when the mind has concerned itself for too long a time with other things. Through this it becomes unable to pay attention readily to things previously thought of:

> Namque si diutius fuerit in aliis animus occupatus, quam ut intentionem suam in ante cogitata facile possit reflectere oblivio vel imperitia nominatur[16].

But man can arrive at the discovery of the things forgotten. He reaches them either by himself through the activity of his reason, or with the help of others, when they question him in a correct way about the liberal disciplines:

> Sed cum vel nosipsi nobiscum ratiocinantes vel ab alio bene interrogati de quibusdam liberalibus disciplinis, ea quae invenimus non alibi quam in animo nostro invenimus[17].

By means of example, taken from his own spiritual life, Augustine had illustrated how he proceeded in order to

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15 Soliloquia, 2.19.36 PL.32, 904.

16 De immortalitate animae, 4.6 PL.32, 1024.

17 Ibidem.

enjoy the presence of the things which are always in the human soul. The things of the senses constitute the greatest obstacle to the ascent towards the higher realities. Still, at Cassaciacum, he described to Nebridius his way of discriminating between these things with which the senses are conversant and those about which the understanding is employed.

> Although the eyes of my mind are for the most part perturbed and oppressed by the destructions produced by blows through things sensible they are revived and raised up again by the brief process of reasoning.
>
> The mind and intelligence are superior to the eyes of the common faculty of sight which could not be the case unless the things which we perceive by intelligence were more real than the things which we perceive by the faculty of sight.
>
> I pray you to help me in examining whether any valid objection can be brought against this reasoning. By it, meanwhile, I find myself restored and refreshed; and when, after calling upon God for help, I begin to rise to Him, and to those things which are in the highest sense real, I am at times satisfied with such a grasp of enjoyment of the things which eternally abide that I sometimes wonder at my requiring any such reasoning as I have above given to persuade me of the reality of those things which in my soul are as truly present to me as I am to myself[18].

> Tanta nonnumquam rerum manentium praesumptione compleor ut mirer interdum illa mihi opus esse ratiocinatione ut haec esse credam quae tanta insunt praesentia quanta sibi quisque sit praesens[19].

How questioning helps to reconquer the forgotten knowledge of the "intelligibilia" Augustine has shown in the De Magistro.

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[18] Ep. 4.2 PL.33, 66.

[19] Ibidem.

3. THE ORIGIN OF THE THINGS OF THE MIND.

By means of this twofold method, that of reasoning by himself and that of being questioned by others, man comes to find the true things of the mind in its innermost regions.

It is a discovery or finding, not a making or begetting, because the things of the mind, or true reasons, are eternal, but the mind reaches them by a temporal discovery. The mind is, therefore, not proportioned to such an effect. The essence for instance of the circle is eternal; eternal are also the principles of the arts because they always have been and always will be. Their seat is in the mind although one may not be aware of them, or he may have forgotten them. This, precisely, can lead to a judgment that one is not in possession of them or has lost them entirely. Whatever it may be, the immutability of true reasons and the mutability of the mind absolutely exclude the theory that man should be their maker. He only discovers them:

> Neque id est invenire quod facere aut gignere; alioquin aeterna gigneret anima inventione temporali (nam aeterna saepe invenit; quid enim tam aeternum quam circuli ratio vel si quid aliud in hujuscemodi artibus nec non fuisse aliquando nec non fore comprehenditur) nam manifestum etiam est omnes veras rationes in secretis ejus esse quamvis eas sive ignoratione sive oblivione aut non habere aut amisisse videatur[20].

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[20] De immortalitate animae, 4.6 PL.32, 1024.

If no teacher is the source of true reasons in the human mind, and if no man **ahly** can create them because of his own mutability, evidently their source must be immutable. The pupil never receives the truth of his knowledge from his teacher: "He is taught not by my words but by the realities themselves made manifest tohim by God to his inner self[21]." I only discover the truth in my mind because I am not God. This idea, implied in the quoted text of the De immortalitate animae, will be explicitly expressed in the De civitate Dei:

> If, then, we were ourselves the authors of our nature we should have generated knowledge in ourselves and should not be required to reach it by education, i.e. by learning it from others. Our love, too, proceeding from ourselves and returning to us would suffice to make our life blessed and would stand in need of no extraneous enjoyment. But now, since our nature has God as its requisite author, it is certain that we must have Him for our teacher in order that we may be wise; we must have Him, too, as a Dispenser of spiritual sweetness in order that we may be blessed[22].

More than that. Since, as Augustine said, we discover in our soul the eternal "ratio" or truth by a temporal discovery, the latter would not be able to find what is eternal by its own light. It requires the help of a light proportioned to the truth to be found. This light Augustine identifies in the De Magistro with God Himself.

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[21] De magistro, 12.40 PL.32, 1217.

[22] De civitate Dei, 11.25 PL.41, 339.

> Cum vero de iis agitur quae mente conspicimus, id est, intellectu atque ratione ea quidem loquimur quae praesentia contuemur in illa interiore luce veritatis qua ipse qui dicitur homo interior illustratur et fruitur[23].

This truth which presides internally over the human mind is Christ Himself. He is consulted by every rational soul[24].

4. INCONSISTENCY IN AUGUSTINE'S THEORY ON ILLUMINATION

There is no doubt that in the De Magistro, Augustine explains our knowledge of what is eternal or immutable by the presence of the Divine Truth or God illuminating the soul. At the same time, Augustine continually stressed the role which words play by reminding the listener of the things already present in his mind.

While this is obvious to the reader, one becomes surprised that in a contemporary writing, Augustine does not reject the Platonic theory of recollection with pre-existence, although he had a good opportunity to do it. He even speaks in exalted words about the "socraticum illud nobilissimum inventum", an expression which reveals his sympathy with the famous Platonic doctrine. This occured in 389, in a reply to a letter from his friend, Nebridius, in connection with the

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[23] De magistro, 12.40 PL.32, 1217.

[24] De magistro, 41.38 PL.32, 1216.

problem concerning memory, whether it can take place without images.

This requires a special examination according to chronological order, of Augustine's attitude towards Platonic pre-existence, first, before his conversion; then, after his conversion in the Contra Academicos, the Soliloquia, the De quantitate animae, and in his correspondence with Nebridius.

5. THE THEORY OF PRE-EXISTENCE BEFORE AUGUSTINE'S CONVERSION.

We know that before his conversion, Augustine had believed in a certain pre-existence of the souls.

Such was one of the basic teachings of the Manichaean creed. The souls are particles of God. Before their separation from the Divine Light, they had lived in it as its members, as parts of the whole. The individual existence of the particles started with the conflict between the Principle of Light and the Principle of Darkness[25]; "The member of God has been mixed with the substance of Evil in order to repress it and keep it from excessive ferocity[26]." Since that time the particles of God which have not been freed are now imprisoned in inanimate matter, plants, animals, but, expecially,

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[25] Confessiones, 7.2.3 PL.32, 734.

[26] De moribus Manichaeorum, 1.15.36 PL.32, 1560-1561.

in human beings. Since the Divine Light is eternal, the particles of God, or souls, must share God's eternity.

Acquainted with the Platonic theory of pre-existence ever since his reading of The Hortensius, Augustine must have been confirmed in his idea about the divine origin and the eternity of the soul.

From Cicero, Augustine had learned something abat the life of souls without bodies, when they enjoyed their happiness derived from the contemplati on of the Godd. He found there, also, at least partly, an explanation of hisevil instincts, of his sensuality. After their moral deviation in the other world, the souls have been compelled to descend into the bodies in which they are now imprisoned.

It seems that the certitude about the pre-existence of the soul must also have been deeply rooted in Augustine's mind. Two different schools exposed it in a similar way. The Manichaeans were not alone in teaching that the union of the soul with the body was contrary to the nature of the soul. Cicero, whom Augustine so much admired, also followed the opinion of Plato who held a similar doctrine. Before Plato it was Pythagoras and his disciples who maintained that the soul is derived from the universal divine mind. The same doctrine was taught by Socrates. Reason itself, according to Cicero, strongly impresses such a certitude. The swiftness of our thoughts, the memory of innumerable things of the past,

the power of foreseeing the future, the knowledge of arts, sciences, the different discoveries suggest that the nature which contains all these things could not be mortal - our mind is always active and has no external source of its own motion because it moves itself. This makes us believe that there never will be an end of its motion, because it never will separate from itself - the soul is not composed like bodies of different elements which can be dissolved. The soul is uncompounded, therefore, it cannot be destroyed. - We see that even children know things which they could not draw from the external world. They rather remember what they had learned in the other world.

All these considerations impose the conclusion that the human soul has not only a divine origin but also that in itself it is divine and eternal.

> Nam dum sumus in his inclusi compagibus corporis, munere quodam necessitatis et gravi opere perfungimur. Est enim[27] animus coelestis ex altissimo domicilio depressus et quasi demersus in terram, locum divinae naturae aeternitatique contrarium[28]. Sed credo, deos

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[27] Cf. the Hortensius, fragment in the Contra Julianum (R.15.78 PL.44, 778).

[28] According to Cicero it was more natural to the soul to live outside of bodies than in bodies: "Mihi quidem naturam animi intuenti multo difficilior occurrit cogitatio multoque obscurior, qualis animus in corpore sit, tamquam alienae domui, quam qualis, cum exierit et in liberum coelum quasi domum suam venerit" (Tusculanae disputationes, 1.22.51).

immortales sparsisse animos in corpora humana, ut essent qui terram tuerentur, quique coelestium ordinem contemplantes imitarentur eam vitae modo atque constantia[29].

Nec me solum ratio ac disputatio impulit, ut ita crederem, sed nobilitas etiam summorum philosophorum et auctoritas. Audiebam Pythagoram Pythagoreosque, incolas paene nostros qui essent Italici philosophi quondam nominati, numquam dubitasse quin ex universa mente divina delibatos animos haberemus[30]. Demonstrabantur mihi praeterea quae Socrates supremo vitae die de immortalitate animorum diseruisset[31], is qui esset omnium sapientissimus oraculo Apollinis judicatus.

Quid multa? Sic mihi persuasi, sic sentio, cum tanta celeritas animorum sit, tanta memoria praeteritorum, futurorumque prudentia, tot artes, tantae scientiae, tot inventa non posse eam naturam, quae res eas contineat, esse mortalem, cumque semper agitetur[32] animus nec principium motus habeat, quia seipse moveat, ne finem quidem habiturum esse motus, quia numquam se ipse sit relicturus; et cum simplex animi natura esset[33], neque haberet in se quidquam

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[29] Cf. also Tusculanae disputationes, 5.25.76.

[30] Cf. also Tusculanae disputationes, 5.13.39 and 5.25.70. "Haec tractanti animo et noctes et dies cogitanti existit illa a Deo Delphis praecepta cognitio, ut ipsa se mens agnoscat conjunctamque cum divina mente se sentiat ex quo insatiabili gaudio compleatur. Ipsa enim cogitatio devi et natura deorum studium incendit illius aeternitatis imitandi neque se in brevitate vitae collocatam putat, cum rerum causas alias ex aliis aptas et necessitate nexas videt, quibus ab aeterno tempore fluentibus in aeternum ratio tamen mensque moderatur" (Tusculanae disputationes, 5.25.70).

[31] Cf. Meno, 86; Phaedo, 73; About the immortality of the soul according to Plato, cf. Jowett, The Dialogues of Plato, vol. 2, p. 922 and 876.

[32] Cf. also Tusculanae disputationes, 1.23.53.

[33] Cf. Phaedo, 78c.

> admixtum dispar sui atque dissimile, non posse eum dividi; quod si non possit, non posse interire. Magnoque esse argumento, homines scire pleraque, antequam nati sint, quod jam pueri, cum artes difficiles discant, ita celeriter res innumerabiles arripiant, ut eas non tum primum accipere videantur sed reminisci et recordari[34]. Haec Platonis fere[35].

Although during his Manichaean years Augustine was not able to understand the Platonic doctrine about the spirituality of the soul, he could find Plato, even known through Cicero, in agreement with the Manichaean tenets concerning the divine origin of the soul, its eternity, its misery in the body, and the method of purification.

Under the influence of St. Ambrose, Augustine had changed his views concerning the divine nature of the soul. He had accepted, by belief, that both souls and bodies have been created by God from nothing. Later, with the help of the Platonic writings, he understood these articles of faith

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[34] As to the doctrine of Plato "The pre-existence of the soul is especially dwelt upon in the Meno, Phaedo, and Phaedrus, in the two former of which the remembrance of the previous existence is made a proof of immortality (Meno, 86; Phaedo, 73). It is apparently alluded to in the myth of Er (Repub. 10.621A), where we are told that the pilgrims drank the waters of Unmindfulness; the foolish took too deep a draught, but the wise were more moderate. In the later dialogues, it is nowhere mentioned" (Jowett, The Dialogues of Plato, Vol. 2, p. 922). Reminiscence is a source of knowledge, Meno, 81 foll. 98A; Phil. 34. It is illustrated by questions to the slave boy, Meno, 82 foll. (also Phaedo 73A) Jowett, op. cit., p. 913.

[35] The whole quotation is taken from Cicero, De senectute, 21.

by means of the immutable truths discovered in the mind.

By the same method, Plato had established the pre-existence and eternity of the soul. He was followed by Plotinus. The fact of our knowledge of sciences, with their characteristic feature of immutability, became a foundation of their teaching about the soul: "If any should be refuted," says Plato, "it is certainly he who abolished the science, the clear thought or intelligence whatever he may affirm at this price[36]." For Plotinus the intelligence is a fact which guarantees true science. The intelligence is the "locus idearum", the unity of minds. There is no proof in Plotinus for the existence of the intelligence, of the intelligible world. The intelligence is the sun. One does not prove the existence of the sun[37].

Certain, through his faith, that souls and bodies were created by God, convinced of it by his own reasoning which was based on immutable truths, Augustine thought that the Neo-Platonists came to the same conclusion:

> In them I found, though not in the very words, yet the thing itself, and proved by all sorts of reasons - that in the beginning was the Word and the

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[36] Sophist, 249c.

[37] Enn. 3.17. See R.Arnou, S.J., Platonisme des Pères, Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, 12 (1925), 2258-2392, especially the section about Plotinus. Arnou has also edited and annotated selected texts in De Platonismo Patrum, Rome, Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1935.

> Word was with God and the Word was God. All things were made by Him and without Him was made nothing... And I found in those writings that the soul of man, though it gives testimony to the light, yet is not light itself; but, the Word of God Himself is the true light which enlightens every man that comes into this world... the world was made by Him[38].

If the world and the souls according to the Neo-Platonists, as Augustine thought, were created by God, the problem must have been raised by him when were the world and the soul made by God. Cicero spoke about the eternity of souls. What did Augustine find on this subject in the Neo-Platonic books?

> Plato, in writing concerning the world and the gods in it, whom the Supreme made, most expressly states that they had a beginning and yet would have no end, but, by the sovereign will of the Creator, would endure eternally. But, by way of interpreting this, the Platonists have discovered that he meant the beginning not of time, but of cause. — For, if a foot, they say, had been always from eternity in dust, there would always had been a print underneath it; and yet no one would doubt that this print was made by the pressure of the foot; nor that, though the one was made by the other, neither was prior to the other, so, they say, the world and the god created in it, have always been, their Creator always existing and yet they were made[39].

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[38] Confessiones, 7.9.13 PL.32, 740.

[39] De civitate Dei, 10.31 PL.41, 311. According to Plotinus, the world had existed from eternity, cf. Enn. 3.2.1. This subject is treated "per longum et latum" in Enn. 2.1, also in 5.8.12; 5.8.7; 2.1.4. See Perler Othmar, Derr Nus bei Plotinus, p. 94-105: Die Erschaffung in der Zeit and die Unveranderlichkeit Gottes.

This makes it probable that in the beginning, after the reading of the Neo-Platonic books, Augustine did not need to change his old conviction about the eternity of the soul. It did not, at that time, contradict his Christian belief in the creation from nothing. Perhaps he was influenced by Victorinus[40] who, even after his conversion, still maintained that the soul was created from eternity and pre-existed before its union with the body[41]. Through translation of the Platonic books by Victorinus, Augustine was probably acquainted with the Neo-Platonic version of the descent of the souls into the body, a descent which was considered not only as a punishment for sins committed in the other world, but, also, as a result of the natural law of emanation. According to it the world-soul continued the emanation started from the One by creating matter from itself[42].

An indication can be noticed in the De quantitate animae that there was a time when the eternity of the soul

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[40] See Herbert de Lousse, S.J., Le problème de la préexistence des âmes chez Marius Victorinus Afer (Recherches) Revue des sciences religieuses, 29 (1939), 197-239. Cette idée exprimée dans son commentaire In Ep. ad Ephesios, lib. 1 PL.8, 1238c.

[41] Ibidem.

[42] Enn. 3.3.4. "Selon Plotin cette "descente des âmes dans la matière" n'était pas seulement la punition des fautes commises en une vie antérieure (Enn.3.3.4) Bréhier, p. 54, mais aussi et principalement le résultat de la loi naturelle d'émanation qui portait l'âme du monde à se communiquer en créant la matière" (Enn. 4.8; 4.3.13-17). Cf. Thonnard, VI Dialogues philosophiques, III. De l'âme à Dieu, p. 475.

and the Platonic pre-existence must have appealed to Augustine's mind. In Rome, in 388 A.D., one year after Augustine's baptism, his pupil, Evodius, still held that souls were eternal and for this reason he was not able to understand why the new born child, for all appearances, is utterly unskilled and without the use of reason.

> ... nec tamen nihil angor ex eo quod imperita omnium rerum et bruta est anima quam in puero recens nato quantum licet inspicimus. Cur enim nullam artem secum attulit si aeterna est?[43]

Augustine was not as certain at this time as Evodius about the eternity of the soul. He promised to discuss this problem later: "As to its eternity, if such there is, this we shall properly examine when we take up, to the extent that it is possible, the fourth question you posed, why it was given to the body[44]." Augustine's answer seems to indicate, at least, a serious doubt about creation from eternity. At the same time, the very fact of not repudiating immediately the error of Evodius's idea shows that his mind was still examining this problem. A year before, at Cassaciacum, in the De ordine, Augustine considered the eternity of the world as a question which requires an investigation[45]. Two years

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[43] De quantitate animae, 20.34 PL.32, 1035.

[44] The problem of the eternity of the soul will be discussed later. Ibidem.

[45] De ordine, 2.16.46 PL.32, 1016.

later, at Tagaste, in 389, Augustine had no more doubts about the creation in time[46]. One should not wonder if Augustine had embraced the eternal pre-existence of souls in the Platonic sense just after the reading of the Platonic books.

But the reading of the Epistles of St. Paul marks a further progress in Augustine's evolution[47]. From St. Paul Augustine had learned not only that Christ was true God and true man[48], and that the source of our concupiscence was the sin of Adam[49], but also that the Platonic pre-existence was certainly not in harmony with revelation. Plato taught that the soul had committed some crime and as its punishment had been compelled to descend into the bodies. This contradicts the doctrine of St. Paul that "nondum natos nihil egisse boni aut mali[50]", and the teaching about the sin of Adam which is the cause of the misery of mankind. But Augustine did not think that the Bible condemned any pre-existence whatsoever. We will see that he spoke of a certain pre-existence of the soul in the De genesi contra Manichaeos, but not in the Platonic sense.

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[46] De Genesi contra Manichaeos, 1.2.3.

[47] De beata vita, 1.4 PL.32, 961; Contra Academicos, 2.2.5 PL.32, 922; Confessiones, 7.19.29 PL.32, 747.

[48] Confessiones, 7.19.25 PL.32, 746.

[49] Ibidem.

[50] Retractationes, 1.1.3 PL.32, 587.

6. THE DISPUTED TEXT OF THE CONTRA ACADEMICOS.

After this short sketch of the development of Augustine's ideas on the pre-existence of the soul before his conversion while under the influence of Cicero, of the Platonic books, and of St. Paul, one is equipped to approach the disputed texts which deal with pre-existence.

The oldest passage to which Augustine himself had paid attention in his old age is found in the Contra Academicos, 2.9.22[51].

> Ergone non erumpet aliquando ista virtus et multorum desperantium risus in horrorem stuporemque convertet; et locuta in terris quasi quaedam futurorum signa rursus projecto totius corporis onera recurret in coelum?[52]

In his Retractationes[53], Augustine was afraid that the expression "rediturus in coelum"[54] might suggest the doctrine of pre-existence. In order to prevent such an interpretation, he acquainted the reader with his true intention:

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[51] ""De vita nostra, de moribus, de animo res agitur qui se superaturum inimicitias omnium fallaciarum et veritate comprehensa quasi in regionem suae originis rediens triumphaturum de libidinibus atque ita temperantia quasi conjuge accepta regnaturum esse praesumit, securior rediturus in coelum."

[52] This was written to Romanianus in Contra Academicos 2.1.2 PL.32, 920.

[53] 1.1.3 PL.32, 587.

[54] Contra Academicos, 2.9.22.

I another passage, where I was treating of the soul, I said that - rendered more secure, it would return to heaven - I would have rendered my meaning more secure if I had said that the soul "would go" rather than that "it would return", for there are those who think that in punishment for their sins the human souls have fallen or have been cast out from heaven and are imprisoned in those bodies of ours[55].

But, I had no misgiving about expressing it that way, for in saying that "it would return to heaven" I meant to say that it would return to God, its Author and Creator. In fact, the blessed Cyprian did not hesitate to say that - since we possess the body from the earth and the spirit from heaven, we are truly earth and heaven[56]. - And in the Book of Ecclesiastes, it is written - before the spirit return to God who gave it[57]. - Of course, this is to be understood in such a manner as not to contradict the Apostle who says that those not yet born have not done aught of good or evil[58]. Indisputably, then, God Himself is in some manner the original region of happiness for the soul, not that He begot it from Himself, but because He created it from no other thing as He created body from the earth. But with regard to the origin of the soul, how it comes to pass that it is in the body, namely, whether it is derived from the one man who was first created, when man was made into a living soul, or whether each man is likewise made with an individual soul - that is something which I did not know at that time nor do I know it now[59].

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[55] De civitate Dei, 22.27 PL.41, 795.

[56] Cyprien, Liber de oratione dominica, 16 PL.4, 546.

[57] Eccl. 12.17.

[58] Rom. 9.11.

[59] Retractationes, 1.1.3 PL.32, 587.

There is no doubt, according to Augustine's confession, that from the very beginning of his literary activity he had rejected the Platonic pre-existence as contrary to the teaching of St. Paul. If the soul appears in the body without being responsible for good or bad actions, no knowledge was possible in the case of the mysterious pre-existence of the soul. But, according to Plato, the soul had contemplated the eternal ideas, a knowledge which was forgotten at the time of the union of the soul with the body. For this reason such expressions as "recognoscere Deum"[60], or "recordari Deum"[61], should not be interpreted in the sense of Platonic pre-existence in which the soul possessed not only knowledge of the good but also had committed some crime in the past[62].

7. THE DISPUTED TEXT OF THE SOLILOQUIA.

In spite of such categorical disowning of the Platonic theory, Augustine had used, at Cassaciacum, an expression which by itself, seemed to mean pre-existence. But, that passage should be considered in its context.

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60 Retractationes, 1.4.4 PL.32, 590.

61 De ordine, 2.15.42)PL.32, 1014.

62 Retractationes, 1.4.4 PL.32, 890.

Already in the De ordine, Augustine had spoken of the intelligible number which is always in the mind and never passes away. Beside the intelligible numbers there are intelligible lines, forms and figures, contained in the intelligence. In comparison with the sensible numbers, sensible forms, lines, and figures, the "intelligibilia" are most true[63]. In the Soliloquies, Augustine wanted to know the difference between the true figure which is contained in the intellect (and the figure which the act of thinking (cogitatio) fashions and which is called in Greek - Phantasy or Phantasm[64].

Since the "intelligibilia" are always in the mind or in the intellectual memory, their actual knowledge can be compared with the remembering of the sensible things which have been forgotten. The latter can be hidden more or less in the memory and, accordingly, there are different degrees of remembering or reminding, based on different degrees of forgetfulness.

The first degree occurs when the thing is so forgotten that one can be reminded of it only negatively. This happens in everyday life: "Suppose," says Augustine, "you have forgotten something, and other men desire, as it were, to recall it

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63 De ordine, 2.15.42 PL.32, 1014.

64 Soliloquia, 2.20.34 PL.32, 902.

to your memory. They say, therefore, is it this or that, offering you things, different from it, as though they were similar. But, you do not see what you are desirous of remembering, yet you see that it is not what they say[65]." The thing, which we want to remember in this case, is not entirely erased from the memory. "The very caution by which you are advised not to admit to their false suggestions is a part of remembrance[66]." — "Such persons, therefore, do not see the truth, but they cannot be deceived or misled and they know sufficiently what they are seeking[67]."

The second case takes place, when the thing is entirely erased from the memory. Augustine illustrates it in the following example:

> If someone told you that you laughed a few days after you were born, you dare not say it is false. If the one who tells you is worthy of belief you will not remember, but you will believe. For all that time is for you buried in a most complete oblivion[68].

In the third case, the thing appears partly as known in regard to its substance, but one has to be reminded of the circumstances of knowing it. This takes place

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[65] Ibidem.

[66] Ibidem.

[67] Ibidem.

[68] Soliloquia, 2.20.34 PL.32, 902.

> ... when we see something and recognize for certain that we have seen it at some time and declare that we know it. But where or when or how or in whose company it came to our attention we struggle to review and remember. As for example, if this were to happen to us in the case of a man, we ask him where it was we made his acquaintance. When he has reminded us of it, all at once the whole affair floods back to our memory like a light, and we no longer have difficulty in remembering[69].

As it has been said above, to know the difference between the "intelligibilia" (here is meant the intelligible figure) and the "sensibilia" (and here is meant the images of imagination) means that we are reminded of them. The memory of the sensible things is more known to our reflective thinking than that of the intelligible things. The comparison helps us in bringing the latter to our "cogitatio" or, as we would say today, to our consciousness.

We know the "intelligibilia" not only in analogy to the first way of remembering, i.e. in a purely negative way. If somebody sees that a statement is not true, he sees it in virtue of a truth already known.

Concerning the second case: there are things in the sensible order which are lost to the memory, but in the intelligible order the "intelligibilia" are never entirely erased from the intellectual memory.

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[69] Soliloquia, 2.20.34 PL.32, 902.

For this reason, Augustine compares the knowledge of truth (in our case, the knowledge of the true figure) with the third kind of remembering. And this applies to the truths of all liberal disciplines. As in the third example of remembering, we recognize at once the person whom we meet without being able immediately to recall the different circumstances of knowing him, except after a certain effort, and, only then, "the whole affair floods back into our memory", so also it happens to those who are trained in the liberal disciplines:

> Tales sunt qui bene disciplinis liberalibus eruditi, siquidem illas sine dubio in se oblivione obrutas eruunt discendo et quodammodo refodiunt: nec tamen contenti sunt nec se tenent donec totam faciem veritatis cujus quidam in illis artibus splendor jam subrutilat latissime atque plenissime intueantur[70].

"Those who are well trained in the liberal arts are like this. They bring to light in the process of learning knowledge that undoubtedly is buried in oblivion within them, and, in a way, they disinter it. Moreover, they are not content and they cannot contain themselves until they behold in all its breadth and fullness the whole countenance of truth whose splendor already glows in a certain measure in those arts."

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[70] Soliloquia, 2.20.35 PL.32, 902.

The whole passage, isolated from the context, can easily suggest Platonic pre-existence.

The expression, "in se oblivione obrutas eruunt discendo et quodammodo refodiunt", remind us of the doctrine of Plato, that the soul, united with the body, in contact with the sensible world has forgotten the knowledge it brought from the other world. No doubt, some readers of the Soliloquies understood the quoted sentence in this sense.

Augustine, who had read the Soliloquies again shortly before his death, very anxious about the doctrine presented in his writings, expressed himself again on the subject in question in order to prevent a misunderstanding and the spreading of false ideas:

> Item quodam loco dixi quod "disciplinis liberalibus eruditi sine dubio in se illas oblivione obrutas eruunt discendo et quodam modo refodiunt." Sed hoc quoque improbo. Credibilius est enim propterea vera respondere de quibusdam disciplinis etiam imperitos earum quando bene interrogantur, quia praesens est eis, quantum id capere possunt, lumen rationis aeternae ubi haec immutabilia vera conspiciunt, non quia ea noverant aliquando et obliti sunt quod Platoni vel talibus visum est. Contra quorum opinionem quanta pro suscepto opere dabatur occasio, in libro duodecimo De Trinitate disserui [12.15][71].

"Sed hoc quoque improbo." This means prima facie, that Augustine made a confession of his error. It would

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71 Retractationes, 1.4.4 PL.32, 590. The passage of the De Trinitate is found, book 12.15.24.

appear that in the Soliloquies he followed the doctrine of Plato that unskilled people give the right answer in matters of liberal disciplines, "quia ea [vera] noverant aliquando et obliti sunt[72]."

It is strange to hear from Augustine in the very same book (Retractationes) that in the Contra Academicos, written at Cassaciacum in 386, he had not taught Platonic pre-existence and that, in his Soliloquies, written a few months later, he had embraced this doctrine. To the Platonic teaching he opposes his later hypothesis:

> It is more credible that even those who are untaught, upon being properly questioned, give correct answers from certain branches of learning because the light of eternal reason is, according to their capacity, present in them in which they can contemplate these immutable truths[73].

But this change of opinion, at Cassaciacum, concerning the pre-existence of the soul, is rather apparent than real.

The strongly explicit repudiation, at Cassaciacum, based on the teaching of St. Paul, seems to exclude the obvious meaning of the Retractationes concerning the Soliloquies.

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[72] Retractationes, 1.4.4 PL.32, 590.

[73] Ibidem.

If Augustine had changed his opinion and interpreted St. Paul otherwise than he had done, while writing the Contra Academicos, one would expect him to explain the reasons for his sudden change to the opposite view on such an important subject. He had not done so.

Besides this, if we consult the context of the passage which seems to imply pre-existence in the Platonic sense, we come to the contrary conclusion.

In the Soliloquies, Augustine does not mention at all any Platonic pre-existence.

The expressions, "oblivione obrutas eruunt... refodiunt", are directly related to the comparison of intellectual knowledge with the act of remembering sensible things which have been partly forgotten. The thing is recognized here, but not in its entirety. Only gradually, with the help of questions or by our own effort, we come to know the whole. This procedure is precisely similar to a disintering of what is buried by oblivion. Now the intellectual knowledge, which requires so much effort of the mind, takes place on the pattern of the preceding remembrance. There are "intelligibilia" which can be grasped at once, without any effort. But they are understood in their entirety, in what they imply and contain. In order to exploit their hidden riches, one has to undertake the work of the "eruere" and "refodire". This is accomplished by ourselves through means of reasoning or

through the help of others. The latter way of reminding is illustrated by Augustine in the De Magistro. It immediately brings to mind the Socratic method of teaching. No wonder that some readers of the Soliloquies must have understood the relevant passage as implying Platonic pre-existence.

In spite of it, in the Soliloquies, the theory of the De Magistro is already in extant, namely, that we see the truth of certain statements because of the presence in the soul of the divine light. There are degrees of learning from the Divine Teacher. The lowest degree consists in seeing the immutable truth of the first principles and that of the conclusions immediately drawn from them. But from these truths one can make an ascent to the Truth which is the source of all truths. The Soliloquies mention these degrees of learning. The lower degree is refered to when Augustine says that we disinter, as it were, the knowledge of liberal disciplines. Then, he passes to the higher degree. Those who know the truth of immutable judgments and have exploited their content, are not entirely satisfied with their discoveries. They inquire further into the ultimate source of the truth of immutable judgments:

> They are not content and they cannot contain themselves, until they behold, in all its breadth and fullness, the whole countenance of truth, whose splendor already glows in a certain measure in these arts[74].

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[74] Soliloquia, 2.20.35 PL.32, 902.

Augustine meant here the Truth which is the Sun of the soul. Its splendor "glows in a certain measure in those arts", in the truths of the liberal disciplines.

> ... disciplinarum autem quaeque certissima talia sunt qualia illa quae sole illustrantur ut videri possint, velut terra est atque terrena omnia. Deus autem est ipse qui illustrat[75]... illa quae in disciplinis traduntur, quae quisque intelligit, verissima esse nulla dubitatione concedit, credendum est ea non posse intelligi nisi ab alio quasi suo sole illustrentur[76].

This Sun of the Soul, or the Truth, is always present to the mind: "It proclaims that it dwells within you, that it is immortal, that its dwelling place can be taken from it by no death of the body. Turn away from your shadow, return to yourself." There is the "whole countenance of truth[77]."

The dwelling of Truth in the mind is the cause of Augustine's difficulty of how science and Truth are considered to exist in the soul of an ignorant person — "quando in anima imperita disciplina et veritas esse intelligatur[78]", — such as is the soul of a newly born infant, not to speak of the life which grows within the womb[79].

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[75] Soliloquia, 1.6.12 PL.32, 875.

[76] Soliloquia, 1.8.15 PL.32, 877.

[77] Soliloquia, 2.20.35 PL.32, 902.

[78] Soliloquia, 2.19.33 PL.32, 902.

[79] Ibidem.

If Augustine had embraced Platonic pre-existence, he should not have raised this problem. He knew that, according to Plato, the soul has been united with the body for punishment's sake because of some crime committed in its previous life. The body is a prison for the soul, something contrary to its nature. In the contact with transient things, the soul has lost its wisdom and can acquire it only gradually, by withdrawing from the fleeting world. For this reason, the ignorance of an infant is a logical consequence of the premises accepted by Plato.

But since, according to Augustine's new ideas, the body was created by God and was a part of man's nature, and, since during infancy, the transient world could not attract the mind of man to the lower things, the soul united with Truth should contemplate the things divine. But, no sign is perceived of such an attitude in the infant's soul. According to all appearances, it lives in a horrible night of ignorance. Augustine was never able to solve satisfactorily the problem of the union of body and soul.

His theology gave him a certain explanation of the infant's ignorance which filled his soul, thirsting for truth, with horror[80]. Before his sin, man was able to contemplate

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[80] Soliloquia, 2.20.36 PL.32, 904.

the things divine, because God irrigated his mind from within from the internal fountain of truth. In this state, man did not need the rain of words which would irrigate his soul with doctrine from without:

> Ante peccatum vero cum... fecisset Deus... invisibilem creaturam [the soul] irrigabat eam fonte interiore loquens in intellectum ejus, ut non extrinsecus verba exciperet, tamquam ex supradictis nubibus pluviam, sed fonte suo, hoc est de intimis suis manante veritate satiaretur[81].

But after the sin of the first man, his condition had been changed. By pride he deserted the innermost part of his soul — "projecit intima sua[82]" — and started to swell externally — "Quid est enim superbia aliud nisi deserto secretario conscientiae foris videri velle quod non est[83]." The result of the sin was that "in exteriora per superbiam tumescens coepit non irrigari fonte intimo[84]". Since that time, man needs a divine doctrine in human words. The words are like clouds which contain the divine teaching. While the words are uttered, the rain of truth is infused into the soul:

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[81] De Genesi contra Manichaeos, 2.8.5 PL.34, 198.

[82] Ibid., 2.5.6 PL.34, 199.

[83] Ibid., 2.4.6 PL.34, 199. Augustine speaks here of the original sin. 2.5.6 PL.34, 199.

[84] Ibidem. It is clear that Augustine meant the illumination in the supernatural order, but in the next quotatim he passed from this order to the general condition in which man is de facto found. De Genesi contra Manichaeos, 2.4.6 PL.34, 1998

> Quae dum tractantur exprimuntur bene intelligentibus tamquam imber veritatis infunditur[85]... laboranti homini in terra id est in peccatorum ariditate constituto necessariam esse de humanis verbis divinam doctrinam tamquam de nubibus pluviam[86]... Et quoniam jam necessitate per hos oculos et per has aures de ipsa veritate admonemur et difficile est resistere phantasmatibus quae per istos sensus intrant in animam, quamvis per illos intrat etiam admonitio veritatis, in ista ergo, perplexitate cujus vultus non sudet ut manducet panem suum[87].

This explains why the infant lives in the darkness of ignorance, Its mind, although united with Truth[88], does not possess the actual knowledge, because the organs of its senses are not developed. The knowledge of truth is conditioned by a certain admonition which comes from the external world through the senses and by means of words. Man cannot act through his soul alone, without the intermediary of the body, on the souls of his fellow men. This can be done by God only; "Sed operari de animis rationalibus non per corpus sed per seipsum solus Deus potest[89]." The limitation on the part of man seems to be a consequence of the original sin:

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[85] De Genesi contra Manichaeos, 2.4.5 PL.34, 199.

[86] Ibidem, 2.5.6 PL.34, 199.

[87] Ibidem, 2.20.30 PL.34, 211-212.

[88] De immortalitate animae, 15.24 PL.32, 1033.

[89] De musica, 6.13.41 PL.32, 1185.

> Peccatorum tamen conditione fit ut permittantur animae de animis aliquid agere significamb eas moventes per alterutra corpora, vel naturalibus signis sicut est vultus et nutus vel placitis sicut sunt verba. Nam et jubentes et suadentes signis agunt et siquid est aliud praeter jussionem et suasionem, quo animae de animis vel cum animis aliquid agunt[90].

If we, therefore, consider the above mentioned passage of the Soliloquies in the light of its context, Platonic pre-existence must be excluded.

8. THE DISPUTED TEXT OF THE DE QUANTITATE ANIMAE.

But, one may object that a year later, in 388, in Rome, Augustine's pupil, Evodius, held the opinion that the souls, being eternal, had pre-existed and that they should bring some art along with them[91]. Yet, we see that the newborn child, for all appearances, is utterly unskilled and without the use of reason. Is not Evodius's conviction about the eternity and the pre-existence of the souls an echo of Augustine's teaching?

First of all, Evodius's problem shows that he did not have a comprehensive knowledge of Platonic reminiscence. He did not distinguish actual knowledge from a certain habitual knowledge. The lack of actual knowledge was for him a proof that no knowledge at all can be attributed to an infant.

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90 Ibidem.

91 De quantitate animae, 20.34 PL.32, 1054.

But Augustine advocated a different view:

> The question you are raising is an important one, an extremely important one; in fact, I am not sure there is any more important. It finds us holding opinions so diametrically opposed as to let you think that the soul has brought no art with it, whereas in my view it has brought all of them with it, and what is called learning is nothing else than remembering and recalling[92].

This does not mean that Augustine believed in the pre-existence of the soul as Evodius did. We saw that he promised Evodius to discuss later the problem of its eternity. This by itself already indicates at least Augustine's doubts on this topic. In the De Genesi contra Manichaeos, Augustine teaches the creation in time.

By maintaining, however, that the infant brought with it all arts, and, that learning is nothing else than remembering or reminding, Augustine did not intend to teach Platonic pre-existence.

> When I stated that, in my view, the soul has brought all the arts with it, and what is called learning is nothing else than remembering and recalling, that is not to be taken as if approval is hereby to be given to the view that the soul has previously lived, either here in another body, or elsewhere, whether in a body or independently of a body, and that the answers it gives to questions, since they were not learned here, were learned before in another life[93].

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92 Ibidem.

93 Retractationes, 1.8.2 PL.32, 594.

While writing these words, Augustine was well aware of what he had said on this subject in his "retractatio" concerning the disputed passage of his Soliloquies. The theory of pre-existence is not the only one which can explain the correct answers given to certain questions in the liberal disciplines before one had studied them:

> For it can well be, as we had said before, in the present work [in the Retractationes, 1.4.4], that it is able to do this because it is by nature intellectual, so that it is in communication with realities that are not only intelligible but also immutable. It is so constituted, that, when it turns toward those realities, with which it is in contact, or, when it turns toward itself, it is able to give true answers regarding those realities to the extent that it sees them[94].

Although this "retractatio" had been written about 427 A.D., shortly before Augustine's death, it affords no new discovery. Similar expressions were used by Augustine already in the De immortalitate animae of 387 where he emphasized the union of the soul with the "rationes aeternae".

> ...summis illis rationibus quae incommutabiliter manent[95] nec utique loco continentur prior afficitur anima quam corpus... Haec autem quae intelliguntur eodem modo sese habentia cum ea intuetur animus satis ostendit se illis esse conjunctum miro quodam eodemque incorporali modo scilicet non localiter[96].

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[94] Retractationes, 1.8.2 PL.32, 594.

[95] De immortalitate animae, 15.24 PL.32, 1033.

[96] De immortalitate animae, 16.17 PL.32, 1030.

Indirectly, Augustine affirms in the same treatise that the soul enjoys the "sempiternam praesentiam verarum rationum". They can be actually known even in sleep. "If, for instance, someone during a dream has appeared to himself as engaged in a discussion and, pursuing true principles, has learned something in this discussion, then these true principles, also remain the same and unchangeable after his awakening[97]." Such learning during a dream may be, of course, accompanied by different images of the place of the discussion, of the person with whom the discussion took place in sleep, even of the words used by the awakened persons. Although the "intelligibilia" learned in sleep remain unchangeable after awakening, other circumstances may be found untrue because

> ... quae... cum ipsis sensibus sentiuntur agunturque a vigilantibus praetereunt tamen nec ulla ex parte sempiternam praesentiam verarum rationum assequuntur[98].

On account of all these considerations, Augustine's "retractatio" concerning the passage of the Soliloquies, in which he seemed to suggest Platonic pre-existence of the soul — this "retractatio" which said: "sed hoc quoque improbo", — should be considered in the same light as similar utterances in the Contra Academicos and those in the De quantitate animae.

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97 De immortalitate animae, 14.23 PL.32, 1032.

98 Ibidem.

Not only the context of the Soliloquies themselves, but also the context of the Retractationes excludes Platonic pre-existence. The "sed hoc quoque improbo" means: "I disapprove (improbo) of the unhappy expression which is misleading".

9. A DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT OF THE MEMORY OF PERMANENT THINGS.

We are led more deeply into Augustine's theory of reminiscence through his discussion on the subject of memory, a discussion held with his friend Nebridius. This conversation took place in 389. Augustine lived at that time a community life with his friends at Tagaste, while Nebridius lived near Carthage together with his mother. The two friends used to exchange their opinions on different problems especially on the problem of knowledge[99].

It is not to be excluded that Nebridius was acquainted with Augustine's De Magistro[100]. Whatever it may be, he was conversant with the Platonic theory that "learning is nothing else than remembering and recalling[101]". But

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[99] Ep.6 PL.33, 67; Ep.7 PL.33, 68-71.

[100] It should be recalled that Augustine used to send his writings to Nebridius in order to know his appraisal.

[101] This can be seen from the exchange of letters and from Augustine's previous dialogues where the problem of memory was discussed as in the Soliloquia and in the De quantitate animae.

precisely this statement was the subject of his criticism.

According to Augustine, the human soul is united to the "rationes aeternae". This union is never discontinued whether we think actually or do not do so. Nevertheless, the actual thinking cannot take place without an admonition made by the senses and communicated by the external world or by means of words. The immutable truths are not derived from the sensible world or from the mind of another man[102].

Since in our actual knowledge, the senses are de facto necessary, both the imagination and the sensitive memory, as well as the external senses, play a great role in our life. Yet, even in an infant, in which the senses have not been developed, the immutable truths are in extant because the mind of the infant always remains in union with the "rationes aeternae". This means that the "intelligibilia" are not accompanied by images, as it happens in our actud knowledge.

Now, this actual knowledge is called remembering or recalling according to the analogy with our memory of sensible things.

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[102] It is just in connection with this statement the problem was raised by Nebridius in what manner the superior powers are able to influence our knowledge. (Ep. 8 and 9).

Nebridus could not agree with Augustine's view on the notion of intellectual memory. He did not understand Augustine's position that there can be a memory without images. In this regard, Augustine was not ambiguous:

> Memoria tibi nulla videtur esse posse sine imaginibus, vel imaginariis visis quae phantasiarum nomine appellare voluisti - ego aliud existimo[103].

Since the "intelligibilia" do not belong to the sensible order, they cannot be represented by images. So Augustine was right by asserting that there can be a kind of memory without images. But, Nebridius thought that this kind of intellectual knowledge is not a memory:

> Mihi enim videtur quod quamvis non omnes phantasia cum memoria sit [for instance, when we have images of the objects present to the senses] omnis tamen memoria sine phantasia esse non possit[104].

In other words, there is no memory without images. This could not be questioned in regard to the things of the sensible order. But what about the intelligible order? Is there no memory at all in this order? Nebridius made here a distinction between our actions which are intelligible by nature and their objects. As to our actions of the intelligible order, there is the fact that we are able to recall our

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[103] Ep.7 PL.33, 68.

[104] Ep.6.1 PL.33, 67.

acts of understanding. This should rather prove Augustine's thesis that there is a memory without images. Nebridius anticipated Augustine's objection: "Sed dices: Quid cum recordamur nos intelexisse aut cogitasse?"[105] No doubt, one could not deny the existence of such a memory. And, since the act of understanding is not in the sensible order, it should not be accompanied by an image which would represent it. And so Augustine would be right by affirming that there is a memory without images. But, according to Nebridius, we recall the act of understanding or thinking only when it is applied to sensible things. In such remembering images of the sensible things are produced in the mind:

> Contra haec [that there is a memory of understanding and thinking without images] ego respondeo et dico, propterea hoc evenisse quia cum intelleximus vel cogitavimus corporeum aliquid, genuimus quod ad phantasiam pertinet: nam aut verba intellectui cogitationibusque nostris adjunximus; quae verba sine tempore non sunt, et ad sensum vel phantasiam pertinent; aut tale aliquid intellectus noster cogitatione passus est quod in animo phantastico memoriam facere potuisset.[106]

These images, according to Nebridius, are rather the product of the imagination than of the senses:

> Cur, quaeso te, non a se potius quam a sensu Phantasiam habere omnes imagines dicimus? Potest enim, quemadmodum animus intellectualis ad intelligibilia sua videnda a sensu admonetur potius quam aliquid accipit, ita et phantasticus animus ad

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105 Ibidem.

106 Ibidem.

> imagines suas contemplandas, a sensu admoneri potius quam aliquid assumere. Nam forte inde contingit, ut ea quae sensus non videt, ille tamen aspicere possit; quod signum est, in se et a se habere omnes imagines[107].

Without discussing Nebridius's theory concerning the origin of the images, a theory to which Augustine could not subscribe, what should one say of our understanding and thinking about thins intelligible by nature. Certainly Nebridius did not disagree with Augustine that knowledge was not accompanied by images, although an admonition from the senses was necessary: "animus intellectualis ad intelligibilia sua videnda a sensu admonetur potius quam accipit[108]." But he could not agree with Augustine that the knowledge of the intelligible object is nothing but remembering or recalling. He insisted that memory is always accompanied by images, because it bears upon transient things — upon the past: "Memoria praeteriti temporis vindicat tenacitatem[109]." In this regard, Nebridius was like Augustine's pupil, Licentius, who thought that "the memory is needful for the things only which are transitory and, so to speak, fugitive[110]." But the things of the mind are always the same; they are not affected by time; they never change. This was always taught by Augustine in his dialogues from the very beginning of his

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107 Ibidem.

108 Ibidem.

109 Ep.7.1 PL.33, 68.

110 De ordine, 2.2.6 PL.32, 996.

literary career. Secondly, Augustine used to stress that the "intelligibilia" are always present to the mind. From this teaching, Licentius has coined an argument against the Platonic notion of recollection. If the immutable things are present to the mind, there is no need for memory: "Even sensation itself we do not call memory to our aid with regard to that which is before our eyes. Therefore, what need is there of memory for a wise man who has everything in front of the interior eyes of the intellect or, in other words, gazes fixedly and immovably on God Himself with Whom are all the things that the intellect can see and possess[111]." We look every day at the things which surround us. They are present to our eyes, and their images are formed in the internal senses, but nobody considers this act as one of memory. Why should we extend the term memory to a similar phenomenon in the intelligible order with regard to the immutable truths which are always present to the mind?

In order to convince Nebridius that the contemplation of the immutable truths exhibits the features of remembering and recalling, Augustine had recourse to our memory of sensible things.

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[111] De ordine, 2.2.7 PL.34, 997.

Even in this order there is a memory not only of transitory things, but often of things which are permanent: "primum ergo videndum est non nos semper rerum praeterëuntium meminisse, sed plerumque permanentium[112]."

According to common opinion, memory bears on the past. Augustine agrees with Nebridius that "memoria praeteriti temporis vindicat tenacitatem." This means that we recall an act of knowledge which took place in the past. Although our knowledge was referred to the things perceived by the senses, even in this domain, there are not only transitory things, but also, in a certain way, permanent ones, i.e., which still exist:

> Such a memory embraces on the one hand, things which leave us, and, on the other hand, things from which we go away. When, for example, I remember my father, the object which memory recalls is one which has left me, and is no more. But, when I remember Carthage, the object is in this case one which still exists and which I have left[113].

In both cases, we retain the act of knowledge which took place in the past: "For I remember that man and this city not because I see them now, but because I saw them in the past[114]."

> In utroque tamen generum horum praeteritum tempus memoria tenet; nam et illum hominem et istam urbem ex eo quod vidi non ex eo quod video memini[115].

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112 Ep.7.1 PL.33, 68.

113 Ep.7.2 PL.33, 68.

114 Ibidem.

115 Ibidem.

This example should explain Augustine's doctrine that there is in the intelligible order a memory of those things which are truely permanent, and for this reason without images of things with which our mind is always united. Such a memory was already taught by Socrates when he said that the things which we learn are not introduced into our mind as something new but brought back to memory by a process of recollection.

But precisely this kind of recollection was criticized by some people, and Nebridius was among them because it seemed to be in disagreement with the definition of memory. The latter is concerned with transitory things, but the things w which we learn are always and never can perish.

> Nonnulli calumniantur adversus Socraticum illud nobilissimum inventum, quo asseritur, non nobis ea quae discimus, veluti nova inseri, sed in memoriam recordatione revocari, dicentes memoriam praeteritarum rerum esse, haec autem quae intelligendo discimus, Platone ipso auctore manere semper, nec posse interire, ac per hoc non esse praeterita[116].

According to Augustine, this criticism has the character of a calumny, because it attributes to Socrates a distortion of the notion of memory, a notion which is common among people, namely, that it enables us to recall the past.

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116 Ibidem.

In defence of Socrates and Plato, Augustine shows that the recall of things which are permanent does not destroy the "memoria praeteritarum rerum". On the contrary, by means of the transitory things, the permanent things are learned. Such a transitory thing was, according to Plato, the vision of permanent things, which took place in the past. We had once contemplated these things with the eyes of our mind, but then, we left them and paid attention to other things. Therefore, if we want to contemplate them again, we are to recall our former spiritual experience. Those, who are displeased with the Platonic theory, do not realize that this vision was transitory, although by means of it the immutable, permanent things had been grasped:

> Qui non attendunt illam visionem esse praeteritam qua haec aliquando vidimus: a quibus quia defluximus, et aliter alia videre coepimus, ea nos reminiscendo revisere id est per memoriam. Quamobrem, si ut alia omittam, ipsa aeternitas semper manet, nec aliqua imaginaria figmenta conquirit, quibus in mentem quasi vehiculis veniat, nec tamen venire potest, nisi ejus meminissemus, potest esse quarumdam rerum sine ulla imaginatione memoria[117].

In this way Augustine showed Nebridius that our knowledge of immutable things exhibits the essential feature of memory since only by recalling the former vision of the immutable things we actually again pay attention to them.

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[117] Ep.7.2 PL.33, 68.

Although Augustine praises Plato and Socrates for their theory of recollection, he did not intend to recommend their doctrine of pre-existence with sin and punishment of the soul. Nebridius used to confine the notion of memory to things which are not present to the knowing faculty and which are transitory. Evidently, prima facie there cannot be a memory of immutable truths since they are always in the mind and never can change. In spite of it, Socrates and Plato maintained that our knowledge of these things is nothing but remembering and recalling. According to Nebridius, it was an evident mistake. Nebridius was misled by our memory of sensible things which are subject to change in place and time. This made him forget that although in our intellectual knowledge the object is immutable, the act itself of knowing is transitory and for this reason it belongs to the past. Plato, therefore, and Socrates did not distort the notion of memory since it is the act of former knowledge that is recalled.

On this point, Both Plato and Augustine are in agreement, but they differ in determining the "when" of the first actual intellectual knowledge which has the character of recollection.

According to Plato, the soul had the knowledge of immutable things when it had lived in the intelligible world and possessed wisdom. The recollection took place in man,

i.e. in the rational animal composed of body and soul, when he became aware, for the first time, of the immutability of a truth, for instance of a moral law binding the conscience. The origin of this knowledge has its root in the past of the soul. Such knowledge is possible because in the other life it was proper to the soul to see the immutable truths. Without this previous seeing, the first intellectual act of knowledge in man of the immutable truth could not be considered as remembering and recalling, because through the remembrance of the former vision, the soul is admonished to contemplate again the truth.

But the Augustinian recollection should be formulated in a different way. St. Augustine does not exclude the possibility of a certain pre-existence, but not such as Plato had fancied. During the same period of time in which he was exchanging views with Nebridius in 389, he did not hesitate to expose his opinion on this subject. In the De Genesi contra Manichaeos, he found a good opportunity to do so, in connection with the account in the Bible of the creation of man:

> Quod autem scriptum est: Et insufflavit in eum spiritum vitae et factus est homo in animam viventem - si adhuc corpus solum erat, animam adjunctam corpori hoc loco intelligere debemus; sive quae jam facta erat, sed tamquam in ore Dei erat id est in ejus veritate vel sapientia, unde tamen non recessit quasi locis separata quando insufflata est; non enim Deus loco continetur, sed ubique praesens est: sive tunc anima facta est, quando in illud figmentum Deus

> insufflavit spiritum vitae, ut illa insufflatio ipsam Dei operationem significet qua fecit animam in homine spiritu potentiae[118].

There can be a twofold interpretation of the words — "et insufflavit in eum spiritum vitae et factus est homo in animam viventem": either the body without the soul was already formed, and the "insufflavit" therefore means the union of the soul with the body; or, the body and the soul were already united: and then the words signify the endowing of the soul with senses.

The pre-existence of the soul, according to Augustine, is possible. If the soul of the first man had really pre-existed before its union with the body, it had lived in a mysterious abode: "in ore Dei, i.e. in ejus veritate et sapientia". It was not a Platonic pre-existence, because the sin of the first man was committed by the soul united to the body.

Neither did Augustine exclude the possibility of the pre-existence of the individual souls of the descendants of Adam and Eve. In the De libero arbitrio, he discusses the different opinions in regard to the origin of the souls:

> Utrum de propagine [animae] veniant; an in singulis quibusdam nascentibus novae fiant; an in corpora nascentium jam alicubi existentes vel mittantur divinitus vel sua sponte labantur[119].

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[118] De Genesi contra Manichaeos, 2.10 PL.34, 174.

[119] De libero arbitrio, 3.21.59 PL.32,

The first opinion maintains that God has created the soul of the first man, and that from this soul all other human souls are born: "...una anima facta est ex qua omnium hominum animae trahuntur nascentium[120]."

According to the second opinion, the individual souls are created in each individual man: "singillatim fiunt in unoquoque nascentium[121]."

Besides these two opinions, Augustine mentions two others which imply the pre-existence of souls. There are people who think that before being united to the bodies, the souls had lived in a certain secret divine abode — from which they descend into their bodies:

> ... in Dei secreto jam existentes animae mittuntur ad inspiranda et regenda corpora singulorum quorumcumque nascentium, ad hoc utique mitturtur officium, ut corpus quod de poena peccati, hoc est mortalitate primi hominis nascitur, bene administrando, id est,castigando per virtutes et ordinatissimae atque legitimae servituti subiciendo etiam ipsi comparent ordine atque tempore oppertuno coelestis incorruptionis locum.
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> Quae cum introeant in hanc vitam, subeuntque gestanda membra temporalia, subeant etiam necesse est et oblivionem vitae prioris et praesentis laborem[122].

From this it follows that in its secret abode the soul had a certain kind of consciousness, since being united to the

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120 De libero arbitrio, 3.21.56 PL.32,

121 Ibidem.

122 Ibidem, 3.21.57 PL.32,

body — "subest oblivionem vitae prioris". But this opinion, quoted by Augustine, does not admit a sin of the soul committed in its previous pre-existence. The union of the souls to their bodies followed not the free choice of the will, but God's Providence — "animae mittuntur ad inspiranda et regenda corpora[123]."

But, according to another opinion, the souls had descended to their bodies by their own free choice: "... alibi animae constitutae non mittuntur a Domino Deo, sed sua sponte ad inhabitanda corpora veniunt[124]."

Both opinions concerning the pre-existence of the soul imply a certain consciousness of the soul but they exclude the sin committed in their previous life.

In the De libero arbitrio, Augustine expressed his attitude to the four opinions in the following way:

> Harum autem quatuor de anima sententiarum... nullam temere affirmare oportebit. Aut non enim ista quaestio a divinorum Librorum catholicis tractatoribus pro merito suae obscuritatis et perplexitatis evoluta atque illustrata est; aut si jam factum est, nondum in manus nostras hujuscemodi litterae pervenerunt. Tantum adsit fides nihil de substantia Creatoris falsum indignumque sentiendi. Ad illum enim tendimus itinere pietatis. Si ergo aliud de illo senserimus quam est, intentio nostra non in beatitatem, sed in vanitatem nos ire compellet. De creatura vero si quid aliter quam sese habet senserimus, dummodo non id pro cognito perceptoque teneamus, nullum periculum est. Non enim

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123 Ibidem, 2.2157 Pl.32,

124 De libero arbitrio, 3.20.58 PL.32,

> ad creaturam jubemur tendere ut efficiamur beati, sed ad ipsum creatorem; de quo si aliud quam oportet ac sese res habet, nobis persuadetur, perniciosissimo errore decipimur. Ad hoc enim pergendo, quod aut non est, aut, si est, non facit beatos, ad beatam vitam nullus pervenire potest[125].

In the tenth Book of the De Genesi ad litteram, Augustine was rather inclined to accept the first two views as more compatible with the Holy Scriptures. In the Soliloquies he seems to develop his theory of illumination on the presumption that the soul begins to be illuminated while united to the body. But this did not dispel his doubts. The possibility of a pre-existence was not excluded. Yet Augustine was certain, his certitude being based on the Bible, that in that life the soul had not committed a sin as Plato had fancied. So, what kind of life was it? Already in Rome, in 388 A.D., Augustine had raised this problem:

> Sed cum sapientia in animo sit, utrum ante consortium hujus corporis alia quadam vita vixerit animus et an aliquando sapienter vixerit magna quaestio est magnum secretum et suo considerandum loco[126].

His theory of recollection which he exposes in the De Magistro is not based on a possible pre-existence and a possible illumination by God, a thesis which cannot be proved. But we are well aware that, united to our bodies, we know the immutable truths. It seems to be more probable that we know

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[125] De libero arbitrio, 3.21.58 PL.32,

[126] De libero arbitrio, 1.12.24 PL.32,

these truths because we are now, while in our bodies, illuminated by God. The true answers given by the pupils and by the illiterate people can be explained through the continual illumination which enables the mind to see with certitude the so-called immutable truths.

> Credibilius est enim propterea vera respondere de quibusdam disciplinis etiam imperitos earum, quando bene interrogantur, quia praesens est eis quantum id capere possunt lumen rationis aeternae, ubi haec immutabilia vera conspiciunt. Non quia ea noverant aliquando et obliti sunt, quod Platoni et talibus visum est[127].

Since according to Augustine, it is properly the vision of the permanent things which is recalled, the first act of knowledge of the immutable truth in human life, cannot be considered as a recollection. As the truth of different statements is seen in the light of the first principles, our intellectual knowledge starts with the grasp of the first principles of thinking. If Augustine says that learning is nothing else but a reminding and recalling, this means that in each necessary conclusion we are reminded in some way of the first act of our intellectual knowledge, and due to this reminiscence, we see the truth of the other statements. For Plato, the knowledge acquired in the previous life is recalled in the first necessary statements during this life. For Augustine, the first act of intellectual knowledge which took

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[127] Retractationes, 1.4.4 /L.32,

place in our childhood lives by way of recollection in all subsequent acts of the intellect[128]. It would be interesting to study Augustine's observations concerning the beginning and the development of the intellectual life of a child. The Confessions provide very precious materials on this subject. Since, according to Augustine, there is no intellectual knowledge without signs, intellectual knowledge, properly speaking, starts when the child grasps the meaning of the sign. This happens not in abstracto, but in a concrete situation, in things in which the child is interested by its instincts: "... in petendis, habendis, reiciendis, fugiendisve rebus[129]".

But this belongs rather to experimental psychology.

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CHAPTER VII

THE MEANING OF THE THINGS OF THE MIND

1. THE CONTENT OF INTELLECTUAL MEMORY: IMMUTABLE TRUTHS.

The intellectual memory of which Augustine speaks in the De Magistro contains, according to his expression, the things themselves — "res ipsae"[1] — the things of the mind: "... haec quae intelliguntur... quae mente percipiuntur ... intelligibilia... spiritualia[2] ... disciplinae ... ipsiusque virtutis atque sapientiae disciplinae[3]." By these terms Augustine meant not only the first principles, but also the conclusions[4] drawn from them, with or without the help of others.

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[1] De Magistro, 1.2 PL.32, 1195.

[2] De Magistro, 12.39 PL.32, 1216.

[3] De Magistro, 14.45 PL.32, 1219. Cf. also Augustine's remarks about scire in the Retractationes, 1.14.3 PL.32, 607 and 1.12 PL.32, 602.

[4] De Magistro, 13.41 PL.32, 1218 and 12.40 PL.32,1217.

2. THE ROLE OF IMMUTABLE TRUTHS IN AUGUSTINE'S CONVERSION.

As had been explained before, during his Manichaean years, Augustine was startled by the immutable truths of the liberal disciplines. He tried to find out the source of their immutability as well as the way in which they are known by the mind. The disproportion between the object known and the knowing subject required an explanation.

With the help of the Platonic books, Augustine had found a solution satisfactory to his problem.

By considering both the act of knowing and the immutable truth itself, known by the mind, he had discovered that, on account of its mutability, his soul must have been created by God. As such, it could not be the source of truth. Moreover, since God alone is immutable, He is not only the Truth Itself, but also the Giver both of being and of truth known by man: the Creator and the Illuminator of man.

By analogy with human activity, Augustine also understood that, before existing in themselves, the things lived in God. "Quod factum est in ipso vita erat[5]." This life means the divine ideas through which God has created the world, the ideas which are God Himself, the Divine Intellect, identified

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[5] John, 1.4.

with the second Person.

Beside the problem of origin, Augustine had succeeded in understanding the "quomodo" of our intellectual knowledge.

To know the immutable truth does not mean that we see God face to face, as the Manichaeans fancied, by considering the human soul as a particle of God.

Man comes to know God indirectly — through creatures, by analysing his knowledge of them. He forms his judgments about them according to certain general, immutable standards. The immutable, which is discovered by man in his own mind, leads him to the knowledge of the Immutable above the human mind — to God.

3. THE IMMUTABLE TRUTHS AND AUGUSTINE'S METHOD OF KNOWING GOD THROUGH CREATURES.

We saw also how Augustine had built up a theory of the ascent to God, according to St. Paul's method, and in harmony with his own experiences which he described in the Confessions.

He pictured, in sweeping lines, the advance of the soul towards God, starting with the sensible reality, the object of the liberal disciplines. Both the human language — which gives the key to the human soul — and the external things, extended in space and time exhibit different numbers. The variety of measures in words and verses, in movements and

figures, gave rise to different arts in which the number is essential. Our knowledge of concrete numbers presupposes the abstract numbers, or, to use St. Augustine's langage, the intelligible numbers in our mind. All numbers are based on the intelligible "unum", that "universae veritatis index[6]". As such, the "unum" enables us, not only to know the sensible numbers, but also to raise ourselves to the "unum" in the "in illa summa lege summoque ordine rerum[7]", — to the Beginning of all things.

From this, one can see how great is the role of the "intelligibilia" found in our soul. They allow us to view the whole universe: what is beneath; in, and above the soul. In the De Magistro, Adeodatus seems to be acquainted with these realities without which Augustine's thesis would not be understandable. It was a great day in Augustine's life when he had grasped the difference between the "intelligibilia" and the "sensibilia", — the beginning of his intellectual conversion. A few years later, while recollecting the hardships of searching for truth, he would make a confession concerning these times:

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[6] De ordine, 2.15.43 PL.32, 1115.

[7] De ordine, 2.18.47 PL.32, 1017.

> Verum est, non poteram illo tempore sensibilia ab intelligibilibus, carnalia scilicet ab spiritualibus dijudicare atque discernere; non erat aetatis, non disciplinae, non cujusdam etiam consuetudinis, non ullorum denique meritorum: non enim parvi gaudii et felicitatis res est; ita ne tandem ne illud quidem arripere poteram, quod in omnium hominum judicio summi Dei legibus natura ipsa constituit[8].

As soon as the difference had been grasped, Augustine realized all the implications involved. He understood that a weapon had been found against Manichaeism and Scepticism. Against Manichaeism, because there is nothing corporeal in the immutable truths; against Scepticism, because nobody can deny the truth of the first principles without contradicting himself. If so, there is no obstacle to approaching by reason the revealed truths which are the denial of Manichaeism.

4. THE STUDY OF THE IMMUTABLE TRUTHS AT THE OUTSET OF AUGUSTINE'S LITERARY CAREER.

With such views, Augustine started his literary career at Cassaciacum. He planned to confirm himself in his recently acquired convictions concerning God and the human soul, and at the same time to purify his mind from the remnants of his former Manichaeism. The dialogues and the other writings completed at Cassaciacum, Milan, Rome, and Tagaste, enable us to watch Augustine's evolution step by step and to see how his

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[8] De duabus animabus, 9.12 PL.42, 94. See also Augustine's letter to Nebridius, Ep.4.

problem concerning the immutable truths gradually culminates in the shape given in the De Magistro.

Already in the Contra Academicos, his first work, Augustine set up against the arguments of the Sceptics of the New Academy the immutable truths which cannot be rejected, and which are used even by those who doubt or deny the existence of truth.

Augustine realized the desperate consequence of the academic position. If no truth can be known with absolute certitude, no one would be able to know God and his own soul. For this reason, the doubt of the mind should be removed at any price. This was Augustine's main purpose at Cassaciacum.

> Cum ergo reliquissem, vel quae adeptus fueram in cupiditatibus hujus mundi, vel quae adipisci volebam, et me ad christianae vitae otium contulissem, nondum baptizatus contra Academicos vel de Academicis primum scripsi, ut argumenta eorum, quae multis ingerunt veri inveniendi desperationem et prohibent cuique rei assentiri et omnino aliquid tamquam manifestum certumque sit, approbare sapientem, cum eis omnia videntur obscura et incerta, ab animo meo, quia et me movebant, quantis possum rationibus amoverem. Quid miserante atque adjuvante Domino factum est[9].

a. The immutable truths in the existential order. — In his mind, Augustine had succeeded in averting the danger of scepticism, not only negatively[10], by solving the difficulties

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[9] Retractationes, l.1.1 PL.32, 835.

[10] Cf. F.J. Thonnard, Précis d'histoire de la philosophie, Paris, 1948, p. 207.

and objections of the Sceptics, but also positively, by concentrating on the principles which he always accepted, and which form the foundation of our intellectual knowledge. This is the climax of his considerations in the Contra Academicos[11].

What are these principles? First, in the existential order, we have the certitude of being composed of body and soul.

This he did for the first time in the De beata vita:

> Manifestum vobis videtur [says Augustine to his pupils] ex anima et ex corpore nos esse compositos? Cum omnes consentirent, Navigius se ignorare respondit. Cui ego: Nihil nihilque omnino scis — inquam — an inter aliqua, quae ignoras, etiam hoc numerandum est? Non puto me — inquit — omnia nescire. Potesne inquam nobis dicere aliquid eorum quae nosti? Possum — inquit — nisi molestum est — inquam — prefer aliquid. Et cum dubitabat: Scisne — inquam — saltem te vivere? Scio - inquit. - Scire ergo habere te vitam, siquidem vivere nemo, nisi vita, potest. Et hoc - inquit - scio. Scis etiam corpus te habere? Assentiebatur. Ergo jam scis te constare ex corpore et vita[12].

Although Augustine underlines our certitude of being composed of body and soul, he does not intend to make a statement concerning the nature of that composition. He only wants to stress the fact of our consciousness: everybody knows that he is composed of body and soul. Since the soul, for him, means life, he is certain that he lives.

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[11] See book 3.

[12] De beata vita, 2.7 PL.32, 965.

Also in the Contra Academicos, there is a certain allusion to that kind of self-knowledge. The Sceptics used to say that the wise man knows nothing with certitude, even whether he lives. To Augustine it would rather appear more logical to maintain that man is not at all able to acquire wisdom than to affirm that the wise man knows nothing, even whether he lives.

> Dicendum potius erat non posse in hominem cadere sapientiam quam sapientem nescire cur vivat, nescire quemadmodum vivat nescire utrum vivat[13].

Naturally, he who is conscious that he lives is not yet, by the very fact of his consciousness, a wise man. But wisdom implies such a consciousness which is the characteristic feature of all human knowledge.

This kind of introspection is developed and analysed more thoroughly by Augustine in the Soliloquies. There we see him, immersed in his thoughts, searching for certitude. For days at a time, he would revolve in his mind various matters. All of them centered around God, his soul, and the evil which he wanted to avoid[14]. In order to find the most certain truth which would protect him against his former doubts, Augustine entered into a conversation with his "ratio". The results of his meditation can be summed up as follows:

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[13] Contra Academicos, 3.9.19 PL.32, 945.

[14] Soliloquia, 1.1.1 PL.32, 989.

> I want to know God and my soul, to know them with absolute certainty. The knowledge which I have about God is faith rather than a true knowledge[15]. What about the knowledge of my soul? What do I know about it with certitude? I know with certitude that I am, but I do not know with certitude where the source of my knowledge is[16]. I do not know whether I am simple or multiple. I do not know with certitude whether I am moved or not, and whether I am immortal. But I know with certitude that I think. This is not subject to doubt. Among things which I would like to know with certitude is that I am immortal. However, if I acquire this knowledge about my immortality, it will not be enough for me although I will enjoy it. If my knowledge is confined to the subjects which I already know, I will not stop crying because such a life would not be a life. This is a sign for me that I want to live in order to know with certitude. But perhaps such knowledge will make me unhappy? No, it is impossible. In this case, nobody could be happy. The source of my unhappiness lies precisely in the ignorance of these things. If knowledge of such matters makes man unhappy, there is nothing but eternal unhappiness. This throws light on my desires. If knowledge with certitude renders nobody unhappy, there is a probability that the understanding of things brings happiness. But nobody becomes happy unless he lives, and nobody lives unless he exists. Hence it follows that I want to be, to live, to know. I want to be, in order to live, and I want to live in order to know. Therefore, I know that I am, that I live, that I know: Ergo esse te scis, vivere te scis, intelligere te scis[16].

It is striking that Augustine had advanced this manner of reasoning just before his demonstration of the immortality of the soul. His concentrating on self-knowledge was intended to overcome any doubts which could threaten or paralyze his intellectual efforts. The same method was used by

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[15] Soliloquia, 1.4.9.

[16] Soliloquia, 2.1.1 PL.32, 885.

Augustine in the De libero arbitrio, book 2, as an introduction to his demonstration of God's existence.

> Prius, abs te quaero, ut de manifestissimis capiamus exordium, utrum tu ipse sis. An tu fortasse metuis, ne in hac interrogatione fallaris, cum utique, si non esses, falli omnino non posses. Evodius: Perge potius ad caetera. Augustinus: Ergo quoniam manifestum est esse te nec tibi aliter manifestum esset, nisi viveres, id quoque manifestum est vivere te: intelligisne ista duo esse verissima. Evodius: Prorsus intelligo. Augustinus: Ergo etiam hoc tertium manifestum est, hoc est: intelligere te[17].

The possibility that these words were written by Augustine at Tagaste in 389 A.D. is not to be excluded. They are probably contemporary to the De Magistro.

b. The immutable truths of general validity and application. — The certitude of Augustine's self-knowledge destroyed his own scepticism. But the truth of the proposition, concerning the reality within, I know that I know — cannot be extended to the reality without. The fact of knowing oneself is a concrete fact, and bears on a concrete object immediately known to the knowing subject only. Such a truth remains in the private possession of the individual man. However, if we analyse the content of our consciousness, we will find out that there are also truths of general validity

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[17] De libero arbitrio, 2.3.7 PL.32, 1213.

and general application[18].

c. The immutable truths of dialectics. — In order to refute not only his own scepticism but also that of his friends and of other people who suffer from doubts, Augustine made an appeal to these truths, as the foundation of our knowledge. He had discovered them many years ago, in the liberal disciplines, without knowing their true source. We saw how Augustine was startled by the principle of the proposition: The immutable is better than the mutable. We also saw how this principle opened his eyes to the most difficult problems concerning God, his soul, and the corporeal world. But similar propositions can be found in great number in the liberal disciplines. In the Contra Academicos, Augustine set them against the Sceptics. As a teacher of liberal disciplines, he was conversant with dialectics. He did not hesitate to declare to his pupils that he had a certain proficiency in this matter: "Truly I know more about dialectics than about

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18 "So hohen Wert nämlich Augustin dem aus der Selbstgewissheit geschopften Argumente auch beimass, es blieb ihm nicht verborgen, dass jehne Tatsachen Wahrheiten sen Denken auf den gewonnenena archimedischen Punkte gebannt hielten und es nicht zur Erkenntniss der Wirklochkeit im weitesten Sinne fuhren konnten. Hierzu bedurfte es vielmehr allgemeiner Vernunftwahrheiten, die jedoch zugleich eine Beziehung zum wirklichen Sein haben. Erst die Sicherstellung diesr zweiten Gruppe von Erkenntnisprinzipien konnte die endgultige Uberwindung der Skepsis herbeifuhren" (J. Hessen, Augustins Metaphysik der Erkenntnis, p. 31-32).

any other part of philosophy[19]." No wonder that Augustine drew his weapons against the Academicos from this branch of learning.

When, for certitude, Zeno required an object which did not mislead the mind by certain signs common both to the true and the false: "... tale comprehendi et percipi posse quale cum falso non habent signa communia", Augustine, without discussing the value of this proposition, retorted: "We know with certitude that this is either true or false — Utar complexione securissima. ... scimus enim aut verum esse aut falsum: non igitur nihil scimus[20]."

To people who fall into scepticism because of the disagreement among philosophers about the unicity or multiplicity of the world, Augustine says that he is not interested in this problem. Therefore, his mind is not affected by doubt. "Hoc nihil ad me attinet." But he knows something about it with certitude:

> Certum enim habeo: aut unum esse mundum aut non unum et si non unum aut finiti numeri aut infiniti... Item scio mundum istum nostrum aut natura corporum aut aliqua providentia esse dispositum... eumque aut semper fuisse et fore aut coepisse minime desiturum; aut ortum ex tempore non habere sed habiturum esse finem, aut et manere coepisse et non perpetuo esse mansurum[21].

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[19] Contra Academicos, 3.13.29 PL.32, 949.

[20] Contra Academicos, 3.9.21 PL.32, 944.

[21] Contra Academicos, 3.10.23 PL.32, 946.

Then St. Augustine makes the following remark: "I have the same kind of knowledge with regard to countless cosmological problems, for those disjunctives are true and no one can confuse them with any likeness to falsity[22]." The following propositions are also based on the principle of contradiction:

> ... eindo per ipsam [dialecticam] novi alia multa vera; sed quam multa sint numerate si potestis.
> Si quatuor in mundo elementa sunt, non sunt quinque. Si sol unus est, non sunt duo.
> Non potest una anima et mori et esse immortalis. Non potest homo simul et beatus et miser esse.
> Non hic sol lucet et nox est. Aut vigilamus nunc aut dormimus. Aut corpus est quod mihi videre videor aut non est corpus[23].

All these propositions, according to Augustine, are true, true in themselves, howsoever our senses may be affected.

> Haec et alia multa, quae commemorare longissimum est, per istam [dialecticam] didici vera esse, quoquo modo sese habeant sensus nostri, in seipsa vera.
>
> Docuit me, si cujus eorum quae per connexionem modo proposui pars antecedens assumpta fuerit trahere necessario id quod annexum est.
>
> Ea vero quae per repugnantiam vel disjunctionem a me sunt enuntiata hanc habere naturam ut cum auferantur caetera sive unum sive plura sint restet aliquid quod eorum ablatione firmetur[24].

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[22] Contra Academicos, 3.10.23.

[23] Contra Academicos, 3.13.29 PL.32, 949.

[24] Ibidem.

Besides this, Augustine enumerates certain rules which are to be observed in the art of disputation. They concern both the use of words and the arguments themselves.

Concerning the use of words:

> Docuit me etiam cum de re constat propter quam verba dicuntur de verbis non debere contendi et quisquis id faciat, si imperitia faciat, docendum esse; si malitia deserendum; si doceri non potest monendum, ut aliquid aliud potius agat quam tempus in superfluis operamque consumat; si non obtemperet, negligendum[25].

Concerning arguments:

> De captiosis autem atque fallacibus ratiunculis breve praeceptum est:
> Si male concedendo inferuntur, ad ea quae concessa sunt esse redeundum.
> Si verum falsumque in una conclusione confligunt, accipiendum inde quod intelligitur; quod explicari non potest relinquendum.
> Si autem modus in aliquibus rebus later, penitus hominem scientiam ejus non esse quaerendam[26].

d. The immutable truths of mathematics. — Augustine, who was so amazed with the mathematical truths during his Manichaean years, would not have missed in the Contra Academicos the opportunity of pointing also to the immutability of numbers.

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[25] Contra Academicos, 3.13.29 PL.32, 949.

[26] Ibidem.

> Si autem unus et sex mundi sunt, septem mundos esse, quoquo modo affectus sim, manifestum est; et id me scire non impudenter affirmo[27].

> Nam ter terna novem esse et quadratum intelligibilium numerosum, necesse est, vel genere humano stertente, sit verum[28].

We saw already in the chapter about the ascent of the soul that Augustine based his conclusions on the truth of the intelligible numbers:

> Unum ad duo vel duo ad quattuor verissima ratio, est nec magis heri fuit ista ratio vera quam hodie, nec magis cras aut post annum erit vera, nec, si omnis iste mundus concidat, poterit ista ratio non esse: ista enim semper talis est[29].

> Mutabile est enim omne quod semper eodem modo non est. Et semper eodem modo est duo et quattuor sex. Item semper eodem modo quod est, quod quattuor habent duo et duo hos autem non habent duo, duo igitur quattuor non sunt. Est autem ista ratio immutabilis[30].

Likewise, the principles of geometry are immutable.

> Nam quod est atque immutabile est semper sit necesse est. Esse autem disciplinam nemo negat. Et quisquis fatetur fieri non posse ut ducta per medium circulum linea non sit omnium quae non per medium ducuntur maxima idque esse alicujus disciplinae immutabilem disciplinam esse non negat[31].

The property of immutability is the reason why it is impossible to locate geometry in the changeable world or to

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27 Ibidem.

28 Contra Academicos, 3.11.25 PL.32, 947.

29 De ordine, 2.19.50 PL.32, 1018.

30 De immortalitate animae, 22 PL.32, 1022.

31 De immortalitate animae, 1.1 PL.32, 1020.

perceive it by the senses:

> Quare citius mihi videtur in terra posse navigari quam geometricam sensibus percipi quamvis primo discentes aliquantum adjuvari videantur[32].

One may, perhaps, maintain that numbers have their source in sensible things, but nobody will affirm that the "ratio partitionis numerorum vel copulationis" can be perceived by our senses:

> Si tibi aliquid diceret, numeros istos non ex aliqua sua natura, sed ex iis rebus, quae sensu corporis attingimus, impressos esse animo nostro, quasi quasdam imagines quorumque visibilium, quid responderes? - Nullo modo id putaverim, non enim, si sensu corporis percepi numeros, idcirco etiam rationem partitionis numerorum vel copulationis sensu corporis percipere potui. Hac enim luce mentis refello eum quisquis vel in addendo, vel in retrahendo, dum computet, falsam summam renuntiaverit[33].

If we compare the things of the senses with the "veritas numerorum", we do not know how long the former will last. But we know that the "veritas numerorum" will last forever. For instance: "seven and three are ten" not only today but forever. It never happened in the past that "seven and three were not ten", and it will never happen in the future that "seven and three" will cease to be "ten". These truths are not reserved to some individuals, but are in the possession of all who use their reason[34].

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32 Soliloquia, 1.4.9 PL.32, 874.

33 De libero arbitrio, 2.8.21 PL.32, 1252.

34 Ibidem.

But even the numbers themselves are not acquired through the senses because each number consists of unities. Now, the unity cannot be grasped by the senses:

> Quidquid enim tali sensu attingitur, jam non unum sed multa esse convincitur: corpus est enim et ideo habet innumerabiles partes... nullum corpus vere pureque unum esse concedimus, in quo tamen non possent tam multa numerari, nisi illius unius cognitione discreta. Cum enim quaero unum in corpore et me non invenire non dubito, novi utique quid ibi quaeram et quid ibi non inveniam et non posse inveniri vel potius omnino ibi non esse. Ubi ergo novi quod non est corpus, unum quid sit novi: unum enim si non nossem, multa in corpore numerare non possem. Ubicumque autem unum noverim non utique per corporis sensum novi, quia per corporis sensum non novi nisi corpus quod vere pureque unum non esse convincimus. Porro, si unum non percepimus corporis sensu, nullum numerum eo sensu percepimus, eorum dumtaxat numerorum quos intelligentia cernimus. Nullus enim est ex iis qui non tot vocetur quoties habet unum cujus perceptio corporis sensu non fit. Cujuslibet enim corpusculi pars dimidia quantis duabus totum constat; habet et ipsa dimidiam suam. Sic ergo sunt illae duae partes in corpore, ut nec ipsae simpliciter duae sint. Numerus autem ille qui vocatur duo, quoniam bis habet illud quod simpliciter unum est, pars ejus dimidia, id est, illud ipsum quod simpliciter unum est, non potest rursus habere dimidiam partem vel tertiam vel quotamlibet quoniam simplex et vere unum est[35].

If we, therefore, want to be wise, we should concentrate on that which is one and always the same[36]. We should pass from the sensible numbers to the intelligible numbers. The external world should help us in this return to ourselves:

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[35] De libero arbitrio, 2.8.22 PL.32, 1253.

[36] De libero arbirtio, 2.16.41 PL.32, 1263.

> Quocumque enim te verteris vestigiis quibusdam quae operibus suis impressit, loquitur tibi [Sapientia] et te in exteriora relabentem ipsis exteriorum formis intro revocat, ut quidquid te delectat in corpore et per corporeos illicit sensus videas esse numerosum et quaeras, unde sit et in teipsum redeas, atque intelligas: te id quod attingis sensibus corporis probare aut improbare non posse, nisi apud te habeas quasdam pulchritudinis leges ad quas referas quaeque pulchra sentis exterius[37].

5. THE IMMUTABLE TRUTHS OF THE "DISCIPLINE OF VIRTUE AND WISDOM" - THE "NOTIONES".

In the De Magistro, Augustine mentions that the pupil considers in himself whether what has been said by the teacher is true. The judgment of the pupil is concerned with the doctrine of the liberal disciplines, with the truths taught in dialectics, and in mathematics. But more than that. The pupils are able to judge even the doctrine taught in the discipline of virtue and wisdom[38].

The De libero arbitrio explains what this means. We all have a notion of the good which is impressed on our mind: "Omnes appetunt et malum fugiunt[39]." If we consider some things as good, we must have in our mind a general notion of the good, in the same way as we have in our mind the notion

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[37] De libero arbirtrio, 2.16.41 PL.32, 1263.

[38] According to Augustine the discipline of virtue and wisdom belongs to the liberal arts. It is philosophy which constitutes the summit of liberal arts. Cf. Retractationes, 1.6.

[39] De libero arbitrio, 2.9.26 PL.32, 1254.

of the "unum" by which we number the things of the senses. Later, in the De Trinitate, Augustine will express it formally[40].

Likewise, there is the well-known fact that we want to be wise and happy. But this drive of the soul presupposes the notion of happiness and wisdom impressed upon the mind:

> Ut ergo constat nos beatos esse velle, ita nos constat velle esse sapientes, quia nemo sine sapientia beatus est. Nemo enim beatus est nisi summo bono quod in ea veritate quam sapientiam vocamus cernitur, et tenetur. Sicut ergo antequam beati simus, mentibus tamen nostris impressa est notio beatitatis, per hanc enim scimus fidenterque et sine dubitatione dicimus beatos nos esse velle ita etiam priusquam sapientes simus, sapientiae notionem in mente habemus impressam, per quam unusquisque nostrum, si interrogetur, velitne esse sapiens, sine ulla caligine dubitationis se velle respondet[41].

As it is true that we want to be happy and wise, so also we accept the truth of certain principles which are at the foundation of our moral life:

> Will you not acknowledge that we ought to live most justly; that things less excellent are to be subordinated to things more excellent; that like things are to be compared to like; that to every one is to be given what belongs to him; and that the truth of the foregoing is common to me and to you and to all who see it[42]?

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[40] De Trinitate, 8.3.4 PL.42.

[41] De libero arbitrio, 2.9.26 PL.32, 1254.

[42] De libero arbitrio, 2.10.28 PL.32, 1256.

And Augustine continues to enumerate the precepts of wisdom and virtue:

> Quid? incorruptum melius esse corrupto aeternum temporali inviolabile violabili poteris negare?
>
> Item a corruptione avertendum animum atque ad incorruptionem convetendum esse id est non corruptionem sed incorruptionem diligendam esse quis negat?
>
> Aut quis cum verum esse fateatur non etiam incommutabile intelligat atque omnibus mentibus id valentibus intueri communiter praesto esse videat?
>
> Quid? Eam vitam quae nullis adversitatibus de certa et honesta sententia demovetur dubitabit aliquis esse meliorem quam eam quae facile incommodis temporalibus frangitur atque subvertitur? Quis dubitabitur?[43]

These principles should be considered as rules and "lumina virtutum". They are true and immutable and constitute the common object of our contemplation:

> Satis enim est quod istas tamquam regulas et quedam lumina virtutum et vera et incommutabilia et sive singula sive omnia communiter adesse ad contemplandum eis qui haec valent sua quisque ratione ac mente conspicere, pariter mecum vides certissimumque esse concedis[44].

The above mentioned rules and "lumina virtutum" belong to wisdom. He is wise who has acquired wisdom. Now, he who has acquired sisdom, lives justly. But, it would be impossible for him to act according to justice, if he did not see that inferior things should be subordinate to the superior; that

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[43] De libero arbitrio, ibidem.

[44] De libero arbitrio, 2.10.29 PL.32, 1256.

equal things should be treated on the same level; and that one has to give to everybody his due. Such knowledge is proper to the wise man. If the latter lives according to prudence, he will choose the incorruptible; he will not turn his mind to corruptible things[45].

> Manifestum est igitur omnes has quas regulas diximus et lumina virtutum ad sapientiam pertinere, quandoquidem, quanto magis quisquam ad agendam vitam eis utitur et secundum haec agit vitam, tanto magis vivit facitque sapienter: omne autem quod sapienter fit non potest recte dici a sapientia separatum[46].

6. RECAPITULATION.

To recapitulate briefly: in the Retractationes, Augustine had formulated the thesis of the De Magistro as follows: "There is no teacher other than God Who teaches man science, which is also in accord with what is written in the Gospel — One is your teacher, Christ[47]."

a. The meaning of "Science" taught by God. — From what has been said, it is clear what Augustine meant by science. This term is tantamount to the expression used in the De Magistro — to the things of the mind, "ea quae mente percipiuntur", to the "intelligibilia spiritualia... discipli-

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[45] Ibidem.

[46] Ibidem.

[47] Retractationes, 1.12 PL.32, 602.

nae". By these terms, Augustine had in mind the immutable truths of our judgments rather than notions, or concepts. Practically, with few exceptions (which we have already mentioned), Augustine's problem is the truth of our judgments. Just from the beginning of his philosophic career he was acquainted through Cicero with the Platonic theory of reminiscence which tries to explain the children's certain knowledge of geometry before being taught by the teacher[48]. While teaching the liberal disciplines, Augustine was startled by the truth of certain judgments. According to the Manichaean teaching, he considered his own soul, the particle of God, as the source of truth[49]. In Milan, before his reading the Platonic books, Augustine inquired in vain into the "unde" and the "quomodo" of the principle that the immutable is better than the mutable. With the help of the Platonic books, he found the answer to his problem. We saw in the Contra Academicos, how Augustine had found in the art of dialectics and in the "artes mathematicales" similar immutable truths in great number. In the De ordine, while showing that God's law is impressed upon our mind, both in our theoretical and practical knowledge, he gives an extensive list of principles regarding

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[48] We have seen it in the chapter The Manichaean Approach.

[49] See the above mentioned chapter.

our moral life[50]. When Augustine's pupil, Trigetius, gave a right answer concerning the order of things, the teacher, filled with admiration, exclaimed:

> Quam magna... quam mira mihi per vos Deus ille atque ipse et magis magisque credere adducor rerum nescio quis occultus ordo respondet. Nam ea dicitus quae nec quomodo dicantur non visa nec quomodo ea videatis non intelligo ita ea vera et alta esse suspicor[51].

That Augustine is interested in the matter of true judgment can be seen from his notion of science, which is taught, as he says, not by man, but by the Divine Teacher. In the same Retractationes, in which he sums up the argument of the De Magistro, a few chapters later, he explains what he means by "scire". We have to distinguish the "scire" from the "credere".

> Multum interesse utrum aliquid mentis certa ratione teneatur quod scire dicimus, an famae vel litteris credendum posteris utiliter commendetur... Quod scimus igitur debemus rationi, quod credimus auctoritati, non sic accipiendum est ut in sermone usitatiore vereamur nos dicere scire quod idoneis testibus credimus.
>
> Proprie quidem cum loquimur id solum scire dicimus quod mentis firma ratione comprehendimus. Cum vero loquimur verbis consuetudini aptioribus sicut loquitur etiam divina scriptura, non dubitemus dicere scire nos et quod percipimus nostri corporis sensibus et quod fide dignis testibus credimus dum tamen inter haec et illud quid distet intelligamus[52].

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[50] De ordine, 2.8.25 PL.32, 1006.

[51] De ordine, 2.4.12 PL.32, 1000.

[52] Retractationes, 1.14.3 PL.32, 607.

Since the "credere" bears on certain statements to which we give assent because of the authority of those who speak, likewise the "scire" has for its object primarily certain judgments which we accept as true, not because of the authority of the one who teaches, but because of the internal evidence of what is said "quod mentis firma ratione comprehendimus".

It should be noted that the few instances in which Augustine speaks of the "notiones", are always connected with a judgment[53].

b. Two modes of intellectual knowledge. — In general, our intellectual knowledge, or science, can grasp the immutable truth either in regards to the soul or in regards to bodies:

> Veniat in mentem illud quod intelligere appellamus duobus modis in nobis fieri: aut ipsa per se mente atque ratione intrinsecus, ut cum intelligimus esse ipsum intellectum aut admonitione a sensibus ut id, quod jam dictum est, cum intelligimus esse corpus[54].

The latter statement, concerning our knowledge of bodies, should be explained more fully, because, strictly speaking, according to Augustine, sensible things are the object not of science but of opinion only. Yet, even in the

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[53] The problem of the "notiones" will be discussed in the last chapter.

[54] Ep. 13.4.

domain of the "sensibilia" we can reach, according to Augustine, an absolute certitude.

> Hic forsitan dicas: quamquam corpore percipi nequeant, multa nos tamen ad corpus pertinentia intelligibiliter posse percipere, ut est, quod novimus esse corpus. Quis enim neget, aut quis hoc verisimile potiusquam verum esse fateatur? Ita cum ipsum corpus verisimile sit, esse tamen in natura tale quiddam verissimum est; ergo corpus sensibile; esse autem corpus intelligibile judicatur, non enim posset aliter percipi[55].

On the other hand, Augustine maintains that the "intelligibilia" are perceived in the soul itself. But, the above quoted text makes an exception, because the "esse" of something sensible is perceived although it is outside of the soul. This does not seem to agree with an earlier passage of the De immortalitate animae:

> Nam omne quod contemplamur sive cogitatione capimus, aut sensu aut intellecta capimus.
> Sed ea quae sensu capiuntur extra etiam nos esse sentiuntur et locis continentur unde nec percipi quidem posse affirmantur.
> Ea vero quae intelliguntur non quasi alibi posita intelliguntur quam ipse qui intelligit animus: simul etiam intelliguntur non contineri loco[56].

This text should be integpreted in the light of Augustine's explanation given to Nebridius[57]. In general, the "sensibilia" are not the object of science because of their mutability.

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[55] Ep. 13.3.

[56] De immortalitate animae, 6.10 PL.32, 1026.

[57] Cf. Ep. 13.4.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NATURE OF GOD'S ILLUMINATION

A. TO KNOW WHAT IS BELIEVED.

1. The subject of the chapter: The rational procedure in Augustine's ascent and its conclusion.

From immutable truths, Augustine ascended to God. In his ascent we have to consider the rational procedure, or the demonstration itself, and the conclusions reached by it.

In the De Magistro, we find the demonstration of the thesis that the man who teaches is not a true teacher. This is shown in the analysis of understanding the words of the speaker and in the illustration of that statement with the help of different concrete examples.

But, we cannot say that the De Magistro itself, isolated from other writings, presents a direct demonstration of the thesis that Christ is the only teacher of the soul. Augustine rather concentrates on this statement as a conclusion of a demonstration made before, a conclusion which should be developed and whose meaning should be explained.

In this chapter, Augustine's gradual, rational procedure will be studies, and the meaning of its consequence will be investigated.

2. Augustine's desire to know what he believed. — We know how much Augustine desired to understand what he believed.

> Ita enim sum affectus ut quid sit rerum non credendo solum, sed etiam intelligendo apprehendere impatienter desiderem[1].

The early writings are commanded and dominated by this ardent desire. Already, by his faith, Augustine had overcome his Manichaeism and Scepticism. But, it was not enough for him, nor for some of his friends. The Platonic books mark a great progress in Augustine's search for wisdom, because, with their help, he had understood the difference between the intelligible and the sensible world. This enabled him to grasp God as an intelligible Being, i.e. a spiritual light, the notion of creation from nothing, and the meaning of illumination. In his writings at Cassaciacum, Augustine wanted to express his new ideas and to purify his mind from the remnants of his former Manichaeism and Scepticism[2].

But at the same time, the former Manichaean auditor intended to help those who still lived in error and doubt. Among them was, for instance, his friend and benefactor, Romanianus. To him Augustine had dedicated his Contra Academicos in the hope that the arguments based on reason would cure him

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[1] Contra Academicos, 3.19.43 PL.32, 954.

[2] Contra Academicos, 2.3.9 PL.32, 923; Retractationes, 1.1.1 PL.32, 585.

of his own errors.

> Restant duo vitia et impedimenta inveniendae veritatis [so wrote Augustine to Romanianus] a quibus tibi non multum timeo; timeo tamen ne te contemnas, atque inventurum esse desperes, aut certe ne invenisse te credas.
>
> Quorum primum, si tamen inest, ista tibi disputatio fortasse detrahet. Saepius enim succensuisti Academicis, eo quidem gravius quo minus eruditus esses; sed eo libentius quod veritatis amore illiciebaris. Itaque jam cum Alipio, te fautore, confligam, et tibi facile persuadebo quod volo, probabiliter tamen. Nam ipsum verum non videbis nisi in philosophiam totus intraveris.
>
> Illud autem alterum [the Manichaeism] quod te fortasse aliquid invenisse praesumis, quamvis a nobis jam quaerens dubitansque discesseris, tamen si quid superstitionis in animum revolutum est, ejicietur profecto, vel cum tibi aliquam inter nos disputationem de religione misero, vel cum praesens tecum multa contulero[3].

Augustine, therefore, required Romanianus to enter into philosophy wth his whole being. Only then one can reach the truth by reason or know it. Romanianus should not be mistaken about the meaning of knowledge.

> ... cavete ne quid vos nosse aribtremini, nisi quod ita didiceritis saltem ut nostis, unum, duo, tria, quatuor simul collecta in summam fieri decem. Sed item cavete ne vos in philosophia veritatem aut non cognituros aut nullo modo ita posse cognosci arbitremini[4].

Our knowledge of God is similar to that of mathematical principles[5]. Augustine meant here that we can know God

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[3] Contra Academicos, 2.3.8 PL.32, 923.

[4] Contra Academicos, 2.3.9 PL.32, 923.

[5] Soliloquia, 1.4.9 PL.32, 874.

with certitude in regard to certain revealed truths which are the denial of Manichaean tenets.

Naturally Romanianus should first believe these truths, especially the truths of God's Providence. Because of some troubles in his material affairs, Romanianus did not see God's hand in his sufferings and adversities. Augustine suspected that he returned to his former Manichaean beliefs or attributed his mishaps to fortune.

Augustine tried to revive in Romanianus his faith in God's Providence, and then to show it by reason, through philosophy. Perhaps what Romanianus called fortune was nothing else than a hidden order. Perhaps nothing fitting or unfitting happens in a part which is not suited and avantageous to the whole?[6]

> Quam sententiam uberrimarum doctrinarum editam, remotamque longissime ab intellectu profanorum se demonstraturam veris amatoribus suis, ad quam te invito philosophia pelliciatur. Quamobrem cum tibi tuo animo indigna multa accidunt, ne te ipse contemnas. Nam si divina providentia pertenditur usque ad nos, quod minime dubitandum est; mihi crede, sic tecum agi oportet ut agitur[7].

Romanianus should consider his life and his adversities in the light of God's Providence, and then, with the help of philosophy, he will understand the teaching of the

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[6] Contra Academicos, 1.1.1 PL.32, 906.

[7] Contra Academicos, 1.1.1 PL.32, 905.

Bible that "nihil seu commodi seu incommodi contingit in parte, quod non conveniat et congruat universo."

This was Augustine's own experience. He was also enticed, like Romanianus, by passing things until a soreness of the chest compelled him to give up his bombastic profession and to flee to the bosom of philosophy[8]. At Cassaciacum, Augustine enjoyed the blessings of that philosophy:

> Ipsa me nunc in otio, quod vehementer optavimus, nutrit et fovet: ipsa me penitus ab illa superstitione [Manichaeism] in quam te mecum praecipitem dederam, liberavit. Ipsa enim docet, et vere docet, nihil omnino colendum esse, totumque contemni oportere quidquid mortalibus oculis cernitur, quidquid ullus sensus attingit. Ipsa verissimum et secretissimum Deum perspicue se demonstraturam promittit, et jam jamque quasi per lucidas nubes ostentare dignatur[9].

3. This knowledge is shaped in an informal and formal demonstration. — The demonstration of God became Augustine's ideal already in his first writings. It seems that in his dialogues, Augustine gradually was preparing himself for a formal demonstration which he achieved later in the second book of the De libero arbitrio. He thinks of it in the Contra Academicos[10], in the Soliloquia[11], and he gives a sketch of it

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[8] Ibidem, 1.1.33 PL.32, 907.

[9] Contra Academicos, 1.1.3 PL.32, 907.

[10] Contra Academicos, ibidem, and 2.2.6 PL.32, 922.

[11] Soliloquia, 1.2.7 PL.32, 872.

in the De ordine. The sixth book of the De musica is also a demonstration of God through numbers. No wonder that in the De Magistro, Augustine did not need to repeat the arguments on the "verissimum et secretissimum Deum" Who is both the Creator and the Illuminator of minds.

B. THE INFORMAL DEMONSTRATION IN THE DE BEATA VITA

4. First attempts to understand what is believed. — Before considering Augustine's formal demonstration of God in the De libero arbitrio, from the standpoint of the main thesis of the De Magistro, we have to inquire into the first dialogues written at Cassaciacum in order to see Augustine's very first attempts to understand what he believed.

Although in the Contra Academicos and the De beata vita, the main stress is laid on the beginning and on the end of his ascent, there are passages in which Augustine anticipated some conclusions drawn from the immutable principles, without giving a formal demonstration of them. These conclusions are identical with what he believed, and they are opposed to the Manichaean doctrine.

His faith, among other factors, taught him that God is Truth: "We have also heard, through divine authority, that the Son of God is nothing but the Wisdom of God. But do you believe that wisdom is different from truth? For it has also

been said: "I am the Truth"[12]. There was a time when Augustine considered his own soul as the source of truth, since according to the Manichaean doctrine, the soul was a particle of God. In other words, he was for himself the highest measure. From his faith Augustine had learned tat God, as his Creator, is the highest measure of man.

By considering his own mutability and the immutability of truth, known by his mind, Augustine understood the teaching of the Bible. This kind of reasoning, developed in the year 386 A.D., shortly before his retreat at Cassaciacum, appears already in the De beata vita. "The truth", says Augustine, "receives its being through a supreme measure from which it emanates and into which it is converted when perfected. However, no other measure is imposed upon the supreme measure. For, if the supreme measure exists through the supreme measure, it is measure through itself."

> Veritas autem ut sit, fit per aliquem summum modum a quo procedit, et in quem se perfecte convertit. Ipsi autem summo modo nullus alius modus imponitur: si enim summus modus per summum modum modus est, per seipsum modus est. Sed etiam summus modus necesse est ut verus modus sit. Ut igitur veritas modo gignitur, ita modus veritate cognoscitur. Neque igitur veritas sine modo, neque modus sine veritate umquam fuit[13].

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[12] De beata vita, 4.33 PL.32, 975.

[13] De beata vita, 4.34 PL.32, 975.

"Veritas fit per aliquem summum modum" - this can be illustrated by means of a syllogism. The truth of the conclusion is measured by the truth of the premises, and the "summus modus" is constituted by the first principles of our thinking. But the "summus modus" in the logical order has its foundation in the "summus modus" of the ontological order, i.e. in God. However, God has no measure above Himself. It follows that the truth which is in our mind emanates from the "summus modus".

"But just as the truth is engendered through measure, so measure is recognized in truth[14]."

"Truth is engendered through measure." Augustine applies this principle both to Truth, which is God, and to the truth which we speak. The Truth which is God, or the Son of God, is engendered by the Father, the Supreme Measure: "Who is the Son of God? It has been said: the Truth. Who is it that has no Father? Who other than the Supreme Measure. Whoever attains the Supreme Measure through the Truth is happy[15]".

But the truth also which we speak has its ultimate foundation in God Himself. God is the "fons veritatis... jubar ille sol secretum", the hidden sun which infuses into our internal eyes a certain "admonition" in order to make us

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[14] Ibidem. Wisdom is called by Augustine "modus animi". De beata vita, 4.33 PL.32, 975.

[15] De beata vita, 4.34 PL.32, 975.

remember God and tend toward Him. The truth which we speak flows from that sun and belongs to Him: "This light appears to be nothing other than God, Who is perfect without any fault."

> Hujus est verum omne quod loquimur, etiam quando adhuc vel minus sanis vel repente apertis oculis audacter converti et totum intueri trepidamus, nihilque aliud etiam hoc apparet esse quam Deum nulla degeneratione impediente perfectum. Nam ibi totum atque omne perfectum est simulque est omnipotentissimus Deus[16].

This passage seems to be a reminiscence of Augustine's experience, described in the seventh book of the Confessions, when, by means of the truth of judgment, he had understood that God is the intelligible Light by which the soul is besprinkled[17]. In other words, "ut igitur veritas modo gignitur, ita modus veritate cognoscitur[18]." By considering the truth which we speak internally, or both internally and externally, due to its immutability, we reach its source, God. Only God can be the source of the immutable truth because He alone is immutable, "nulla degeneratione impediente perfectus ... ibi totum atque omne perfectum est[19]." At the same time, God is "omnipotentissimus"[20]. It is an allusion to another of

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16 De beata vita, 4.35 PL.32, 976. Here we also find the expressions "fons veritatis" and "jubar sol".

17 Confessiones, 7.17.23 PL.32, 745.

18 De beata vita, 4.34 PL.32, 975.

19 Ibidem.

20 Ibidem.

Augustine's discoveries, namely, that God is the Creator of all mutable things. Although man knows the immutable truths, he himself is mutable. This shows that he is not self-sufficient or independent. God is not only the "summus modus" of the truth known by man, but also of his whole being. The light which besprinkles his mind is above it, as its Creator[21].

5. Wisdom as the end of the rational approach. — As in the De Magistro, so also in the De beata vita, Augustine wants the reader to reach the sapiential knowled·e of God, by means of the immutable truths. Such a wisdom, in a certain way, can be attained in this life, but not in a perfect measure. This will accrue to man in the other life.

Here we are in a state of seeking, therefore wisdom and happiness cannot be possessed in their fulness:

> Sed tamen quamdiu quaerimus, nondum ipso fonte, atque ut illo verbo utar, plenitudine saturati, nondum ad nostrum modum nos pervenisse fateamur; et ideo, quamvis jam Deo adjuvante, nondum tamen sapientes ac beati sumus[22].

No wonder that we are neither wise nor happy, because the eyes of the mind are not yet healthy and, even when wide open, they are not able to direct themselves towards God and

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[21] Confessiones, 7.10.16 PL.32, 744.

[22] De beata vita, 4.35 PL.32, 975.

to behold Him in His entirety - "adhuc vel minus sanis vel repente apertis oculis audacter converti et totum intueri trepidamus[23]."

In the other life, the souls will enjoy the fulness of happiness because of their perfect knowledge of God:

> Illa est igitur plena satietas[24] animorum, quae est beata vita, pie perfecteque cognoscere a quo inducaris in veritatem, qua veritate perfruaris, per quid connectaris summo modo. Quae tria unum Deum intelligentibus unamque substantiam exclusis vanitatibus variae superstitionis, ostendunt[25].

The perfect knowledge of and union with the Trinity will result in the "plena satietas animarum". St. Monica understood Augustine's words in this sense:

> Hic mater recognitis verbis quae suae memoriae penitus inhaerebant et quasi evigilans in fidem suam, versum illum sacerdotis nostri: fove precantes, Trinitas, laeta effudit atque subjecit: Haec est nullo ambigente beata vita, quae vita perfecta est, ad quam festinantes posse perduci, solida fide, alacri spe, flagrante charitate praesumendum est[26].

Although the means of knowing God is the immutable truth of our judgments, Augustine is well aware that such a knowledge, in itself, is not proportioned to the perfect happiness of the other life. He wants his knowledge to grow

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23 Ibidem.

24 Ibidem.

25 De beata vita, 4.35, PL.32, 975.

26 De beata vita, 4.35 PL.32, 976.

into wisdom, but it is a fact that this happens seldom and only for th few[27]. He was in search of wisdom for many years, confident of the power of his reason. While disappointed and disillusioned in his hopes, he found th wisdom in his faith. Now, since he wants to understand that wisdom[28] and possess it, faith must be the starting point of his intellectual efforts on the one hand; hope and charit must anticipate its possession on the other. One should not wonder why Augustine insists so much on faith as the starting point. He is not interested in knowledge for the sake of knowledge, but in knowledge for the sake of happiness[29]. Knowledge, even of God, is of no avail, if one does not believe and love God in Christ, by fulfilling God's Commandments. Without all of these accessories, knowledge does not grow into wisdom. So they must complete the act of knowing both in its principle and in its end.

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[27] Contra Academicos, 2.1.1 PL.32, 919.

[28] Contra Academicos, 3.20.43 PL.32, 957.

[29] Contra Academicos, 1.8.23 PL.32, 917; 1.7.20 Pl.32, 916.

C. INFORMAL DEMONSTRATION IN THE CONTRA ACADEMICOS

6. The ideas of the Contra Academicos are in connection with those of the De beata vita. — The third book of the Contra Academicos develops Augustine's conclusion which was drawn from the immutable truths and exposed at the end of the De beata vita. God is the "summus modus" of the soul, of its being - by His omnipotence; and of the truth known by the mind. In the latter case, Augustine compares God to the "radiant sun - jubar ille sol" from which the truth known is derived. It is, therefore, the light of God, or God Himself, Who reveals truth to the mind. It would follow that the mind does not discover the truth by its own light.

This reminds us of Augustine's account of his discovery of the truth, before his coming to Cassaciacum, after the reading of the Platonic books. It is true that for a long time, before his conversion, Augustine had considered God as a subtle, huge light. He followed, in this regard, the Manichaean fancies. The Bible, through the current passages of the Scriptures heard in the Church, had first impressed upon his mind the idea of God in human form. The discovery of this error had caused in Augustine's mind a dangerous spiritual crisis. The Manichaeans seemed to have succeeded in correcting Augustine's anthropomorphist views about God, by pointing

to some passages of the Bible in which God is represented as a light, but a light of a corporeal nature. Augustine was, therefore, well accustomed to the conception of God as a light. In this regard, the Platonic books had brought no novelty.

However, due to the influence of the Platonic philosophers (but not without a previous preparation, independent of them), Augustine understood that God is a spiritual light; a spiritual sun; the true light: "Erat lux vera quae illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum." In the De beata vita for the first time, Augustine availed himself of this metaphor, no doubt, under the influence of both the Bible and the Platonists: "And I read there [in the Platonic books] that the soul of man, though it gives testimony of the light, is nevertheless not itself the light; but the Word of God Himself is the true Light that enlightens every man coming into the world[30]." The truth which we know is derived from this light, it is not a part of our nature.

With this spiritual acquisition, Augustine came to Cassaciacum and in the De beata vita made the profession of his new idea about the origin of truth. This was diametrically opposed to his former Manichaean ideas expressed in the

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[30] Confessiones, 7.9.13 PL.32, 740.

De pulchro et apto, contrary to his former belief that the soul was the "summum verum et summum bonum".

In the Contra Academicos, Augustine could not abstain from concentrating on the new conclusion. In this regard he liked to stress the authority of Plato whose doctrine he advocated:

> Sat est enim ad id quod volo, Platonem sensisse duos esse mundos: unum intelligibilem, in quo ipsa veritas habitaret, istum autem sensibilem, quem manifestum est nos visu tactuque sentire; itaque illum verum, hunc verisimilem et ad illius imaginem factum, et ideo de illo in ea quae se cognosceret anima velut expoliri et quasi serenari veritatem, de hoc autem in stultorum animis non scientiam sed opinionem posse generari. Quidquid tamen ageretur in hoc mundo per eas virtutes, quas civiles vocabat, aliarum verarum virtutum similes, quae nisi paucis sapientibus ignotae essent, non posse nisi verisimile nominari[31].

Through self-knowledge, i.e. through the immutable truths discovered in his mind, Plato came to the conclusion that there are two worlds: the intelligible and the sensible world.

In order to explain the immutability of truth, Plato had admitted the pre-existence of the soul in the intelligible world where the soul contemplated the good, or God. The intelligible world was identified by Plato, according to Augustine, with God's ideas from which truth irradiated into the

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[31] Contra Academicos, 3.17.37 PL.32, 954.

human mind. The source of truth is, therefore, in God or in God's ideas by which, and after which, the sensible world was created[32]. The truth of ideas "is a true world and the present world is truth-like, made unto the image of the other. The truth emanates from the intelligible world and is, as it were, refined and brightened in the soul which knows itself[33]." The truth cannot be sought after in the sensible world, because the latter is subject to a continual change, while the truth remains always the same.

The two passages, just considered, that from the De beata vita and that from the Contra Academicos, anticipate Augustine's De Magistro in which he explains the doctrine of the Bible that Christ is the only teacher of the soul. The former teacher of Milan, puzzled by his certitude concerning the principle - "the immutable is better than the mutable[34]" - had found so many other similar judgments. It became evident to him that their immutability can be explained by an immutable source only. This is the reason why the sensible world does not engender absolute certitude in our mind, but only opinion. No wonder, the transient things are subject to change so that the assent of the intellect can never be firm. In a

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32 De quaest.83, 46.

33 Contra Academicos, 3.17.37.

34 Confessiones, 7.1.1 PL.32, 733.

contemporary letter, addressed to Zenobius, Augustine stresses this feature of all corporeal things:

> Bene inter nos convenit, ut opinor, omnia quae corporeus sensus attingit, ne puncto quidem temporis eodem modo manere posse, sed labi, effluere, et praesens nihil obtinere, id est, ut latine loquar, non esse[35].

As in the De Magistro and the De beata vita, so also in the Contra Academicos, following Plato, Augustine wants our knowledge to be ordained to wisdom. The life based on opinion (not on science - here Augustine means wisdom) develops only political virtues which are not true virtues. On the contrary, the wise man, in whose soul the truth is refined and brightened, practices the true virtues which deal with the immutable reality. He has wisdom, i.e. "rerum humanarum divinarumque scientiam[36]".

The wise man has science - "scientiam". Augustine explains what he means by this term:

> Primo ego scientiam non appello, in qua ille qui eam profitetur, aliquando fallitur. Scientia enim non solum comprehensis sed ita comprehensis rebus constat, ut neque in ea quis umquam errare, nec quibuslibet adversantibus, impulsus mutare debeat. Unde verissime a quibusdam philosophis dicitur, in nullo eam posse nisi in sapiente inveniri; qui non modo perceptum habere debet id, quod tuetur ac sequitur, verum etiam inconcussum tenere[37].

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35 Ep.2.1 PL.33, 63.

36 Contra Academicos, 1.6.16 PL.32, 914.

37 Contra Academicos, 1.7.19 PL.32, 915.

Such science or knowledge can be also obtained in regard to human things, but not to all of them:

> Deinde res humanas esse ut concedam res hominum, quidquam tu existimas nostrum esse, quod nobis vel dare vel eripere casus potest? Aut cum rerum humanarum scientia dicitur, ea dicitur, qua quisquam novit vel quot, vel quales fundos habeamus; quid auri, quid argenti, quidque denique alienorum carminum cogitemus[38]?

By "res humanae", Augustine understands the things which belong to man by virtue of his human nature, and, therefore, cannot be subject to chance, as, for instance, material property, possessions, etc., that we acquire or lose even against our will. The science of human things does not mean the knowledge about other people's estates, money, or even their thoughts.

The term "human things" signifies human actions in as far as they are related to our happiness. In this sense Augustine says:

> Illa est humanarum rerum scientia, quae novit lumen prudentiae, temperantiae decus, fortitudinis robur, justitiae sanctitatem. Haec enim sunt, quae nullam fortunam metuentes, vere nostra dicere audemus[39].

Now, as to the science of things divine, nobody can know them, unless he knows himself: "quo pacto ille eas assequi poterat, qui, quid esset ipse, nesciebat[40]?" It is true

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[38] Contra Academicos, 1.7.20 PL.32, 916.

[39] Ibidem.

[40] Contra Academicos, 1.8.22 PL.32, 916.

that the things of nature are divine, in a certain sense, but they are nothing: "... in comparatione verissimi et secretissimi Dei, quem raro fortasse intellectus, sensus autem nullus attingit[41]."

The things divine, proper to wisdom, are first the immutable truths which we find in our mind, and then whatever they make us discover in regard to God in Himself and in His relation to the world.

But wisdom can be considered as a certain inquiry, or as a perfect possession of truth:

> Sapientia mihi videtur esse rerum humanarum divinarumque quae ad beatam vitam pertineant, non scientia solum, sed etiam diligens inquisitio. Quam descriptionem si partiri velis, prima pars quae scientiam tenet, Dei est; haec autem quae inquisitione contenta est, hominis. Illa igitur Deus, hac autem homo beatus est[42].

Human wisdom, therefore, consists in the search for truth, but it is not a merely theoretical attitude of the mind. It results in a certain happiness when all powers of the soul concentrate on God:

> Nam hoc ipso quo quaerit, sapiens est; et quo sapiens beatus, cum ab omnibus involucris corporis mentem quantum potest, evolvit et seipsum in semetipsum colligit; cum se non permittit cupiditatibus laniandum, sed in se atque in Deum semper tranquillus intenditur, ut et hic, quod beatum est esse supra inter nos convenit, rati ne perfruatur; et extremo

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[41] Contra Academicos, 1.8.22 PL.32, 916.

[42] Contra Academicos, 1.8.23 PL.32, 917.

> die vitae ad id quod concupivit adipiscendum reperiatur paratus fruaturque merito divina beatitudine, qui humana sit ante perfructus[43].

Although these descriptions of wisdom and happiness seem to be akin to the academic view that the search for wisdom makes man wise and happy, the distinction between human and divine wisdom throws light on the true meaning of the terms. The divine wisdom or happiness is the "plena satietas animorum"[44], while human happiness or wisdom, with its search for truth, cannot be considered as true wisdom or happiness, but as a preparation for the beatitude of the next life[45].

One can see how much Augustine wanted the knowledge of immutable truths to be ordained to wisdom. Although the definition of wisdom was taken from Cicero, it had been imbued by Augustine with a christian spirit. He himself says that his philosophy had been formed not only after the Platonic pattern, but also under the powerful influence of St. Paul's letters:

> Itaque titubans, properans, haesitans arripio apostolum Paulum .. Perlegi totum intentissime atque castissime... Tunc vero quantulocumque jam lumine

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[43] Contra Academicos, 1.8.23 PL.32, 917.

[44] De beata vita, 4.35.

[45] Contra Academicos, 1.8.23 PL.32, 917.

asperso tanta se mihi philosophiae facies aperuit... ut eam demonstrare potuissem[46].

The Confessions explain what Augustine meant by the term "tanta facies philosophiae"[47]. While the Platonic books helped Augustine to understand God's spirituality, the illumination of the mind, the notion of creation and evil, St. Paul revealed to Augustine the cause of man's concupiscence - the original sin, and the role of Christ in the economy of salvation[48]. The ardent desire to understand what he believed impelled Augustine to study Platonic philosophy, but his faith had provided him with the criterion of truth. Whatever is in contradiction with the teaching of the Bible will be repudiated[49].

D. THE ORIGIN OF THE HARMONY BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN AND PLATONIC DOCTRINE.

7. Augustine puzzled by Plato's and Plotinus's sublime ideas. — To Augustine, one thing appeared strange: Plato's and Plotinus's doctrine on God and the human soul.

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[46] Contra Academicos, 2.2.5 PL.32, 922.

[47] Confessiones, 7.21.27 PL.32, 747.

[48] Ibidem.

[49] Contra Academicos, 3.20.43 PL.32, 957.

To his great surprise, Augustine noticed that the notion of God and the human soul taught by St. Ambrose and Theodorus[50] was preserved in the Platonic tradition. The successors of Plato received from their master the doctrine of the intelligible world and guarded it as a secret[51]. In this way, they tried to defend the purity of the doctrine against the wide-spread materialistic ideas of Zeno: "According to this theory [Zeno's] the soul is mortal; there is nothing beyond the sensible world; there is no operation except the corporeal. In fact, he believed that God was fire[52]." It is natural that such ideas found a ready acceptance among people, because "through the familiarity with bodies a person very easily comes to believe that all things are corporeal[53]." In order to escape being influenced by the things of the senses and to understand the things of the spirit, a purification is necessary: "For such theories are not easily understood except by those who cleanse themselves from all imperfection and adopt a mode of life that is more than human[54]."

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50 De beata vita, 1.4 PL.32, 961.

51 Contra Academicos, 3.7.38 PL.32, 954.

52 Ibidem.

53 Ibidem.

54 Contra Academicos, 3.17.38 PL.32, 954.

Fortunately, the time came when Plato's doctrine began to be taught openly by Plotinus. "This philosopher", says Augustine, "is regarded as being so like Plato that one would think that they have lived at the same time. The interval of time between them is, however, so great that one should rather think that Plato came to life again in Plotinus[55]."

According to Augustine, the philosophy of the Platonists does not set up Aristotle against Plato. Plotinus is considered as an "os Platonis purgatissimum et lucidissimum". The teaching of Plato and Aristotle ultimately resulted in the "truest philosophy".

> Quod autem ad eruditionem doctrinamque attinet et mores quibus consulitur animae, quia non defuerunt acutissimi et alertissimi viri, qui docerent disputationibus suis Aristotelem et Platonem ita sibi concinere, ut imperitis minusque attentis dissentire videantur; multis quidem saeculis multisque contentionibus, sed tamen eliquata est, ut opinor, una verissimae philosophiae disciplina[56].

8. Plato's and Aristotle's doctrines blended into the "verissima philosophia". — Why does Augustine call that doctrine the "verissima philosophia"?

First of all, it partly agrees with the teaching of the Christian religion and repudiates the materialism of Stoic

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[55] Contra Academicos, 3.18.41 PL.32, 956.

[56] Contra Academicos, 3.19.42 PL.32, 956.

Philosophy and Manichaeism, i.e. the philosophy of this world.

Augustine learned from his own experience how difficult it was to get rid of his errors about God and the soul. He was convinced that towards that "truest philosophy" - "even the most accute reasoning would never lead souls blinded by the multiform darkness of error and smeared with so much grime from the bodies[57]". Special help from God was necessary. Without the Incarnation, the teaching and the example of Christ, man would not be able to extriate himself from his error and weakness.

> Non enim est ista hujus mundi philosophia, quam sacra nostra meritissime deterstantur, sed alterius intelligibilis, cui animas multiformibus erroris tenebris caecatas, et altissimis a corpore sordibus oblitas, numquam ista ratio subtilissima revocaret; nisi summus Deus populari quadam clementia divini intellectus auctoritatem usque ad ipsum corpus humanum declinaret, atque submitteret, cujus non solum praeceptis, sed etiam factis excitatae animae redire in semetipsas et respicere patriam, etiam sine disputationum concertatione potuissent[58].

But, to admit this is to raise the problem of how Plato could teach the philosophy of the intelligible world without knowing Christ or God's revelation. Did he discover the intelligible world by himself? At Cassaciacum, Augustine seems to have excluded this course of events, because, as he

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[57] Ibidem.

[58] Ibidem.

says, "human reason would never lead such mean to that intelligible world[59]". Where is, then, the source of Plato's sublime ideas which are in harmony with the Christian Faith? Probably, already at that time, i.e. in 386, Augustine was acquainted with St. Ambrose's "solution", which he mentions in the De doctrina christiana, II, n.43. According to this writing there were lovers of Plato who fancied that Christ had borrowed His doctrine from the Athenian philosopher. But "noster Ambrosius", says Augustine, "quaestionem solvit". St. Ambrosius, according to Augustine, found out that Plato was a contemporary of Jeremiah. During his travel to Egypt, Plato was supposed to have met the Prophet and through him to have been acquainted with the Scriptures. For a long time, Augustine followed this opinion. The first allusion to it is found in the passage just mentioned in the Contra Academicos, when Augustine ways that without Christ it would be impossible to discover the intelligible world. Augustine, who knew only too well how difficult it was to understand the spirituality of God, was overwhelmed with astonishment that Plato had reached such a high knowledge of God. If human reason is not able to learn these things by itself, Plato, in some way, must have been helped by God Himself. St. Ambrose's solution had explained to Augustine the mystery of

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59 Ibidem.

Plato[60].

Only through Christ men are enabled to reflect upon themselves and to gaze upon their fatherland. But Christ, true God and true man, can be reached in this life through faith. Thus, we have to start the journey towards the "invisibilia" by believing in Christ and his teaching. Then, we may try to understand what we believe. Already in the beginning of his literary career, Augustine had expressed the attitude of his mind: "I am resolved never to deviate in the least from the authority of Christ, for I find none more powerful. But, as to what is attainable by acute reasoning, such is my state of mind that I am impatient to grasp what truth is, to grasp it not only by belief, but also by comprehension[61]."

Although Augustine does not formally specify the truths believed which he wanted to understand, we are able to do so by referring to his former Manichaean errors.

There are two kinds of truths revealed by God: those which can be understood by reason, and those which exceed the power of our intellect. For the time being, Augustine had

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60 Already in his De Noe et arca,(PL.14, 391, cap.8 n.24), St. Ambrose mentions the opinion popular among christian scholars and Fathers that Plato was acquainted with the Old Testament: "Plato potuit in Aegypto legere Moysen". According to Migne, the De Noe et arca was writtin ân 379 (PL.14, 382).

61 Contra Academicos, 3.19.43 PL.32, 954.

concentrated on the first category of truths, concerning God and the human soul. It was not simple for him to free his mind from the Manichaean principles. For many years, he had believed that the soul was a particle of God, that both God and the soul were of a corporeal nature, - a kind of subtle light; that the material world and the human body were derived from the Principle of Evil which is co-eternal with God.

In the Catholic Church, now, he had accepted by faith a teaching diametrically opposed to the Manichaean creed. Both God and the soul are of a spiritual nature. The soul did not emanate from God, but has been created from nothing. The material world is good since it has been created by God. Evil is not a substance since all substances or things are created by God. God as the highest good cannot be the source of evil.

It remained for Augustine to understand what he was taught in the Church. Already as a Manichaean, Augustine had found the right means which lead to truth, namely, the immutable principles of the liberal disciplines. But the Manichaean materialism had predetermined his conclusions about God and the soul[62]. Since, according to the Manichaeans nothing exists that could not be extended, it must be

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[62] This was especially evident in the De pulchro et apto.

conceived in terms of lines, surfaces, mass, and colours. But from St. Ambrose, Augustine often heard that God and the soul should not be considered in terms of material forms. In spite of his efforts, Augustine, still affected by the Manichaean theory of knowledge, was unable to think of God as a being without extension, place, and time. At this moment, the Platonic books had intervened and encouraged him to return to himself. He had concentrated again on the immutable judgment that the immutable is better than the mutable, and discovered that its truth is neither shaped by extension, nor limited by place and time. Such must be God, the source of immutable truths.

E. INFORMAL DEMONSTRATION IN THE SOLILOQUIES

9. The ideas about God as the Creator and Illuminator developed. — An implicit reasoning permeates all of Augustine's formulations, which we have just considered in the De beata vita, and the Contra Academicos. God, as the Cause of the immutable truth, is compared to a "modus" according to which a thing is measured and distributed; to the sun which pours its light into the eyes. The latter comparison will be further developed in the Soliloquia.

As in the previous dialogues, so in the Soliloquies, Augustine tried to understand what he believed. The lengthy

introductory prayer[63] expresses, among other things, his faith in the dogmas taught by the Prologue of St. John. The third chapter of the first part has shown how Augustine had partly understood the doctrine about creation and illumination. The Soliloquia make an allusion to his discovery of truth.

The former Manichaean auditor looked now at God as the only "founder of the universe", even of those things which he had once considered as derived from the Principle of Evil.

> Deus universitatis conditor... Deus per quem omnia quae per se non essent, tendunt esse. Deus qui ne id quidem quod se invicem perimit perire permittis[64].

It is God who withholds "from perishing even that which seems to be mutually destructive". Augustine refers here to the material world. He explains to himself the tendency towards "not being" by the fact of their being created from nothing: "Deus qui de nihilo mundum istum creasti, quem omnium oculi sentiunt pulcherrimum[65]."

In spite of its origin from nothing the world is beautiful. It was precisely from the beauty of the world

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[63] Soliloquia, 1.1.2-6. This prayer deserves a special study in order to ascertain Augustine's theology and his science of spiritual life at the time of his retreat at Cassaciacum.

[64] Soliloquia, 1.1.2 PL.32, 869.

[65] Soliloquia, 1.1.2 PL.32, 869.

that Augustine had made his successful ascent to God.

Although God must be considered as the founder of all things, He is not the cause of evil which has no being at all, as the Manichaeans fancied. It is due to God that in spite of their imperfections creatures are not reduced to nothingness, i.e. to the "pessimum". In order to understand that evil is nothing, one has to know that which truly is:

> Deus qui malum non facis et facis esse ne pessimum fiat. Deus qui paucis ad id quod vere est refugientibus ostendis malum nihil esse[66]

In spite of the imperfections by which different parts of the world are affected, the whole universe is perfect:

> Deus per quem universitas etiam cum sinistra parte perfecta est. Deus a quo dissonantia usque ad extremum nulla est, cum deteriore melioribus conveniunt[67].

Since God is the Creator and the Supporter of all things, the latter live in His Mind, but in such a way that He is not affected by their ugliness, moral evil, or errors.

> Deus in quo sunt omnia, cui tamen universae creaturae nec turpitudo turpis est, nec malitia nocet, nec error errat[68].

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[66] Soliloquia, 1.1.2 PL.32, 869.

[67] Soliloquia, 1.1.2 PL.32, 869-870.

[68] Ibidem.

Augustine had reached all of these conclusions with the help of immutable truths by comparing their immutability with the mutability of reality. The mutability both of the soul and corporeal things demonstrates that they cannot be the source of truth. The immutability of the latter points to the Immutable Being Who is the Creator of all mutable beings and the Illuminator of minds. No wonder that in order to know God and the soul, Augustine always concentrated on immutable truths:

> R. Animam te certe dicis et Deum velle cognoscere? A. Hoc est totum negotium meum. R. Nihilne amplius? A. Nihil prorsus. R. Quid, veritatem non vis comprehendere? A. Quasi vero possim haec nisi per illam cognoscere. R. Ergo prius ipsa cognoscenda est per quam possunt illa [Deus et anima] cognosci[69].

However, Augustine is not interested in a purely intellectual approach to the truth of judgment. The ultimate end of his inquiries is wisdom. For this purpose, certain moral dispositions are necessary. This is the meaning of the following statement: "Deus qui nisi mundos verum scire noluisti[70]."

Even people without this disposition implied by Augustine in the word "mundus" know many truths, but they do not know the whole face of truth. With this disposition,

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[69] Soliloquia, 1.14.26 PL.32, 883.

[70] Soliloquia, 1.1.2 PL.32, 870.

they are able to acquire more than the ordinary knowledge of truth — namely, true wisdom. Nevertheless, the intellectual approach to the truth of judgment is, according to Augustine, indispensable for the acquisition of wisdom. The immutable truth of judgment and our knowledge of it which leads to the love of God can be explained only by the Immutable Source, God. In this sense Augustine calls God:

> Deus pater veritatis, pater sapientiae, pater verae summaeque vitae, pater beatitudinis, pater boni et pulchri, pater intelligibilis lucis, pater evigilationis atque illuminationis nostrae, pater pignoris, quo admonemus redire ad te[71].

This passage is characteristic of Augustine's way of thinking. God is the source not only of the immutable truth but also of our knowledge of it, a knowledge culminating in wisdom or in the highest life and happiness. God is the source of the good and the beautiful. He is the source of the light of our intellect, of the acts of the latter from their very beginning (evigilatio) until they are illuminated by truth. He is also the source of all the incentives which move us to return to God. As a source of all these factors within our knowledge, whether it is imperfect or perfect knowledge, God justly can be called: Truth, Wisdom, Life, Happiness, Goodness, Beauty, Intelligible Light.

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[71] Ibidem.

God is truth - Deus veritas, in quo et a quo et per quem vera sunt, quae vera sunt omnia[72].

God is wisdom - Deus, Sapientia, in quo et a quo et per quem sapiunt quae sapiunt omnia[73].

God is life - Deus vera et summa vita, in quo et a quo et per quem vivunt, quae vere summeque vivunt omnia[74].

God is happiness - Deus beatitudo in quo et a quo et per quem beata sunt, quae beata sunt omnia[75].

God is goodness and beauty - Deus bonum et pulchrum in quo et a quo et per quem bona et pulchra sunt omnia[76].

God is the intelligible light - Deus intelligibilis lux in quo et a quo et per quem intelligibiliter lucent quae intelligibiliter lucent omnia[77].

10. Conclusions from the comparison between the knowledge of truth and our sense knowledge. — Since knowledge of truth precedes all human actions and constitutes, as it were, the foundation of our highest life, of the goodness and beauty of our soul, which is reached by wisdom and results in happiness, Augustine focusses his special attention on the operation of man.

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72 Soliloquia, ibidem.

73 Ibidem.

74 Ibidem.

75 Ibidem.

76 Ibidem.

77 Ibidem.

Our knowledge of truth is not of a corporeal nature like our sense knowledge. It is of an intelligible nature. Nevertheless, it can be compared with our sense knowledge. De facto, Augustine draws such a comparison[78] in order to show that in our knowledge of immutable truths a special illumination by God is necessary.

> Promittitur tibi ratio quae tecum loquitur ita se demonstraturam Deum tuae menti, ut oculis sol demonstratur. Nam mentis quasi sunt oculi, sensus animae; disciplinarum autem quaecumque certissima talia sunt qualia illa quae sole illustrantur, ut videri possint, veluti terra est et terrena omnia: Deus autem ipse est qui illustrat.
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> Ego autem ratio ita sum in mentibus ut in oculis est aspectus. Non enim hoc est habere oculos ut aspicere; aut item hoc est aspicere quod videre. Ergo animae tribus quibusdam rebus opus est: ut oculos habeat, quibus jam bene uti possit; ut aspiciat; ut videat[79].

In our sense knowledge, the eyes play the most important role. Without them one would not be able to see the external reality, the earth, and the other visible things. But, in order to see them, it is not enough to be endowed with eyes. The visible things are hidden from our eyes if the sun does not illuminate them.

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[78] De ordine, 2.3.10.

[79] Soliloquia, 1.8.15 PL.32, 577.

Likewise, in our intellectual knowledge, three things are required: the soul must be endowed with eyes which are its senses. Secondly, the objects to be seen are for the soul the "disciplinarum quaeque certissima", i.e. the immutable judgments of the liberal disciplines. Thirdly, the truth of these judgments cannot be seen unless they are illuminated by their own sun[80] - "Deum autem est ipse qui illustrat". The soul has its own eyes; it is even able to look at different objects, but in regard to the immutable judgments, it is not able to see their truth without an illumination coming from God.

This comparison is developed more completely in the following passage:

> Nunc accipe quantum praesens tempus exposcit, ex illa similitudine sensibilium etiam de Deo aliquid nunc me docente:
>
> Intelligibilis nempe Deus est, intelligibilia etiam illa scientiarum spectamina, tamm plurimum differunt.
>
> Nam et terra visibilis et lux; sed terra nisi luce illustratur videri non potest. Ergo et illa quae in disciplinis traduntur, quaeque quisque intelligit, verissima esse nulla dubitatione concedit, credendum est ea non posse intelligi, nisi ab alio, quasi suo sole illustrentur.
>
> Ergo quomodo in hoc sole tria quaedam licet animadvertere quod est, quod fulget, quod illuminat;

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[80] Soliloquia, 1.6.12 PL.32, 875. Cf. Plato, Rep. 517b; Soliloquia, 1.13.23 PL.32, 881.

> ita in illo secretissimo Deo tria quaedam sunt: quod est; quod intelligitur, et quod caetera facit intelligi[81].

Augustine wants to underline not only the necessity of a special light for our knowledge of the "spectamina disciplinarum" which are "verissima" and "certissima", but also the conclusions about God to which they point.

Before his retreat at Cassaciacum, Augustine had discovered that God must be intelligible in nature because the immutable truths are intelligible. Their intelligibility however, is drawn from their immutable source, or God.

It is true that the "spectamina disciplinarum" are "verissima" and "certissima", and, as such, immutable, but they cannot be identified with God in spite of their immutability.

> Movet me, fateor, haec similitudo, adducorque ut assentiar quantum in suo genere a coelo terram tantum ab intelligibili Dei majestate spectamina illa disciplinarum vera et certa differre[82].

The intelligibility of the "spectamina disciplinarum" is not their own but derived from their divine sun: "credendum est ea non posse intelligi, nisi ab alio suo sole illustrentur[83]."

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81 Soliloquia, 1.8.15 PL.32, 597.

82 Soliloquia, 1.5.11 PL.32 875.

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As to the conclusion drawn from the immutable truths, the first bears on God's "esse": "... quod [Deus] est". This means not so much God's existence which Augustine never doubted, but rather God's true being identified by Augustine with God's immutability: "Id enim vere est quod incommutabiliter manet[84]."

The second conclusion, "quod [Deus] intelligitur", stresses the nature of God's "esse". It cannot be grasped by our senses as the Manichaeans fancied, but by the intellect only. God may be compared to a light, to the sun, but He is not a sun like that perceived by our senses.

> Lux est quaedam ineffabilis et incomprehensibilis mentium[85].

> ... vidi... supra mentem meam lucem incommutabilem; non hanc vulgarem et conspicuam omni carni: nec quasi ex eodem genere grandior erat; tamquam si ista multo multoque clarius claresceret; totumque occuparet magnitudine. Non hoc illa erat; sed aliud, aliud valde ab istis omnibus[86].

In the third conclusion, "... quod caetera facit intelligi", Augustine teaches God's illumination. All things, even corporeal, can be grasped by the intellect, although not in the same way. The truth of the immutable judgments of the "spectamina disciplinarum" are directly impressed by God upon

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84 Confessiones, 7.11.17 PL.32, 742.

85 Soliloquia, 1.13.23 PL.32, 581.

86 Confessiones, 7.10.16 PL.32, 742.

the human mind. Without these truths man would not be able to pass his judgments even about the sensible reality. We saw how Augustine had discovered the immutable principle in his judgments about beautiful things. He also had found its ultimate source — "that which is", or God Who besprinkles the human mind with His light:

> ... erexit se ad intelligentiam suam; et abduxit cogitationem a consuetudine, subtrahens se contradicentibus turbis phantasmatum, ut inveniret quo lumine aspergeretur, cum sine ulla dubitatione clamaret incommutabile praeferendum esse mutabili; unde nosset ipsum incommutabile, quod nisi aliquo modo nosset nullo modo illud mutabili certo praeponeret. Et pervenit ad id quod est[87].

The immediate union of the mind with God, stressed in the De musica[88] and in the De Magistro[89], is mentioned for the first time by Augustine in the De immortalitate animae. Although the soul is united with its body, but not locally, the eternal reasons besprinkle the soul first:

> ... si quamvis locum occupanti corpori anima tamen non localiter jungitur, summis illis aeternisque rationibus, quae incommutabiliter manent, nec utique loco continentur, prior afficitur anima; nec prior tantum, sed magis. Tanto enim prior quanto propinquior; et eadem causa tanto etiam magis, quanto etiam corpore melior[90].

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87 Confessiones, 7.17.23 PL.32, 745.

88 De musica, 6.1.1 PL.32, 1161.

89 De magistro, 11.38 PL.32, 1211.

90 De immortalitate animae, 15.24.

Due to the fact of being immediately affected by the "aeternae rationes", the soul is better than its body. This applies to all bodies. If they are endowed with numbers, i.e. "rationes", or proportions, which are based on numbers and constitute their beauty (speciem), this happens through the soul:

> Hoc autem ordine intelligitur a summa essentia speciem corpori per animam tribui, qua est in quantumcumque est. Per animam ergo corpus subsistit et eo ipso est quo animatur, sive universaliter ut mundus; sive particulariter, ut unumquodque animal intra mundum[91].

Now we can understand why the numbers in the soul are considered by Augustine as "verissimae", while the numbers in bodies are considered as "umbrae et vestigia". The former are immediately granted by God, the latter through the soul.

Since the human mind is in an immediate contact with God, it follows that man should spontaneously concentrate both on his soul and on God. This would be the natural consequence of his union with God. And yet the facts defy the moral law which results from the order of nature. Very few people are able to devote themselves to God and their soul. Instead, they are implicated in worldly affairs so that it becomes difficult for them to "return to themselves" in order to know their rational soul and to ascend to God:

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91 De immortalitate animae, 15.24 PL.32, 1033.

> Ratio est mentis motio, ea quae discuntur distinguendi et connectendi potens: qua duce uti ad Deum intelligendum, vel ipsam aut quae aut in nobis, aut usquequaque est animam, rarissimum omnino genus hominum potest: nec ob aliud, nisi quia in istorum sensuum negotia progresso, redire in semetipsum cuique difficile est. Itaque, cum in rebus ipsis fallacibus ratione totum agere homines moliantur, quid sit ipsa ratio, et qualis sit, nisi perpauci prorsus ignorant[92].

It is surprising that those three conlusions drawn from the "spectamina disciplinarum" are considered by Augustine not as true but only as probable: "Sed responde quomodo haec acceperis; ut probabilia, an ut vera? - Plane ut probabilia[93]".

This should not be interpreted as if the statements that God is, that He is intelligible, and that He illuminates the human mind, taken by themselves, were probable only. We have to consider them against the background of Augustine's state of mind when he was writing the Soliloquia.

After the reading of the Platonic books, he became certain of the truth of these statements: "... faciliusque dubitarem vivere me, quam non esse veritatem quae per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspicitur[94]."

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[92] De ordine, 2.11.30 PL.32, 1009.

[93] Soliloquia, 1.8.15 PL.32, 877.

[94] Confessiones, 7.10.16 PL.32, 742.

This exceptional kind of certitude was due not to a purely intellectual knowledge of what he believed, but to the intimate enjoyment of the presence of the "id quod est"[95], or of the "Truth which is" - God. This kind of experience did not, however, last permanently. There came (at Cassaciacum) moments,of spiritual dryness, without the enjoyment of the presence of God[96]. In comparison with it, the intellectual perception of truth did not exhibit in Augustine's consciousness the certainty which is proper to the embracement of truth by the will. No wonder that in his intellectual procedure in regard to those statements, Augustine had the impression of their probability only. He could have no doubt about the truth of geometrical principles[97], so he increased in the hope that the probability of the conclusions would pass into certitude. The only way to attain the latter was to embark on the road of wisdom, to divert his mind and his heart from transient things, and to heal himself by faith, hope and charity: "Aggredienda est via: videamus tamen quid praecedit omnia utrum sani simus[98]."

If the conclusions about God, conclusions qualified by Augustine as probable, must be considered in relation to

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[95] Confessiones, 7.17.25 PL.32, 745.

[96] Soliloquia, 1.8.15 PL.32, 877.

[97] Soliloquia, 1.4.9 PL.32, 874.

[98] Soliloquia, 1.9.16 PL.32, 877.

the experiences proper to wisdom, as described by Augustine, the problem of how he knew the Immutable Truth had not been solved with any certitude. The solution remained absolutely probable since it is not necessarily related to wisdom. In the Soliloquies, and the De immortalitate animae, Augustine explains the immutability of the truth of our judgments by the presence in the soul of the Divine Sun which illuminates the mind by a special light. The illumination takes place in the soul united to the body. But Augustine did not exclude the possibility of the pre-existence of the soul, and consequently of a certain illumination in the other life. Nevertheless, he considered the first opinion as more probable, and on this presumption the theory of illumination is exposed in Augustine's first writings and also in the De Magistro. If Augustine adopts the theory of reminiscence, the formula is taken from Plato, but its meaning is not Platonic. According to the Augustinian theory, there is a reminiscence, since in virtue of our first knowledge of the immutable truth, a knowledge acquired in this life, we are able to live as rational animals.

F. FORMAL DEMONSTRATION IN THE DE LIBERO ARBITRIO

11. Augustine's intention of formally demonstrating the revealed doctrine. — We can now examine the way by which Augustine realized his intention of knowing what he believed by giving his formal demonstration of God.

His rational procedure always centered around the doctrine of the Bible that God is the Illuminator and the Creator of all things: "Erat lux vera quae illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum ... Omnia per ipsum facta sunt et sine ipso factum est nihil[99]."

That God is the Creator of all things is also implied in St. Paul's method of knowing God through creatures. In the De ordine, Augustine had concentrated on the teaching of St. Paul: "De ordine studendi loqui malui quo a corporalibus ad incorporalia potest profici[100]." The principles of this method investigated and exposed in the De ordine are applied in the De libero arbitrio, book II.

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[99] John, 1.3.

[100] Retractationes, 1.3.1 PL.32, 588.

12. The demonstration and the "iter ad sapientiam".— As in the De ordine, so also in the De libero arbitrio, the ascent to God is considered not only as merely theoretical demonstration of God, but also as an "iter ad sapientiam"[101] which culminates in the possession of the highest good: "Utrum aliam putas esse sapientiam nisi veritatem, in qua cernitur et tenetur summum bonum[102]?" This constitutes man's happiness: "Whoever possesses God is happy[103]."

Although the ascent to God reaches its climax in the love of God, and consequently it is intended to reach God by the will; without the knowledge of God, it would be impossible to be united with our ultimate end. This is why the dialogues de facto deal more intensely with the problem of knowledge than that of love.

According to St. Paul, we know God through His creatures. Augustine's interpretation of St. Paul's teaching does not anticipate the "quinque viae" of St. Thomas.

This would not agree with Augustine's intention of eradicating from his soul the last remnants of his Manichaeism and of convincing his former Manichaean friends of the

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101 De libero arbitrio, 2.17.45 PL.32, 1265.

102 De libero arbitrio, 2.17.45 PL.32, 2.8.26 PL.32, 1254.

103 De beata vita, 2.11 PL.32, 965.

falsehood of their tenets. His arguments had to be adapted to the Manichaean mentality. He had to take into account that because of its corruptibility, matter was considered by the Manichaeans as an emanation from the Principle of Evil. This, beforehand, prevented any arguments from being drawn from the material world. It was necessary to show that matter was not derived from Evil.

Augustine has done it indirectly. He first concentrated on the soul, as the latter was considered by the Manichaeans as a particle of God. As such, it should be divine in nature. But the Scriptures teach that the soul has been created by God. Can this be proved to the Manichaeans by reason? Certainly, if we use the common notion of God.

> Non mihi placet Deum appellare, quo mea ratio est inferior sed quo nullus est superior. Hunc plane fatebor Deum quo nihil superius esse constiterit[104].

13. The soul is not God. — Now, if we analyze our knowledge, the knowledge of the Immutable truths, we come to the conclusion that this knowledge implies the existence of the Immutable Truth, on account of which our judgements are immutably true.

This Truth is common to all rational beings. It is not held in private possession of any individual:

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[104] De libero arbitrio, 2.6.14 PL.32, 1248.

> Quapropter nullo modo negaveris esse incommutabilem veritatem haec omnia quae incommutabiliter vera sunt continentem; quam non possis dicere tuam vel meam vel cujuscumque hominis sed omnibus incommutabilia vera cernentibus tamquam miris modis secretum et publicum lumen, praesto esse ac se praebere communiter[105].

14. The Immutable Truth and the soul. — Compared with our own mind, this Immutable Truth, this "publicum lumen", must be either inferior, or equal, or superior to it.

Certainly that Truth is not inferior to the mind. Otherwise, we would pass judgments upon it, as we do upon bodies which are inferior to us. If we pass judgments upon our soul we do it in virtue of the inner rule of Truth, but no one judges the rules themselves[106].

Likewise, we cannot say that Truth is equal to our mind. There are different degrees in seeing the truth, sometimes more plainly, sometimes less plainly. This shows that our mind is subject to changes, but Truth is always the same:

> Si autem aequalis esset mentibus nostris haec veritas, mutabilis etiam ipsa esset. Mentes enim nostrae aliquando eam plus vident, aliquando minus et ex hoc fatentur se esse mutabiles: cum illa in se manens nec proficiat cum plus, a nobis videtur, nec deficiat cum minus, sed integra et incorrupta[107].

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[105] De libero arbitrio, 2.12.33.1259; 2.7.19.

[106] Ibidem.

[107] De moribus manichaeorum, 2.10.20 PL.32, 1334.

If Truth is neither inferior nor equal to the mind, it follows that it must be superior to it, and thereby more excellent. More than this: that Truth is God Himself.

> Docet enim ratio, nec sane recondita, sed in promptu sita et exposita omnium intellectui, sed invicta et eo invictior quo eam nemo ignorare permittitur Deum esse incorruptibilem, incommutabilem, inviolabilem, in quem nulla indigentia, nulla imbecillitas, nulla miseria, cadere possit[108].

Augustine clearly saw the difference between the immutability of true judgment and the immutability of the Truth which is God. The Manichaean dualism resulted in God's mutability. Augustine ridiculed such a doctrine about God. If we grant immutability to the relation of numbers, an immutability which can never be destroyed, how can one deny it to God?

> Summum bonum omnino et quo esse aut quo cogitari melius nihil possit, aut intelligendus aut credendus Deus, si blasphemiis carere cogitamus. Ratio aliqua numerorum violari... nullo pacto potest ... et Deus a vobis commutabilis dicitur[109].

Likewise, Augustine suggests that the wisdom of man based on the Immutable Truth is a participated wisdom. From this, it follows that the immutable truth immediately known by man is a participated truth, derived from God Whi is Truth Itself. We know by faith that Christ is the Wisdom of the Father.

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108 De moribus Manichaeorum, 2.11.24 PL.32, 1355.

109 Ibidem.

> Nam si te hoc movet quod apud sanctam disciplinam Christi in fidem recepimus, esse Patrem Sapientiae; memento nos etiam hoc in fidem accepisse, quod aeterno Patri sit aequalis quae ab ipso genita est Sapientia[110].

15. Contradictions in the Manichaean theory. — By affirming that the soul is God, the Manichaeans became involved in monstrous contradictions.

If we say that the soul is God, we attribute to God the imperfections and limitations of our soul[111]. Augustine reproached the Manichaeans with their blasphemous inconsistency; "When you try to relate your fables, that God is corruptible, and mutable, and subject to injury, and exposed to want, and to weakness, and not secure from misery, this is what you are blind enough to teach, and what some are blinded enough to believe. And this is not all; for, according to you, God is not only corruptible, but corrupted; not only changeable, but changed; not only subject to injury, but injured; not only liable to want, but in want; not only possibly, but actually weak; not only exposed to misery, but miserable[112]."

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110 De libero arbitrio, 2.15.39 PL.32, 1262.

111 De moribus Manichaeorum, 2.11.21 PL.32, 1354.

112 Ibidem.

There is no excuse for saying that the soul is not God, but a particle of God. "I do not see", Augustine replies, "how it can be a particle of God without being God. A part of gold is gold; of silver, silver; of stone, stone; and to come to greater things, a part of the earth is earth; a part of water is water; and of air, air; and if you take a part of fire, you will not deny it to be fire, and a part of light can be nothing but light. Why, then, should a part of God not be God? Has God a jointed body like man and the lower animals? For a part of man is not man[113]."

The Manichaeans could not reject the notion of God as the highest, immutable, incorruptible, inviolable being. "All this the common sense of rational beings perceives - "and even you", Augustine addresses the Manichaeans, "assert it when you hear it[114]." On the other hand, the mutability of the soul is a fact known by our consciousness. On account of its mutability, it can be neither God nor a particle of God. Consequently, no other relation of the soul to God can be found than that of a creature.

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[113] Ibidem.

[114] Ibidem.

16. Matter is derived from God by way of creation. — After having proved that the soul was not God, but a creature, Augustine finally formulated his conclusions about the material world.

If, in spite of its mutability, the soul was not considered by the Manichaeans as derived from the Principle of Evil, there was no reason why the creation of changeable matter should be derogatory to God's dignity:

> Quocirca cum in Catholica dicitur, omnium naturarum atque substantiarum esse auctorem Deum, simul intelligitur ab eis qui hoc possunt intelligere, non esse Deum Auctorem mali. Quomodo enim potest ille, qui omnium quae sunt, causa est, ut sint, causa esse rursus ut non sint, id est ut ab essentia deficiant et ad non esse tendant? Quod malum generale esse clamat verissima ratio[115].

The Manichaeans were not able to understand the notion of evil. Without knowing its definition, they inquired into its source: "You Manichaeans often, if not in every case, ask those whom you try to bring over to your heresy: whence is evil... You ask me whence is evil? I ask you in return: what is evil? Which is the most reasonable question? Are those right who ask whence a thing is, when they do not know what it is; or he who thinks it necessary to inquire first what it is, in order to avoid gross absurdity while searching for the origin of a thing unknown?[116]"

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[115] De moribus Manichaeorum, 2.2.3 PL.32, 1346.

[116] De moribus Manichaeorum, 2.2.2 PL.32, 1345.

In order to make them understand what evil is, Augustine had first to demonstrate that God is the "summum esse". This he did by considering the immutable truths in the human mind, since they lead us to the Immutable Truth, or that which is: "... id enim vere est quod incommutabiliter manet... Et perveni ad id quod est." In the beginning of the De moribus Manichaeorum, Augustine insists on this notion of God:

> Nulli esse dubium arbitror, cum de bonis et malis queritur hoc genus quaestionum ad moralem pertinere disciplinam. ... Quamobrem vellem quidem, ut tam serenam mentis aciem homines ad haec investiganda deferrent, ut possent videre illud summum bonum quo non est quidquam melius aut superius, cui rationalis anima pura et perfecta subjungitur. Hoc enim intellecto atque perfecto, simul viderent id esse quod summe ac primitus esse rectissime dicitur. Hoc enim maxime esse dicendum est, quod semper eodem modo sese habet, quod omni modo sui simile est, quod nulla ex parte corrumpi aut mutari potest, quod non subjacet tempori, quod aliter nunc se habere quam habebat antea, non potest. Id enim est quod esse verissime dicitur. Subest enim hic verbo manentis in se atque incommutabiliter sese habentis naturae significatio. Hanc nihil aliud quam Deum possumus dicere, cui si contrarium recte quaeras, nihil omnino est. Esse enim contrarium non habet, nisi non esse[117].

To be, therefore, means for Augustine to be an immutable and ever-remaining nature. This is to be in the highest degree: "maxime esse... verissime esse... omnimodo sui simile esse". Such a nature excludes any change whatsoever.

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[117] De moribus Manichaeorum, 2.1.1 PL.32, 1345.

> Esse enim ad manendum refertur. Itaque quod summe et maxime esse dicitur, permanendo in se dicitur. Nam quod mutatur in melius non quia manebat mutatur, sed quia pervertebatur in pejus, id est ab essentia deficiebat: cujus defectionis auctor non est qui est auctor essentiae. Mutantur ergo quaedam in meliora et propterea tendunt esse: nec dicuntur ista mutatione perverti, sed reverti atque converti. Perversio enim contraria est ordinationi. Haec vero quae tendunt esse ad ordinem tendunt: quem cum fuerint consecuta ipsum esse consequuntur, quantum id creatura consequi potest. Ordo enim ad convenientiam quamdam quod ordinat redigit. Nihil est autem esse quam unum esse. Itaque in quantum quidque unitatem adipiscitur, in tantum est. Unitatis est enim operatio, convenientia atque concordia, qua sunt inquantum sunt, ea quae composita sunt: nam simplicia per se sunt, quia una sunt; quae autem non sunt simplicia, concordia partium imitantur unitatem, et intantum sunt in quantum consequuntur. Quare ordinatio esse cogit, inordinatio vero non esse[118].

As soon as Augustine had understood the notion of the "summe esse ... verissime esse", he also came to grasp the notion of evil as a privation of being or goodness, a notion heard for the first time probably from St. Ambrose[119]. Since "idipsum... malum...est...deficere ab essentia, et ad id tendere ut non sit"[120], the material world must have been created by God. The changes in the material world show that it has being, but not the true being. It has the participated being, or goodness, received from the true Being or Goodness:

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[118] De moribus Manichaeorum, 2.6.8 PL.32, 1348.

[119] Confessiones, 7.12.18 PL.32, 743. About the influence of St. Ambrose, cf. Courcelle, op.cit., p. 106.

[120] De moribus Manichaeorum, 2.?.2. PL.32, 1346.

> ... catholica disciplina... aliud dicit bonum quod summe ac per se bonum est, et non participatione alicujus boni, sed propria natura et essentia; aliud quod participando bonum et habendo; habet autem de illo summo bono ut bonum sit, in se tamen manente illo, nihilque amittente[121]

Although God is the cause of being, He cannot be made responsible for any imperfections whatsoever. For evil in general is not a nature or being, but a privation of being. No creature exhibits a total privation of being. In this case it would be nothing. Neither can any creature be its own highest good because this is proper to God:

> Hoc autem bonum quod postea diximus, creaturam vocat [Augustine means here the participated good], cui noceri per defectum potest: cujus defectus Deus auctor non est, quia existendi, et ut ita dicam, essendi, auctor est. Ita et malum ostenditur quomodo dicatur: non enim secundum essentiam, sed secundum privationem verissime dicitur; et natura cui noceri possit apparet. Non enim ipsa est summum malum, cui bonum adimitur cum nocetur neque summum bonum, quae propterea deficere a bono potest, quia non existendo bonum sed bonum habendo dicitur bona. Neque naturaliter bona res est, quae cum facta dicitur, utique ut bona esset accepit. Ita et Deus summum bonum est, et ea quae fecit bona sunt omnia quamvis non sint tam bona, quam est ille ipse qui fecit[122].

17. God is also the Illuminator of the minds. — With the help of true being, Augustine was enabled to understand the notion of evil.

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121 De moribus Manichaeorum, 2.4.6 PL.32, 1347.

122 Ibidem.

But, only by concentrating on the immutable truths in his mind, did he come to know that God is the True Being, because He is Truth Itself. As Truth, God contains all the truths:

> Nullo modo negaveris esse Incommutabilem veritatem haec omnia quae incommutabiliter vera sunt continentem[123].

God is, therefore, the source of all truths spoken by us internally or externally, whether these truths belong to wisdom or not. They all abide in Truth, identified by Augustine with the Second Person of God[124].

Augustine also believed that the Second Personne is the Wisdom of God[125]. All of our intellectual knowledge, whether it regards theory or practice is derived from God's knowledge or discipline; from that "alta quaedam et a multitudinis vel suspicione remotissima disciplina". This doctrine is in God ever-abiding, fixed and unshaken in God. As to the soul, it is "transcribed" on it and constitutes the law of our thinking and living[126].

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123 De libero arbitrio, 2.12.33 PL.32, 1259.

124 De beata vita, 4.24 PL.32, 975.

125 Ibidem, and De libero arbitrio, 2.15.39 PL.32,1262.

126 De ordine, 2.8.25 PL.32, 1006: "Haec autem disciplina Dei, quae apud eum fixe et inconcusse manens, in sapientes animas quasi transcribitur, ut tanto se sciant vivere melius tantoque sublimius, quanto et perfectius eam contemplantur intelligendo et vivendo custodiunt intelligentius. Haec igitur disciplina eis qui illam nosse desiderant simul geminum ordinem sequi jubet: cujus una pars vitae, altera eruditionis est."

G. AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE ON DIVINE IDEAS

18. God, Creator of all things. — The Bible calls God, especially the Second Person, not only the Truth and the Wisdom, but also the Power of God[127]. As such, God is the Creator of all things: "Omnia per ipsum facta sunt[128]."

Following Plato, Augustine understood that it was necessary to accept in God from eternity the ideas, or "rationes aeternae", of things to be made. He explains it by an analogy with the working of the human artificer, for instance, the carpenter, - "lignarius faber":

> ... quamvis in comparatione sapientiae et potentiae Dei pene nullius sit, tamdiu lignum caedere, atque tractare dolando, asciendo, planando, vel tornando atque poliendo, quousque ad artis regulas perducatur quantum potest... Prorsus noverat intus in animo, ubi ars ipsa pulchrior quam illa quae arte fabricantur. Sed quod videt artifex intus in arte, hoc foris probat in opere et hoc est perfectum quod artifici suo placet[129].

Likewise, "mutatis mutandis", in creating the world, God must have contemplated in His mind certain rules, exemplars or models according to which all things are made.

Augustine used to call the entirety of the models, the "mundus intelligibilis". The intelligible world is the

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[127] Contra Academicos, 2.2.1 PL.32, 919.

[128] John, 1.2.

[129] De Genesi contra Manichaeos, 1.13.

true world, the present world is truthlike, made unto the image of the other[130]. Later, Augustine preferred to use the term "rationes aeternae", which was more in vogue among Christians. Naturally, the examplars in God are not distinct from Him as those which are distinct from the human artificer.

> Nec Plato quidem in hoc erravit quia esse mundum intelligibilem dixit, si non vocabulum, quod ecclesiasticae consuetudini in re illa non usitatum est, sed ipsam rem velimus attendere. Mundum quippe ille intelligibilem nuncupavit ipsam rationem sempiternam atque incommutabilem qua fecit Deus mundum[131].

If one rejects the divine plan of creation, he will be compelled to say that before, during, and after the creation, God knew nothing about the world; in other words, God would act like an irrational being:

> Quam rationem [incommutabilem] qui esse negat, sequitur ut dicat irrationabiliter Deum fecisse quod fecit; aut, cum faceret, nescisse quid faceret, si apud eum ratio faciendi non erat. Si vera erat, sicut erat, ipsam Plato videtur vocasse intelligibilem mundum[132].

19. The term "idea" and its meaning: — Four years after the writing of the De ordine, Augustine stopped calling the "ratio sempiterna" the intelligible world. Along with the expression "rationes sempiternae", he speaks of God's

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130 Contra Academicos, 3.17.27 PL.32, 954.

131 Retractationes, 1.3.2 PL.32, 589.

132 Ibidem.

ideas. The famous De 83 quaestionibus, qu.46 gives different synonyms for that term and its notion[133].

The term idea is a Greek word. If we want to follow a literal translation, we should say forma or species. De facto, the Latins used the expression ratio. This is not a literal translation. It rather corresponds to the Greek logos. But, after all, the signification of a term depends on its common use[134].

As to the meaning of that term, Augustine gives the following definition:

> Sunt namque ideae principales formae quaedam, vel rationes rerum stabiles atque incommutabiles: quae ipsae formatae non sunt, ac per hoc aeternae et semper eodem modo se habentes quae in divina intelligentia continentur. Et cum ipsae neque oriantur, neque intereant, secundum eas tamen formari dicitur omne quod oriri et interire potest, et omne quod oritur et interit[135].

By the "formae principales", Augustine understood the eternal, immutable examplars, according to which all mutable things are created: "secundum eas [formas] ... formari dicitur omne quod oriri et interire potest..."

There is no doubt that Augustine identifies the ideas with God Himself. They have not been formed; they do not come

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133 De diversis quaestionibus 83, qu.46, PL.40, 11-100.

134 Ibidem, p. 38.

135 Ibidem, PL.40, 38.

to be or perish. They are eternal and always the same.

Augustine was aware of the opinion which had located the ideas outside of God's mind. He underlines just the contrary: "quae [ideae] in divina intelligentia continentur[136]".

> Has autem rationes ubi arbitrandum est esse nisi in ipsa mente creatoris. Non enim extra se quidquam positum intuebatur ut secundum id constitueret quod constituebat. Nam hoc opinari sacrilegum est[137].

20. The problem whether each individual thing corresponds to a particular idea. — Since the ideas are forms or examplars of all mutable things, does it follow that to each individual thing there is a corresponding particular idea?

Augustine calls ideas: "principales formae". This seems to indicate, beforehand, that Augustine confined ideas to the "formae principales" in the created world. What he means becomes clearer by the following text:

> Quis autem religiosus et vera religione imbutus quamvis nondum possit haec intueri, negare tamen audeat, immo non etiam profiteatur, omnia quae sunt, id est quaecumque in suo genere propria quadam natura continentur, ut sint, Deo auctore esse procreata eoque auctore omnia quae vivunt vivere, atque universalem rerum incolumitatem, ordinemque ipsum quo ea quae mutentur, suos temporales cursus certo moderamine celebrant summi Dei legibus contineri et gubernari. Quo constituto atque concesso quis audeat dicere Deum irrationabiliter omnia condidisse[138].

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[136] De div. quaestionibus 83, q.46 PL.40, 30.

[137] Ibidem.

[138] Cf. St. Thomas: "Plato non posuit ideas singularium, sed specierum" (De veritate, q.111,8).

It is striking that Augustine connects the divine ideas with all things which "by their proper natures are contained in their own genus", - "quaecumque in suo genere propria quadam natura continentur[139]". At the same time, he considers all things as a universe mutable in time, subject to and governed by the laws of God.

There is no doubt that "singula igitur propriis sunt creata rationibus". However, the "singula" should be considered both as species and as parts of the whole. This is better explained in the correspondence which Augustine had exchanged on this subject with Nebridius, in the year of 389. As Augustine, so also Nebridius was interested in the problem of whether there are in God ideas of species or individuals.

> Quaeris [Augustine sums up Nebridius's question] utrum summa illa veritas et summa sapientia et forma rerum per quam facta sunt omnia, quem Filium Dei unicum sacra nostra profitentur, generaliter hominis, an etiam uniuscujusque nostrum rationem contineat. Magna quaestio[140].

According to Augustine, there is in God the idea of man in general, in which the individuals are not contained. But God has also the idea of the temporal universe in which idea the 'reasons" (examplars) of particular men are contained.

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139 St. Thomas, De Veritate, q.111, a.2.

140 Ep.4.4 PL.33. ad Nebridium. Cf. St. Thomas, De Veritate, q.111, a.2.

> Sed mihi videtur, quod ad hominem faciendum attinet, hominis quidem tantum, non meam vel tuam ibi esse rationem; quod autem ad orbem temporis, varias hominum rationes illa sinceritate vivere[141].

In order to shed more light on this solution which seems to be very obscure, Augustine resorted to a comparison with the arts which live in the human mind:

> Nam in disciplina metiendi una est anguli ratio, una quadrati. Itaque quoties demonstrare angulum volo nonnisi una ratio anguli mihi occurrit. Sed quadratum nequaquam scriberem nisi quatuor simul angulorum rationem intuerer.
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> Ita quilibet homo una ratione, qua homo intelligitur, factus est. At, ut populus fiat, quamvis et ipse una ratio, non tamen hominis ratio sed hominum. Si igitur pars hujus universi est Nebridius, et omne universum partibus confit, non potuit universi conditor Deus rationem partium non habere. Quamobrem quod plurimorum hominum ibi ratio est, non ad ipsum hominem pertinet, quamquam miro rursum modo ad unum omnia redigatur[142].

From this it follows that there are in God ideas both of species and of individual things. But while each specific nature depends on its own separate idea, the individuals depend on the idea of their corresponding collective, as for instance on that of "populus", or "universus". Since "populus" and "universus" are composed of individual men and individual parts, the idea of "populus" and "universus" contains in itself the ideas of individual men and parts.

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141 Ibidem.

142 Ep.14 ad Nebridium.

Apparently, according to his logic, Augustine underlined in the species more their comprehension rather than their extension. On the contrary, the collective terms, "prima facie" suggest multiplicity. So it is true that "singula igitur propriis sunt creata rationibus[143]." There is in all created things both a principle of unity and multiplicity. The former is constituted by specific nature, the latter by individual nature. Accordingly, there is in God an idea of one in which different natures participate, and there is an idea of many, composed of units which again form a whole or unity. So it is also true that "miris rursum modis ad unum omnia redigun-tur[144]."

21. Augustine's admiration for Plato. — No wonder that, after his conversion, Augustine was full of admiration for Plato's doctrine on the intelligible world, or the "mundus idearum". He understood that, without this doctrine, one would not be able to grasp the teaching of the Bible on God as the Creator of all mutable things and the Illuminator of minds. For this reason Augustine says: "Siquidem tanta in eis [ideis] vis constituitur ut nisi his intellectis sapiens

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[143] De diversis quaest.83, 46 PL.40.

[144] Ep.14.4 PL.33.

esse nemo possit[145]."

Although Plato is "par excellence" the philosopher of divine ideas, it does not mean that he was the first who had discovered the thing itself as signified by that term:

> Ideas Plato primus appellasse perhibetur: non tamen si hoc nomen, antequam ipse instituerat, non erat, ideo vel res ipsae non erant, quas ideas vocavit, vel a nullo erant intellectae: sed alio fortasse atque alio nomine ab aliis nuncupatae sunt. Licet enim cuique rei incognitae, quae nullum habeat usitatum nomen, quodlibet nomen imponere. Nam non est verisimile sapientes aut nullos fuisse ante Platonem; aut istas, quas Plato, ut dictum est, ideas vocat, quaecumque res sint, non intellexisse... Credibile est etiam praeter Graeciam fuisse in aliis gentibus sapientes: quod etiam Plato non solum peregrinando sapientiae proficiendae gratia satis testatus est, sed etiam in libris suis commemorat. Hos ergo, si qui fuerunt non existimandum est ideas ignorasse, quamvis alio fortasse eas nomine vocaverint[146].

No doubt the notion of ideas was known not only to Plato, but also even before Plato to different philosophers in Greece and in other countries. Yet, no other philosophy centered so much around the divine ideas as that of Plato. With the help of Platonic philosophy, Augustine had solved his difficulties, as yet insoluble, in regard to God's nature, to the notion of creation, and illumination. He simply could not understand how a pagan philosopher was able to discover by himself certain truths taught by Revelation. The theory

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[145] Ibidem.

[146] De div. quaest.83, 46,2 PL.40,38.

that Plato had been acquainted with the Old Testament explained to Augustine the Wisdom of the Athenian philosopher. More than this, Augustine went as far as to assert that Christ Himself had recommended the Platonic doctrine of ideas: "There is another world utterly remote from these eyes of ours, a world which the intellect of a few sound men beholds. This Christ Himself indicates clearly enough. He does not say: My kingdom is not of the world. He says: My kingdom is not of this world[147]."

Later, in his Retractationes, Augustine will correct his former opinion: "I am

> I am displeased... because I propounded the existence of two worlds, the sensible and the intelligible, not as from the teaching of Plato or the Platonic philosophers, but as my own, as if the Lord Himself wished to indicate this, because He does not say: My kingdom is not of the world, but My kingdom is not of this world, although the saying can be found in some utterance of His (John 18,36). But even if another world was indicated by Christ the Lord, it could the more fittingly be understood as that one in which there will be a new heaven and a new earth, when that has been accomplished for which we pray when we say: "Thy kingdom come"[148].

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[147] De ordine, 1.11.32 PL.32, 993.

[148] Retractationes, 1.3.2 PL.32, 588.

CHAPTER IX

THE UNION OF THE MIND WITH GOD'S IDEAS

1. GOD'S IDEAS IN THE CENTER OF AUGUSTINE'S PHILOSOPHY

Augustine had never rejected the Platonic theory of Ideas: "Nec Plato quidem in hoc erravit, quia esse mundum intelligibilem dixit[1]." It should be underlined that this view was expressed by Augustine shortly before his death. Augustine's philosophy centers around God's Ideas.

a. The Ideas and the "esse" of things. — God holds all things in the hand of Truth[2]. The Second Person was identified by Augustine with God's Truth and God's Intellect[3] "in quo universa, vel ipse potius universa[4]". All things which exist, had existed, will exist or can exist, live in the Divine Ideas as exemplars which is God Himself. Through the Divine Ideas and on their pattern all things had received their being outside of God's Mind. Therefore, above all things, on the summit of all reality, Augustine sees God's Truth and Wisdom with their "rationes aeternae".

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[1] Retractationes, 1.3.2 PL.32, 589.

[2] Confessiones, 7.15.21 PL.32, 744.

[3] Cf. Introductory Chapter, footnote 9.

[4] De ordine, 2.9.26 PL.32, 1007.

Once created all things are sustained by God in their being[5]. But also their activity is subject to God's Ideas, although not in the same manner in all creatures. Rational souls are immediately "affected" by God's Truth. Other creatures are also submitted in their "agere" to the "rationes aeternae", although by the intermediary either of the universal or particular soul[6].

> Deus humanis mentibus nulla natura interposita praesidet[7]... summis illis aeternisque rationibus quae incommutabiliter manent, nec utique loco continentur, prior afficitur anima quam corpus; nec prior tantum, sed etiam magis, quanto etiam corpore melior. Nec ista propinquitas loco, sed naturae ordine dicta sit.
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> Hoc autem ordine intelligitur a summa essentia speciem corpori per animam tribui, qua est in quantumcumque est. Per animam ergo corpus subsistit, et eo

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[5] De immortalitate animae, 8.14 PL.32, 1028: "Haec autem vis et natura incorporea effectrix corporis universi praesente potentia tenet universum. Non enim fecit, atque discessit effectumque deseruit. Ea quippe substantia quae corpus non est, neque, ut ita dicam, localiter movetur, ut ab ea substantia, quae locum obtinet, separari queat; et illa effectoria vis vacare non potest, quin id, quod ab ea factum est, tueatur, et specie carere non sinat, qua est, in quantumcumque est. Quod enim per se non est, si destituatur ab eo, per quod est, profecto non erit; et non possumus dicere id accepisse corpus cum factum est, ut seipso jam contentum esse posset, etiamsi a conditore desereretur". This reasoning applies also, mutatis mutandis, to the soul.

[6] Augustine teaches that God immediately affects the human intellect. On this subject one should compare St. Augustine with St. Thomas, Summa Theol. 1.1 q.105, a.3: "Utrum Deus moveat immediate intellectum creatum". Cf. also Grabmann, Der gottliche Grund menschlicher wahrheitserkenntnis nach Augustinus und Thomas von Aquin, p. 63.

[7] De musica, 6.1.1 PL.32, 1161; De vera religione, 55.113.

> ipso est, quo animatur sive universaliter ut mundus, sive particulariter, ut unumquodque animal intra mundum[8].

We are interested in the first part of the text, in the action of God's Ideas on the human mind. The result of God's influence on the human soul, without any intermediary, is the resemblance of man to God. There is nothing so close to God as the rational soul: 'The soul is far superior to, more powerful than, the body in its entirety...[9] what is superior to the rational soul is God, as all agree..[10] id est unum de rebus proximum Deo ... anima rationalis inter eas res quae sunt a Deo conditae, omnia superat[11]." Now that in which we excell all animals is the "ratio": "Nihil aliud me pecori praeponit, nisi quod rationale animal sum[12]."

Human reason can be considered either as a power of knowing, or as an act of knowing. Man is a rational animal, "animal rationale". But "rationale (veteres) esse dixerunt

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[8] De immortalitate animae, 15.24 PL.32, 1033. Cf. Retractationes, 1.5.3 PL.32, 591. About the universal soul, see Retractationes, 1.5.3 PL.32, 591; ibidem, 1.11.4 PL.32, 601; De consensu evangelistarum, 1.23.35 PL.34, 1058. De civitate Dei, 13.16.2 PL.41, 388-389.

[9] De quantitate animae, 30.59 PL.32, 1068.

[10] De immortalitate animae, 13.22 PL.32, 1032.

[11] De div. quaest. 83, 46, PL.40, 31.

[12] De ordine, 2.19.49 PL.32, 1018.

quod ratione uteretur, vel uti posset[13]."

Let us, therefore, see whether and how the human reason is under the influence of God's Ideas; first, when man has not yet reached the use of reason, and then, when he exercises his reason in his actual knowledge.

2. GOD'S IDEAS IN AN INFANT.

There is the fact that the infant does not exhibit the use of reason, although it is a rational animal, a being endowed with reason. It has the "posse uti ratione", but not yet the actual "uti ratione".

Augustine's notion of the "ratio" will help us in determining God's action on the soul of the infant:

> Ratio est mentis motio ea quae discuntur distinguendi et connectendi potens.
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> Ego quodam meo motu interiore et occulto ea quae discenda sunt possum discernere et connectere et haec vis mea ratio vocatur[14].

The "ratio", therefore, even if not used, i.e. without being an actual knowledge, is a certain "vis", a certain actual or active power, an energy which Augustine describes as "mentis motio". In this regard, it can be compared to an

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[13] De ordine, 2.11.30 PL.32, 1009.

[14] De ordine, 2.11.30; 2.18.48 PL.32, 1009, 1017. St. Ambrose's definition of man: "homo mens rationis capax" (De Noe et arca, 10.2).

open eye which is looking:

> Ego autem ratio ita sum in mentibus ut in oculis est aspectus. Non enim hoc est habere oculos quod aspicere; aut item hoc est aspicere quod videre... aspectus animae ratio est[15].

This "aspectus animae", by itself, does not constitute the act of knowledge or the vision: "Non sequitur, ut omnis, qui aspicit, videat[16]." However, this movement of the mind intends to become a vision. A vision of what?

The natural tendency of the "mentis motio" is directed towards "ea, quae discenda sunt". The Augustinian "discere et docere" bears on the immutable truths, on the "certissima disciplinarum". Where are they to be found? God's Truth presides over the human mind, even over that of the infant. There, in God's Immutable Truth, all the truths are contained: "omnia, quae incommutabiliter vera sunt[17]."

Now the "ratio" is an active power of grasping the immutable truths by means of a judgment: "... quae discenda sunt possum discernere et connectere."

It is striking that in the definition of the "ratio" Augustine does not mention the active power of forming concepts, but that of forming judgments. And yet, from one of

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[15] Soliloquia, 1.6.12 PL.32, 875.

[16] Soliloquia, 1.6.12 PL.32, 875.

[17] De libero arbitrio, 2.12.33 PL.32, 1259.

Augustine's texts it could be concluded that the infant is born with ready-made concepts. Although Augustine was filled with horror while watching the complete ignorance of infants, he still maintained that new-born children have brought all arts with them. In this regard, he could not agree with his pupil Evodius who supported just the opposite opinion:

> ... tantum nostrae sibimet opiniones adversantur, ut tibi [Augustine replies to Evodius] anima nullam, mihi, contra, omnes artes secum attulisse videatur[18].

One should not imagine that Augustine's expression "omnes artes secum attulisse" certainly implies the ready-made concepts, infused into the mind of the infant. Even if we interpreted Augustine's words as implying the pre-existence of the soul, the term "artes" would not mean concepts, or, as Augustine says "notiones", but immutable judgments. As we have seen, through Cicero Augustine had been acquainted with the Platonic theory of reminiscence. The latter tries to explain the knowledge of the most simple truths of geometry in children and illiterate persons. According to this theory, the soul had lived in another world and had brought with it all its knowledge of the intelligible world. But in contact with sensible things, that science has been forgotten; yet it can be recalled by means of teaching.

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[18] De quantitate animae, 20.34 PL.32, 1055; Soliloquia 2.20.35 PL.32, 903; Retractationes, 1.8.2 PL.32, 1026.

The possibility of a previous life was not entirely repudiated by Augustine. However, he was more inclined to accept the creation of the soul in the body. On this supposition there is no reason which would compel us to attribute to Augustine the theory of innate ideas or concepts. Augustine's words "omnes artes secum attulisse" do not change or complete his definition of the "ratio".

The "ratio" as an active power of knowing "ea, quae discuntur", is directed towards the immutable truths. Now when Augustine asserts that the soul of the infant has brought all arts with it, he takes the term "artes" objectively, as the truths taught by the liberal disciplines.

In this regard, the meaning of the term "artes" is similar to that of the term "ratio" and "disciplina". The term "ratio" can be taken not only subjectively, as "aspectus mentis ... vis ... mentis motio" or as the act of knowing the true, but also objectively, as the true which is contemplated.

> Ratio est aspectus animi, quo per seipsum, non per corpus verum intuetur; aut ipsa veri contemplatio, non per corpus; aut ipsum verum, quod contemplatur[19].

As the true that is contemplated, the "ratio" is formally identified by Augustine with the "ars":

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[19] De immortalitate animae, 6.10 PL.32, 1026.

> ... aut aliud esse artem, aliud rationem? Quamvis enim ars una multarum quasi quidam coetus rationum esse dicatur, tamen ars etiam una ratio dici verissime atque intelligi potest. Sed sive hoc, sive illud sit, non minus immutabilem artem esse conficitur[20].

The "artes" are also called "disciplinae". Objectively taken, the "disciplinae" are immutable and never cease to be:

> Nam quod est atque immutabile est, semper sit necesse est. Esse autem disciplinam nemo negat, Et quisquis fatetur fieri non posse, ut data per medium circulum linea non sit omnium, quae non per medium ducuntur maxima, idque esse alicujus disciplinae, immutabilem disciplinam esse non negat[21].

Certainly all these truths, rationes... artes... disciplinae originally have their seat in God's "rationes aeternae" which preside over the human mind. The "rationes aeternae" are participated in by the human mind or impressed on it in a twofold way. The initial, imperfect participation takes place in the infant which is born with an active power (mentis motio, vis) of knowing the truths, stored in God's Truth, present to the human mind. The perfect participation takes place in the actual knowledge, when the truth of the immutable judgment is grasped.

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[20] De immortalitate animae, 4.5 PL.32, 1024.

[21] De immortalitate animae, 1.1 PL.32, 1021.

Augustine's expression "omnes artes secum attulisse" seems to mean nothing more than the active power of knowing the immutable truths of the liberal disciplines. The infant has brought all arts with it, because it is united with God's mind in which all truths are contained and the infant is endowed with the power of knowing them. It cannot be proved that, according to Augustine, that active power should be more determined by ready-made concepts or imprints of truth in order to be a true active power. Therefore, the notion of the "ratio" is to be understood as it stands. The Platonic formula of the "omnes artes secum attulisse" should not be interpreted against the background of Platonic pre-existence, but against that of the doctrine of the creation of the soul in the body.

The active power of grasping the truth is granted to the soul of the infant by God who presides over the mind without an intermediary. No activity is involved on the part of the soul, since God's act of presiding over the soul is nothing more than the continuation of the act of creation.

> At si illa rationis vis [namely rationis aeternae] ipsa sua conjunctione afficit animum; neque enim non afficere potest; ita profecto afficit, ut ei esse tribuat. Est enim maxime ipsa ratio, ubi summa etiam immutabilitas intelligitur. Itaque eum quem ex se afficit, cogit esse quodammodo[22].

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[22] De immortalitate animae, 6.11 PL.32, 1026.

Through the immediate union of the "ratio aeterna" with the soul, the latter participates in God's immutability, since it has the power of knowing what is immutable. This makes the soul rational, i.e. participating in God's "ratio": "Nam mihi videtur [animus] est substantia quaedam rationis particeps regendo corpori accommodata[23]."

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[23] De quantitate animae, 13.22 PL.32, 1048. For a long time, Augustine was wont to consider man according to his Manichaean principles: Man is a soul, a particle of God. But this particle of God is imprisoned in the body derived from the Principle of Evil. The bodily substance is animated by an evil soul. For such a notion of man, Augustine had found a proof in his own experiences. His bad inclinations contradicted the movements of his soul towards the good. The source of the former has to be sought both in the body and in its evil soul which animates the body. When Augustine had recovered his faith (already before the reading of the Platonic books) his whole anthropology gradually broke in pieces. According to the Christian doctrine both the soul and body had been created by God so that man is composed of body and soul. This Augustine started to believe. It seems that at this time Augustine did not feel compelled to repudiate the theory of two souls. In his opinion he had only to believe that God was their Creator. The inferior soul animating the body should obey the superior soul. The former was considered as the slave of the latter. For this purpose it was endowed with senses and memory. But soon Augustine had to inquire into the mutual relation of these two souls. Was he to consider the inferior soul as a substance in itself or as a part of the superior sal? Traces of Augustine's difficulties adn meditations can be seen in the opinions exposed by his pupil Licentius, in the De ordine, 2.2.5-7. After the reading of Platonic books and St. Paul's Epistles, Augustine understood the essential differences between the intelligible and sensible things. He also came to the conclusion that there was in man only one rational soul. The evil inclinations have their source both in the changeable body and in the lower man. But since there is such a diversity between the nature of body and soul how could they be united? This problem was passionately discussed between Augustine and his friend Nebridius. The latter even resorted to the theory of something intermediary between the soul and the body. That something should unite

3. GOD'S IDEAS IN THE ACT OF KNOWLEDGE.

But God presides over the human mind not only in the order of being by conferring the power of knowing. He intervenes also in the actual knowledge of the immutable truth.

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both substances. There is an allusion to such a discussion in the De beata vita 2.7 PL.32,963. Later at Tagaste, in 389, Augustine understood that such an intermediary factor cannot be proved, because whatever is known is grasped either by our senses or by our intellect. It is therefore either of intelligible or sensible nature (Ep.13.2 PL.32,78);De div.quaest. 83.54). The problem of the union of bodyand soul became more acute on account of our knowledge of immutable truths. Due to its union with the immutable truth the soul is immortal. From this the problem arises: "Quomodo immortalis est ratio et ego simul et rationale et mortale quiddam esse definior?"(De ordine, 2.19.30). There is the fact that the immortal soul is united wih the mortal body. What kind of union is it? Augustine draws the following conclusions: "Igitur si immortalis est ratio et ego qui ista omnia vel discerno vel connecto ratio sum, illud quo mortale appellor non est meum".(De ordine, 2.19.50). In other words, if we have to identify the soul with truth itself, (ratio is taken objectively as the "verum" known), then the body is something foreign to the soul. Such was the teaching of the Manichaeans. The second conclusion is this: "Aut si anima non est id quod ratio et tamen rationе uter et per rationem melior sum, a deteriore ad melius, a mortali ad immortale fugiendum est" (ibidem). This means that if the soul cannot be identified with the "ratio", i.e. with the immutable truth and yet it used the "ratio" and finds in it its source of perfection, it should turn to the better, i.e. to the immortal. Augustine takes rather a practical attitude to the problem of the union of the body with the soul. Theoretically he is inclined to consider the soul as man. The soul seems to be united with the body accidentally. He will correct himself for having said that God is insearch of men worthy of Him. He should rather say of souls worthy of Him: "Alios autem viros, vel, ut verius loquamur, alias animas, dum hoc corpus agunt, jam thalamo suo dignas conjunx ille optimus ac pulcherrimus quaerit, quibus non vivere, sed beate vivere satis sit" (De ordine, 1.8.24). The relation of the soul to the body had been formulated in the De quantitate animae (13. 22). Augustine's definition of man is identical with his definition of the soul: "Homo... ut homini apparet, anima

The act of knowledge or the "videre" takes place when the "ratio" is united with the object to be known, with the "ea quae discenda sunt":

> Ipsa autem visio intellectus est ille qui in anima est, qui conficitur ex intelligente et eo quod intelligitur: ut in oculis videre quod dicitur ex ipso sensu constat atque sensibili, quorum detracto quolibet videri nihil potest[24].

Since in the ac tual knowledge the "ratio" reaches a term among "ea quae discenda sunt", the act of knowledge consists in the vision of the immutable truth of a judgment. This is precisely the second result of the influence of God's Ideas on the human mind. Due to the immediate action of God, the soul comes to know the immutable truth. This is meant in Augustine's expression: "Summis rationibus prior afficitur anima et magis".

How does Augustine justify this second role of God's Ideas? Although the soul has its own active power of knowing the truth, this power exhibits a certain deficiency in its

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rationalis est, mortali atque terreno utens corpore" (De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae, 1.27.52). In spite of this definition, Augustine as a Christian admitted that the union of the soul with its body is natural. In this, he contradicted Plato's doctrine that the union of soul and body is the result of a crime committed by the soul in the other life. But Augustine did not succeed to justify this union (Cf. De moribus ecclesiae, 1.4.6; Gilson, The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy, p. 174).

[24] Soliloquia, 1.6.13 PL.32, 876.

exercise. In order to see the immutable, our intellect has to be aided. There is a certain disproportion between the immutable truth to be known and the mutable knowing subject. From this the problem arises how the soul is able to know what is immutable:

> Si enim subjectum est animus arte in subjecto existente, neque subjectum immutari potest quin et id quod in subjecto est immutetur, qui possumus obtinere immutabilem esse artem atque rationem, si mutabilis animus in quo illa sunt esse convincitur? Quae autem major quam in contraria solet esse mutatio? et quis negat animum, ut caetera omittam, stultum alias, alias vero esse sapientem?[25]

In other words, there is the fact that we know the immutable truths which are in the soul as in their subject. Now the knowing subject is mutable. We are sometimes ignorant and sometimes wise. But it seems that, if the knowing subject undergoes a change, that which is in the subject should also change. And yet we affirm that the principles of the liberal disciplines are immutable.

Because of this disproportion which exists between the immutable truth and the mutable soul, one has to account for the appearance of truth in the human mind. Where does it come from? The mind cannot be its creator. We have the consciousness that we are not the makers of truth, but rather that we discover it. How could the mutable soul create what is eternal and immutable?

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[25] De immortalitate animae, 5.7 PL.32, 1025.

> Sed cum vel nos ipsi nobiscum ratiocinantes vel ab alio bene interrogati de quibusdam liberalibus artibus ea quae invenimus, non alibi quam in nostro animo invenimus; neque id est invenire quod facere aut gignere; alioquin aeterna gigneret animus inventione temporali. Nam aeterna saepe invenit; quod enim tam aeternum quam circuli ratio, vel si quid aliud in hujusmodi artibus? Nec non fuisse aliquando, nec non fore comprehenditur[26].

Since the immutable must be derived from an immutable source, and, since the mind, in spite of its own active power, of knowing the truth, is not quite proportioned to it, the soul needs a special help from above. This, as we have seen, Augustine illustrates by means of our sense knowledge. Without the light of the sun we are not able to see the sensible objects. Likewise without the Divine Sun we would not be able to know the truths of the liberal disciplines. It is God who impresses the truth on our judgments and this explains their immutability, on the one hand, and our certitude about their truth, on the other hand.

> Ergo et illa, quae in disciplinis traduntur, quae quisquis intelligit, verissima esse sine ulla dubitatione concedit, credendum est, ea non posse intelligi nisi ab alio, quasi suo sole illustrentur[27].

Thus with the help of the Divine Light, the mutable mind can be united with the immutable truth. This union appears to Augustine as something mysterious:

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[26] De immortalitate animae, 5.7 PL.32, 1025.

[27] Soliloquia, 1.8.15 PL.32, 877; 1.6.12 PL.32, 875.

> Haec autem quae intelliguntur eodem modo sese habentia, cum ea intuetur animus, satis ostendit se illis esse conjunctum mâro quodam eodemque incorporali modo[28].

First of all, the mind sees the immutable truths without the intermediary of the senses. If we watch the process of thinking and reasoning, we become aware that it is the mind which proceeds from one object to another. This could not be done without understanding it. And again, it is neither the body that understands, nor the mind with the help of the body that understands, since, as soon as we try to understand something, we turn away from the body. No wonder. That which we understand is always the same, while the objects of our sense knowledge are subject to change:

> Jam vero cum ratiocinamur, animus id agit. Non enim id agit nisi qui intelligit; nec animus auxiliante corpore intelligit; quia cum intelligere vult, a corpore avertitur. Quod enim intelligit, ejusmodi est semper; nihilque corporis ejusmodi est semper; non igitur potest adjuvare animum ad intelligendum nitentem, cui non impedire satis est.
>
> Quis enim se inspiciens, non expertus est tanto se aliquid intelexisse sincerius, quanto removere atque subducere intentionem mentis a corporis sensibus potuit?[29]

From this it follows: first, that things of the mind are not of a corporeal nature, otherwise it would not be possible to contemplate them "sine instrumento corporis";

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[28] De immortalitate animae, 10.17 PL.32, 1030.

[29] Ibidem.

secondly, that their properties are not those of bodies. The latter which we grasp by our senses, in a certain way are not, since they change at every moment, while the former are in the highest degree, because they are always the same. Consequently the intelligence is incomparably higher than our senses.

> Ad haec ea quae intelligit animus, cum se avertit a corpore, non sunt profecto corporea, et tamen sunt; maximeque sunt; nam eodem modo semper sese habent. Nam nihil absurdius dici potest quam ea esse, quae oculis videmus, ea non esse quae intelligentia cernimus; cum dubitare dementis sit intelligentiam incomparabiliter oculis anteferri[30].

4. A THREEFOLD KIND OF UNION OF THE MIND WITH TRUTH.

Since in the actual knowledge the mind is united with the immutable truth, one has to determine the nature of this union. When the soul contemplates the truth, the nature of the union varies according to the "alicubi" or the "whereabouts" of the truth. Truth is either in the mind as in its subject, or truth is the subject and the mind is in it as in its subject, or both the mind and truth are two substances:

> Quare ista conjunctio intuentis animi et ejus veri quod [animus] intuetur aut ita est, ut subjectum sit animus, verum autem illud in subjecto; aut contra, subjectum verum et in subjecto animus; aut utrumque substantia[31].

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[30] De immortalitate animae, 10.17 PL.32, 1030.

[31] De immortalitate animae, 6.11 PL.32, 1026; 10.17 PL.32, 1030.

5. THE FIRST KIND OF UNION: "SUBJECTUM EST ANIMUS, VERUM AUTEM IN SUBJECTO".

In the first case, the mind is the subject and the truth is in it as in its subject.

The soul therefore contemplates (intetur) the truth not outside of the mind, but in the mind itself. This is the truth of immutable judgments, the "verum omne quod loquimur", the truth of the liberal disciplines, "quaeque quisquis intelligit verissima esse". They are in the subject or in another. Augustine applies here the old doctrine of Aristotle's categories with which he had been acquainted in his adolescence: "... ab ineunte adolescentia studiosissime percepta et cognita[32]". In the Soliloquia, Augustine gives the meaning of the expression that truth is in the mind as in its subject:

> One thing is said to be in another in two ways. In the first way, it is so in such a manner that it might be removed and be somewhere else, as, for example, this wood is in this place, as the sun is in the East. In the second way, the thing is in the subject in such a manner that it cannot be separated from it, as the form and appearance which we see in this wood, as light in the sun, as heat in the fire - [and here Augustine comes to the point at issue] as discipline is in the soul and any other things which may be of this kind[33].

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[32] Soliloquia, 2.12.22 PL.32, 895; Confessiones, L.16. 28 PL.32, 704. It is possible that Augustine had studies the commentary on the Categories made by Victorinus.

[33] Soliloquia, 2.12.22 PL.32, 895.

Evidently, science or truth cannot be removed from the soul like a piece of wood from its place, in order to be put somewhere else. Truth is strictly connected with man's nature. The power of knowing the truth flows from the definition of man. Even the truth actually known and then forgotten is not entirely erased from the human mind. Truth is in the same relation to the human soul as light is to the sun, as heat is to the fire. Without light the sun would not be what it is; without heat the fire would cease to be fire. Without truth, or, as Augustine says, without disciplina, the human soul would not be a rational soul. For this reason truth is inseparable from the human mind as its subject. Since truth is immutable, it confers a certain immutability on its subject.

Without truth, according to Augustine, the soul cannot exist. In this regard, it depends on truth. But does not truth depend on its subject? "Do you not grant that whatever is inseparable from a subject cannot continue, if the subject does not continue? — I see that this, too, necessarily follows. For anyone who examines the matter carefully knows that, even when the subject continues, it is possible that that which is in the subject may not continue. Thus the colour of the body can change with the condition of one's health or with the age, even though the body itself may not yet have died. This is not equally true in all cases, but only in

those cases, in which the things which are in subjects co-exist with them without being necessary for the existence of the subjects. For the wall to exist it need not have the colour we see in it, since, even if it were to grow black or white, or change to some other colour, it would still remain and be called, nonetheless, a wall. — But, contrariwise, if fire were to be without heat, it would not be fire, and we can call snow only that which is white. But, as regards your question, who would admit or who would deem it possible that that which is in the subject remains, when the subject has passed away? It is surely preposterous and far from the truth to say that something which would not exist unless it existed in a subject might exist, when the subject has ceased to exist[34]."

Few months later, this problem was again discussed by Augustine in the De immortalitate animae: "Utrum verum quod sine instrumento corporis animus intuetur, sit per se ipsum et non sit in animo, aut possit esse sine animo?[35]"

Whatever it may be, there is no doubt about the fact of that union, since truth is contemplated:

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[34] Soliloquia, 2.13.23 PL.32, 895.

[35] De immortalitate animae, 6.10 PL.32, 1026. This seems to be an allusion to the theory of Ideas outside of God's mind.

> ...uoquolibet autem modo se habeat, non id posset contemplari animus per seipsum, nisi aliqua conjunctione cum eo. Nam omne quod contemplamur, sive cogitatione capimus, aut sensu aut intellectu capimus.
> Sed ea, quae sensu capiuntur, extra etiam nos esse sentiuntur, et locis continentur, unde nec percipi quidem posse affirmentur.
> Ea vero, quae intelliguntur, non quasi alibi posita intelliguntur, quam ipse qui intelligit animus; simul enim etiam intelliguntur non contineri loco[36].

Truth itself may be outside of the mind, but since it is known, it must be in some way in the mind. In this regard the intellectual knowledge differs from the sense knowledge. The latter deals with the "sensibilia" which are found outside of ourselves, while the "intelligibilia" known by us are discovered in the mind without being limited by place.

> Omne quod scit animus, in sese habet... Manifestum est ... omnes veras rationes in secretis ejus [animi] esse[37].

The question, therefore, "utrum verum illud ... quod animus intuetur sit per seipsum et non sit in animo?" should be answered negatively. De facto, the truth known by the mind is in the mind. But the second question,"utrum possit esse sine animo?" should also be answered negatively. The immutable truths are in the mind in such a way that they must be there always and cannot be separated from it:

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[36] De immortalitate animae, 6.10. PL.32, 1 26.

[37] De immortalitate animae, 1.1 PL.32, 1021; 4.6 PL.32 1024.

> ... artem autem non solum esse in animo artificis, sed etiam nusquam esse nisi in animo manifestum est, idque inseparabiliter. Nam si ars ab animo separabitur, aut erit praeter quam in animo, aut nusquam erit, aut de animo in animum continuo transibit[38].

It is, therefore, evident that the "ars" or the immutable truth of the liberal disciplines is de facto in the mind of the artificer. And more than that, it cannot be but in his mind and is inseparable from his mind. Why should the separation be impossible? We have to consider all the consequences which would follow.

If there is a divorce between truth and the soul, truth will be either outside of the mind, or nowhere, or it will pass continuously from mind to mind.

It will be outside of the mind. - But this can never happen, because the art or participated truth is proper only to the rational soul:

> At si sedes arti nulla sine vita est, ita nec vita cum ratione ulli nisi animae. Disciplina non potest esse nisi in eo quod vivit. Nihil enim quod non vivit, aliquid discit; nec esse in eo quod nihil discit, disciplina potest[39].

It will be nowhere. - This again implies a contradiction. If the art or truth is proper to the rational soul, it cannot be nowhere. That which is immutable must have its "alicubi".

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[38] De immortalitate animae, 4.5 PL.32, 1024.

[39] Ibidem, and 1.1 PL.32, 1021.

> Est autem alicubi disciplina, nam est, et quidquid est nusquam esse non potest ... Nusquam porro esse quod est, vel quod immutabile est non esse aliquando non potest[40].

It will pass from mind to mind. - In this case, if art passes from mind to mind, leaving the one, in order to dwell in the other, then nobody teaches art without losing it, or, nobody becomes educated but by forgetting or by the death of his teacher. But these statements are absurd and false:

> Si vero ars de animo in animum transit, in illo mansura, deserens istum, nemo artem docet nisi amittendo, aut etiam nonnisi docentis oblivione fit aliquis peritus, sive morte. Quae ... absurdissima et falsissima sunt[41].

6. OBJECTION AGAINST THE STATEMENT THAT TRUTH IS ALWAYS IN THE MIND.

From Augustine's reasonings it is evident that the "artes ... disciplinae" or truths are not considered by him as living in God's mind, but merely as participated in by the human mind. It would seem that his arguments for their being "de facto" and "de jure" in the rational soul should confirm Augustine in his view on that subject. However, some difficulties weakened his certitude about his conclusion.

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[40] De immortalitate animae, 4.5 .L.32, 1024.

[41] Ibidem.

> I do not see how a science, particularly that of argumentation, exists always in the soul, whereas so few know of it, and whoever does know of it was for a long time from childhood on unaware of it. For we cannot say that the souls of the unlearned are not souls, or that there can be in the soul science of which they are not conscious. However, if this is exceedingly absurd, it remains that truth is not always in the soul or else that science is not truth[42].

The fact of an infant's ignorance seems to imply that truth is not always in the mind. The best method of solving the difficulty would consist in examining "how science can exist in an unskilled mind - imperito animo - which nevertheless is a mind[43]." It was precisely the infant's ignorance which had instilled into Augustine's mind a certain doubt about the conclusion that truth is always in the mind and that the science of argumentation is the truth:

> Quare, si placet, repetamus breviter, unde illa duo confecta sint, aut semper manere veritatem, aut veritatem, esse disputandi rationem. Haec enim vacillare dixisti, quominus nos faciat totius rei summa securos. An potius illud quaeremus, quomodo esse possit in imperito animo disciplina, quem non possumus non animum dicere? Hinc enim commotus videbare, ut de illis quae concesseras, dubitare rursum necesse fuerit[44].

Augustine, however, preferred first to establish on a firm ground the truth of his conclusions, independently of the solution given to the problem of an infant's ignorance:

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[42] Soliloquia, 2.14.25 PL.32, 897.

[43] Soliloquia, 2.15.27 PL.32, 898.

[44] Ibidem.

> Immo, discutiamus prius illa [his conclusions], deinde hoc quale sit videbimus. Ita enim, ut opinor, nulla controversia remanebit[45].

In regard to the statement that truth is always in the mind, he finds its justification in the immutability of truth:

> As I remember it, we concluded that truth cannot perish for the reason that, if not only the whole world, but even truth were to perish, it will be true that the world and truth have perished. But nothing is true without truth. Therefore, truth in no way perishes... Will it not be true then, that truth has perished? If it will not be true, then truth has not perished. If it will be true, how will it be true once truth has passed away, since now no truth exists?[46]

It is our mind which sees that the above mentioned statement or judgment is true. But the judgment is true because it is affected by truth, since "truth is nothing more than that, by which whatever is true, is true... numquid nam ergo dicitur veritas nisi qua verum est quidquid verum est?[47]" Moreover, by the very fact of being true, that judgment is not false: "numquidnam recte dicitur verum nisi quod non est falsum?" " Hinc vero dubitare dementia est[48]". Since the judgment affected by truth proceeds from the mind, truth is in our mind. This truth cannot perish, because it is

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[45] Soliloquia, 2.15.27 PL.32, 898.

[46] Soliloquia, 2.15.28 PL.32, 898.

[47] Ibidem.

[48] Ibidem.

immutable. However, we encounter the problem whether it is perfectly immutable, perfectly true, without any imitation of the true. In the latter case, our judgment would be false. This invites us to study the Augustinian notion of the true andfalse.

The true is, according to Augustine, that which is: "Nam verum mihi videtur esse id quod est[49]." The true is therefore identical with being, which is nothing more than that which is: "Omnis essentia non ob aliud essentia est nisi quia est[50]." However, not all beings are beings in the same sense. There is the first and original being, "prima essentia... substantia, quae maxime ac primitus est[51]", and there are all the other beings which are from the first being: "illa omnia quae, quoquo modo sunt, ab ea essentia sunt, quae summe maximeque est[52]". Since "verum est id quod est", things are true in proportion to their being. The first, original being is the Truth or the True Itself, by which all things are true, in so far as they are:

> Prima illa essentia ... dicitur veritas in quantum essentia est ... veritatem eam dicimus, qua vera sunt omnia inquantumcumque sunt, in tantum autem sunt, in quantum vera sunt[53].

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[49] Soliloquia, 2.5.8 PL.32, 888.

[50] De immortalitate animae, 12.19 PL.32, 1031.

[51] Ibidem.

[52] De immortalitate animae, 11.18 PL.32, 1030.

[53] De immortalitate animae, 12.19 PL.32, 1031.

From this it follows that the ultimate foundation of all things which are is that which truly is. Only God can be predicated as the most true being, because He is the highest and first being:

> For that is in the highest sense of the word which continues always the same, which is throughout like itself, which cannot in any part be corrupted or changed, which is not subject to time, which admits of no variation in its present as compared with its former condition. "Id enim est quod esse verissime dicitur." Now such things can be said only of God[54].

No other beings are immutable like God. They are subject to change either for better or for worse:

> Nam quod mutatur in melius, non quia manebat m mutatur, sed quia pervertebatur in pejus, id est ab essentia deficiebat, cujus defectionis auctor non est qui est auctor essentiae. Mutantur ergo quaedam in meliora, et propterea tendunt esse[55].

This consideration of the reality is in harmony with Augustine's discovery after the reading of the Platonic books:

> Et inspexi caetera infra te et vidi nec omnino esse, nec omnino non esse. Esse quidem quoniam abs te sunt; non esse autem, quoniam id quod es non sunt: id enim vere est quod incommutabiliter manet[56].

Since there is such a difference between the "esse" of God and that of creatures, and since "verum est id quod est", God is the "vere verum", Truth itself, while other beings are "non vere vera".

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[54] De moribus Manichaeorum, 2.1.1 PL.32, 1345.

[55] De moribus Manichaeorum, 2.6.8 PL.32, 1348.

[56] Confessiones, 7.11.17 PL.32, 742.

While the true is that which is, the false is "that which is adequate to resemble something, without however, being that which it seems to resemble[57]". In every day life we call false "that which either feigns to be what it is not, or tends to exist and does not succeed", or "that is called false which is far from the resemblance to the true ... yet it has some sort of imitation of the true".

> Num falsum non est quod ad similitudinem alicujus accommodatum est, neque id tamen est cujus simile apparet? ... Sed tamen solet falsum dici, etiam quod ad veri similitudinem longe abest... sed tamen quod habeat ad verum nonnullam imitationem[58].

In order to be false, the thing called false must exist, because a thing which is not at all cannot imitate anything. For, if it is false, it is,; if it is not, it is not false.

Now we can apply our definitions to judgments. The judgment is not nothing. It is an act of the mind by which we connect or separate the things to be taught[59]. The judgment can be true or false.

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[57] Soliloquia, 2.15.29 PL.32, 898: "Num falsum non est, quod ad similitudinem alicujus accommodatum est, neque id tamen est cujus simile apparet?"

[58] Soliloquia, 2.15.29 PL.32, 898.

[59] De ordine, 2.11.30 PL.32, 1009; 2.18.48 PL.32,1017.

A false judgment feigns to be a true judgement. But we have to remember "that there is a great difference between our expression and the object about which we say something[60]." The judgment is not false on account of its object, but on account of its expression.

> When we say that Medea took flight with a team of huge serpents, this does not in any way imitate the true, since it does not exist in reality; a thing which is absolutely non-existant cannot imitate anything[61].

And yet the judgment is false, because

> it would be expressed in the same way, even if Medea had in truth done that. A false judgment therefore, imitates true judgments by the very form of its expression. If it is not believed, it imitates the true only in a similar manner in which it is worded, and it is false only and not falsifying. But, if it elicits faith, it imitates the truths which one has believed[62].

We see, therefore, "that what we call false is not properly so called unless it bears an imitation of something true[63]." This is clearly grasped on the substances which we call false, for instance, false silver, false gold, false money. But, if we speak of false sentences, we have to distinguish two things: the sentence as a sign and the thing

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[60] Soliloquia, 2.15.29 PL.32, 898.

[61] Ibidem.

[62] Ibidem.

[63] Ibidem.

signified by it. The sentence as a sign is not false, because it points to a thing which we consider as false, but because it is used as a sign of a thing of which it is not a sign. When I point to a stone and say "this is silver", my sentence is false, not the stone. But, when I point to a piece of zinc or lead and say "this is false silver", my sentence is true, although the object is considered as something false:

> ... si quisquam lapidem argentum esse dicat, dicimus falsum eum dicere, id est falsum proferre sententiam. Stannum autem vel plumbum non absurde, ut opinor falsum argentum vocamus, quod id res ipsa imitatur; neque ex eo falsa est nostra sententia, sed illud ipsum de quo enuntiatur[64].

Augustine discussed so much our notion of the false, in every day life, in order to apply it to his philosophy of knowledge. When he states that truth is always in the mind, he means "that truth which is not self contradictory and two-faced, so that it is true on one side and false on another[65]." Such is the truth of liberal disciplines. The principles of dialectic, mathematics, wisdom and moral science are immutable. Their immutable truth is impressed upon the rational mind by God, the sun of the soul. Nothing can deprive the soul of the truth once known. Although the actual knowledge passes

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[64] Soliloquia, 2.15.29 PL.32, 898.

[65] Soliloquia, 2.10.18 PL.32,

away, the trace remains in the memory, so that the soul reminded by external things of it is able to consult the truth which continually presides over the human mind. The truth of judgment impressed upon the mind is in the mind as in its subject. Therefore there is a difference between the truth which is in God or rather God himself and that which is in the soul. The former is the original Truth, the latter is the participated truth, the truth granted by God:

> Unde credendum est animae tribui quod aeternum est et incommutabile, nisi ab uno aeterno et incommutabili Deo? -- Non video quid aliud credi oporteat.
> Quid tandem? illud nonne manifestum est, eum qui alio interrogante sese intus ad Deum movet, ut verum incommutabile intelligat nisi eumdem motum suum memoria teneat, non posse ad intuendum illud verum, nullo extrinsecus admonente revocari? - Manifestum est[66].

Since the trace of the actual knowledge cannot be erased from the mind and since God always presides without an intermediary over the soul, the truth is always in the mind, although not always according to its full actual knowledge.

Augustine's doubt as to whether the science of argumentation is truly true was dispelled by means of a comparison with bodies:

> Let us now examine this last point, namely, whether a body is not truly true, that is, whether, though truth is not in it, there is in it some sort of an image of truth. For, if we find in the body, which quite certainly suffers death, something true in the same way as it is in the branches of learning,

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[66] De musica, 2.12.36M.

> are true. For the body is true, and the body does not seem to be formed by any principle of argumentation. If, on the other hand, a body is true by reason of a certain imitation, and on this account not completely true, then, perhaps, there will be nothing to prevent us from teaching that the science of argumentation is truth itself[67].

In other words, Augustine means this: truth is impressed upon our judgment by God. Owing to its connection with truth, our soul is rational and immortal. But bodies are also true. By what kind of truth are they true? Are they affected by the same truth which is impressed upon our soul? It seems, for instance, that this stone does not imitate something else and does not deserve on this account, to be called false. But, on the other hand, it is subject to change. If it is formed by the truth proper to the discipline of argumentation, it should be like our soul immortal.

The fact of death or change because of which bodies perish led Augustine to the following conclusion:

> ... ego puto corpus aliqua forma et specie contineri, quam si non haberet, corpus non esset; si veram haberet, animus esset. An aliter putendum est?
>
> Assentior in parte, de caetero dubito; nam nisi teneatur aliqua figura, corpus non esse concedo. Quomodo autem, si eam veram haberet, animus esset, non satis intelligo.
>
> Talesne in corporibus figurae inveniuntur, quales illa disciplina (geometrica) demonstrat?
>
> Immo incredibile est quanto deteriores esse convincuntur.
>
> Quas ergo istarum veras putas?

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[67] Soliloquia, 2.18.32 PL.32, 898.

> Ne, quaeso, etiam istuc me interrogandum putes. Quis enim mente tam caecus est qui non videat istas quas in geometrica docentur, habitare in ipsa veritate aut in his etiam veritatem; illas vero corporis figuras, siquidem quasi ad istas tendere videntur, habere nescio quam imitationem veritatis, et ideo falsas esse[68].

> Sive enim figurae geometricae in veritate, sive in eis veritas sit, anima nostra, id est intelligentia nostra, contineri nemo ambigit, ac per hoc in nostro animo etiam veritas esse cogitur... quaelibet disciplina ita est in animo ut in subjecto inseparabiliter, nec interire veritas potest... An illa linea, vel quadratura, vel rotunditas habent alia ut imitentur ut vera sint?
> Nullo modo id possum credere[69].

In other words all bodies are maintained in a certain form and appearance. Without it they would not be bodies. Now this form and appearance is either false or true. If it were a true form, the body would be a soul. But if we compare the forms proper to bodies with those of the liberal art of geometry, we will find out how much the former differ from the latter. No one can doubt that the forms contained in the mind are the true forms:

> Who, indeed, is so mentally blind, as not to see that the forms which are taught in geometry abide in truth or the truth abides in them; whereas the forms of a body, because they appear to tend toward the geometric forms, have a kind of imitation of the truth and are therefore false[70].

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[68] Soliloquia, 2.18.32 PL.32, 901.

[69] Soliloquia, 2.19.33 PL.32, 901.

[70] Soliloquia, 2.18.32 PL.32, 901.

It is certain that the true geometrical figures are in the intellect and, therefore, truth is in the soul. While the forms of bodies tend towards the true figures, that line, that squareness, that roundness which is in the mind has no other exemplars which it should imitate in order that it may be true[71].

Likewise we arrive at the same conclusion, if we compare the figures and forms of the mind with those in our imagination. When we deal with geometrical problems,

> thought depicts to itself and, so to speak, displays before the eyes squares of varying size. But that inner mind which desires to see the true, rather turns aside, if it is able, towards that square according to which it judges that they are all squares[72].

If one objects and says that our judgments are made according to what we see with the eyes we can reply:

> Why, then, does it [mens interior] judge, if, indeed, it is well instructed, that a true sphere of any size whatsoever is touched by a true plane at only one point? What thing of this kind does the eye ever see or can it see when nothing like it can be pictured even by the imaginary of thought? Do we not prove this, whenever we describe by the mind's imagining the tiniest circle and draw lines from it to the circle? For, when we have drawn two lines, between which one hardly insert a needle, we are unable to draw, even in imagination, other lines between them, in such a way that they will reach the center without touching each other. Yet, reason asserts that lines without number can be drawn, and that, in these

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[71] Soliloquia, 2.18.32 PL.32, 901.

[72] Soliloquia, 2.20.35 PL.32, 903.

> unbelievably narrow spaces the lines can meet only in the center, so that in every space between the lines a circle can be described. Since the phantasy is incapable of doing this, and since it fails more than the eyes themselves, because it is through the eyes that the phantasy is imposed on the mind, it is evident that the phantasy is far different from the truth, and as long as it is seen, the truth is not seen[73].

It would seem that the solution to Augustine's difficulties as to whether the truth is always in the mind and as to whether science is truly true, should be followed by a discussion on the infant's ignorance. Apparently Augustine was bewildered when he faced this problem. "I beg you", so he speaks to himself, "settle quickly what remains, that is, how learning and truth are considered to exist in the soul of an ignorant person, for we cannot call such a soul mortal[74]." In spite of the urgency of the matter, Augustine postponed the discussion for another time: "Aliud ista quaestio volumen desiderat, si eam vis tractari diligenter[75]." We have seen in the chapter about Augustine's theory of reminiscence how he had explained the lack of the actual knowledge in infants with the help of his theology. Yet, from the philosophical standpoint, he never had reached a satisfactory solution to his problem. Many years later, while writing the De Trinitate, he returned to the same subject:

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[73] Soliloquia, 2.20.35 PL.32, 903.

[74] Soliloquia, 2.19.33 PL.32, 902.

[75] Ibidem.

> What, then, is to be said of the mind of an infant which is still so small, and buried in such profound ignorance of things, that the mind of a man who knows anything shrinks from the darkness of it?[76]

What can be the reason of this absolute lack of thinking, although the mind of an infant is united with God's Truth? Perhaps this strange phenomenon can be accounted for by the fact that the soul of an infant is too intent upon those things which it has begun to perceive through the bodily senses, with a greater delight in proportion to their novelty. An infant is greedy, for instance, for light. If anyone through carelessness, or being ignorant of the possible consequences, places a light at night-time where an infant is lying down on that side to which the eyes of the child can be directed, but its neck cannot be turned, the gaze of the child will be so fixed in that direction that it will begin to squint. The eyes will retain that form which the habit in some way impressed upon them. This should apply also to the other senses of the infants. Their souls narrow themselves, as it were, and are bent upon them so that they either vehemently detest or vehemently desire that only which offends or allures the flesh. That is why the infants do not think at all of their inward self[77].

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[76] De Trinitate, 14.5.7 PL.42, 1040-1041.

[77] Ibidem.

There is another reason of their ignorance. We have seen that de facto, according to Augustine, the soul needs an admonition from the visible world, in order to return to itself. Such an admonition takes place by means of signs. Now in the first stages of its evolution, the infant exhibits no knowledge of signs, especially of words[78].

Truth dwells in the souls of infants, but not in the same manner as it does in those who exercise or have exercised their actual knowledge. In the rational souls which use their reason the true is in the mind as in its subject. Augustine meant here the immutable truths of the liberal disciplines, especially the first principles of human thinking. These truths constitute an imprint of the eternal law which is impressed upon the mind by God. When we focus our attention on the immutability of these principles, we do not see God, but something which is given by God.

7. THE SECOND KIND OF UNION: "SUBJECTUM VERUM - NT IN SUBJECTO ANIMUS".

From the union of our mind with the true granted by God, Augustine passed to another kind of union which he describes in very strange terms: "Ista conjunctio intuentis

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[78] De Trinitate, 14.5.7 PL.42, 1040-1041.

animi et ejus veri ita est ... ut subjectum verum et in subjecto animus[79]."

This puzzling mutual relation of the true and the mind demands an explanation which can be afforded by inquiring into the meaning of the terms, against the background of their context. We have seen that the true or "verum" is that which is. In other words, the true is identified with being. Now being is either mutable or immutable. The latter is the true being. The former, on account of its mutability, cannot be called "vere verum", because it exhibits a continual passage from being to nothing. When Augustine says: "subjectum est verum", he means the original and highest Being, the True or Truth itself, the "modus sine modo". From this the strange consequence would follow that the mind is in God as in its subject.

If so, the question arises in what sense the human soul is in God as in its subject. Certainly not like heat is in the fire, or light in the sun, or colour in the body. This would lead us to the absurd conclusion that the soul belongs to the essence of God or constitutes His accident. To be in a subject or in another also means that a thing is attached to another, but can be separated from it. This,

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79 De immortalitate animae, 6.11. PL.32, 1026; 10.17 PL.32, 1030.

applied to the relation of the soul to God, means that the soul is mited with God by love or wisdom. The characteristic feature of the perfect sapiential knowledge is the "inhaerere Deo":

> ... tunc est animus sapientissimus, cum veritatem, quae semper eodem modo est, intuetur, eique immobilis inhaeret, divino amore conjunctus[80].

The term "inhaerere" is the best synonym of the expression "to be in a subject". However, this kind of union of the soul with the True or God can be destroyed. The soul can separate itself from the divine subject:

> Sapientiam vero, quia conversione habet ad id ex quo est, aversione illam potest amittere. Conversioni namque aversio contraria est. Illud vero, quod ex eo habet, cui nulla res est contraria, non est unde potest amittere[81].

The sapiential knowledge cannot be obtained without faith, hope and charity. This is often stressed by Augustine, even in his early writings. Although it is a subject of theology, one would not be able to understand Augustine's theory of knowledge without realizing that he always considers it in its relation to the ultimate end. Now the ultimate end is attained through wisdom:

> ... quoniam in veritate cognoscitur et tenetur summum bonum, eaque veritas sapientia est, cernamus in ea, teneamusque summum bonum, eoque perfruamur. Beatus est quippe qui fruitur summo bono[82].

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[80] De immortalitate animae, 11.18 PL.32, 1020.

[81] Ibidem.

[82] De libero arbitrio, 2.13.36 PL.32, 1260.

8. THE THIRD KIND OF UNION: "UTRUMQUE (VERUM ET ANIMUS) SUBSTANTIA".

This has brought us to the last point, namely, to the third kind of union with the true: "... ista conjunctio intuentis animi et ejus veri ita est, ut ... utrumque (verum et animus) substantia[83]."

In this case of knowing the true the latter should not be taken as a participated truth, that which is in the mind as in its subject. It remains that the true or verum means here God who is the Substantial Truth. But the union of the soul with the True does not take place by means of love through which the soul is in God as in its subject. It is a purely intellectual union of God. But we do not know God immediately, face to face, as He is in Himself. There is no doubt about the nature of our knowledge of immutable truths which are in the mind. We know immediately the principles of the liberal disciplines, for instance those of geometry. Although these principles are immutable, they do not exhibit the immutability proper to God.

> No geometer... has claimed that he teaches a knowledge of God. Secondly, if the knowledge of God and of these things were the same, I would rejoice over knowing them as much as I anticipate my joy in the knowledge of God[84].

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[83] De immortalitate animae, 6.11 PL.32, 1026.

[84] Soliloquia, 1.5.11 PL.32, 875.

If we compare our knowledge of the liberal disciplines with that of God, we see that the difference lies in the things known, not in the nature of our knowledge. As the earth and the sky are contemplated by the same kind of vision and with the same certitude, so also, in the intellectual order, the same intellect comes to know with certitude two different things: the truth of the liberal disciplines and the Truth which is God:

> ... adducor ut assentiar quantum in suo genere a coelo terram, tantum ab intelligibili Deo majestate spectamina illa disciplinarum vera et certa differre[85].

Yet, in spite of the chasm which keeps the truth of the mind and God apart there is a passage which runs from the mind to God:

> Fortis acies mentis et vegeta cum multa vera et incommutabilia certa ratione conspexerit, dirigit seipsam in veritatem qua cuncta monstrantur[86].

The immutability of, and the certitude about, the truth of the liberal disciplines lead us to the knowledge of God. As has been explained in the discussion on the Soliloquia, by considering the "intelligibilia" in the mind, we reach three conclusions about God: that He is, that He is intelligible and that He illuminates the mind of man. In

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[85] Soliloquia, 1.5.11 PL.32, 875.

[86] De libero arbitrio, 2.13.36 PL.32, 1260.

addition to it, if we contrast the immutable truths with our own mutability, we reach the fourth conclusion: that God is the creator of all mutable things.

This is the imperfect sapiential knowledge of union of the soul with the True which is not in the soul as in its subject, nor is the soul in the True or God as in its subject.

9. THE THREE KINDS OF UNION IN SAPIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE.

All these three kinds of union of the mind with the true take place in the perfect sapiential knowledge. The soul returns to itself and concentrates its spiritual eye on the "multa vera et incommutabilia", namely on the truths which are in the soul as in their subject.

From them the mind raises itself to the True, i.e. to God, the source of all truths. This is a union with God as a substance, a union similar to that which we a person has with another person when we come to know somebody by way of analogy with our own mind.

At this moment, a new element accrues, an element by which our knowledge of God is perfected:

> ... acies mentis... dirigit se in ipsam veritatem qua cuncta monstrantur [the mind passes from the truth which is in it, to God, the source of truth] eique inhaerens tamquam obliviscitur caetera, et in illa simul omnibus fruitur. Quidquid enim jucundum est in caeteris veris, ipsa utique veritate jucundum est.[87]

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[87] De libero arbitrio, 2.13.36 PL.32, 1260.

This is the union of the mind with the True or God in whom the soul is as in its subject while embracing God by love. The soul reaches hereby the acumen of its perfection. The vision of God's Truth in which God's Ideas are contained is accompanied by the act of love. Without love, according to Augustine, there is no vision of God's Ideas:

> Anima vero negatur eas intueri posse, nisi rationalis ea sui parte, qua excellit, id est ipsa mente atque ratione quasi quadam facie vel oculo suo interiore atque intelligibili. Et ea quidem rationalis anima non omnis et quaelibet, sed quae sancta et pura fuerit, haec asseritur illi visioni esse idonea; id est, quae illud ipsum oculum, quo videntur ista, sanum et sincerum et serenum et similem his rebus, quae videre intendit, habuerit[88].

According to Augustine, the perfection and degree of this vision depends on the perfection and degree of charity:

> Sed anima rationalis inter eas res, quae sunt a Deo conditae, omnia superat; et Deo proxima est, quando pura est; eique in quantum charitate cohaeserit, in tantum ab eo lumine illo intelligibili perfusa quodam modo et illustrata cernit, non per corporeos oculos, sed per ipsius sui prind pale, quo excellit, id est per intelligentiam suam, istas rationes, qua visione fit beatissima[89].

The contemplation of God's Ideas is, according to Augustine, proper to a higher spiritual life. Not every religious or pious man is able to enjoy such a contemplation, although he believes in God as the Creator of all things:

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[88] De div.quaest.83, qu.46.2 PL.40, 30.

[89] Ibidem.

> Quis autem religiosus et vera religione imbutus, quamvis nondum possit haec intueri, negare tamen audeat, immo non etiam profiteatur, omnia quae sunt, id est, quaecumque in suo genere propria quadam natura continentur, ut sint, Deo auctore esse procreata, eoque auctore omnia, quae vivunt, vivere[90].

In order to arrive at the intuition of God's Ideas, one has to approach the articles of faith by reason. This can be achieved by means of a concentration of the mind on the immutable truths which are in the mind as in their subject. Augustine never had denied the possibility of the human intellect or rather its power of knowing God without faith. This would be against the teaching of St. Paul, the teaching with which he was so well acquainted. In spite of it, he insists so much on the priority of faith, because his writings were destined for the use of Christians who believed in God the Creator and the Illuminator of the minds. Since Augustine intended to acquire the true wisdom and to make them acquire it by his readers, he had to lay stress both on faith and reason as the "conditio sine qua non" of the true wisdom.

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[90] De div. quaest.83, qu.46.2 PL.40, 30.

10. THE ROLE OF GOD'S IDEAS IN OUR KNOWLEDGE.

Now we can better understand the role of God's Ideas in our intellectual knowledge.

As regards the truth which is in the soul as in its subject, God, the sun of the soul, impresses the truth on the mind. The soul grasps the truth by its own intellect, (although not without God's help) in an act of judgment, because it is endowed with the "ratio", i.e. with an active power of connecting or separating the things to be learned. It is not God who sees the truth in us, but the soul by its own mind granted by God in the act of creation. There is a special illumination of God when man grasps the immutable truth of a judgment.

It should be emphasized that, according to Augustine, it is truth which is irradiated into the mind, not ready made concepts[91]. The true which affects our judgments is identified by Augustine with that which is, i.e. with being, with the "unum", with the "bonum" and "pulchrum" and with the "immutabile"[92]. From this it follows that, while knowing the

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[91] De musica, 6.12.35-36. Speaking about numbers, Augustine shows that the truth of mathematical judgments is derived from above. This truth is in the mind and one questioned whether "duo et unum sint tria" has to penetrate his self in order to understand that that sentence is true.

[92] De moribus Manichaeorum, 2.1.1 PL.32, 1345; 2.6.8 PL.32, 1348; Confessiones, 7.12-18 PL.32, 743.

true, we also know that which is, the one, the good, the beautiful, the immutable and eternal. Since the true is impressed by God upon the mind in a judgment and is in the mind as in its subject, the other transcendentals, implied in the true are likewise irradiated into the mind. But this does not mean that they are explicitly known as soon as the true is impressed upon the soul for the first time. Their origin from above is often underlined by Augustine like that of the immutable and eternal:

> Credendum est animae tribui quod aeternum est et incommutabile... ab uno aeterno et incommutabili Deo[93].

Since the true is received from God in an act of judgment and the judgment is composed of concepts, the question arises of the origin of the concept. But it seems that Augustine was not interested in this problem.

First of all, the solution to this question was not indispensable to his purpose. In order to prove, against the Manichaeans, that God is the Creator of all things, that He is a spiritual Being and the Illuminator of the minds, no more was needed than to concentrate on the immutability of thetrue judgment.

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[93] De musica, 6.12.36 PL.32, 1183.

Secondly, the discussion on the origin of the concept would have involved Augustine in the intricate problem of the union of the body and soul, a problem to which Augustine had never found a satisfying solution.

However, we find in Augustine's writings some expressions which seem to suggest, at least "prima facie", that, according to his theory of knowledge, some concepts have been infused by God into the human mind. Does he not speak of the "notiones impressae" which are not derived from the corporeal world? If so, they must be infused either at the moment of the creation of the soul, or in our actual knowledge.

But, although the term "notio impressa" brings the idea of concept forward, Augustine did not intend to teach that man is born with ready-made concepts, even with those of transcendentals. Is it not striking that he never used the expression "notio impressa" while speaking of the infant's knowledge? In the passage already quoted from the De quantitate animae, Augustine preferred to employ the term "artes", but never "artes impressae". "Ars" or "scientia" meant for Augustine, in that context, truths. Although infants bring with them at birth all arts or immutable truths, the latter are not yet impressed upon their minds. There is in the infant only the active power of knowing these truths, since God's Truth or Ideas preside immediately over its mind.

It remains that the "notiones impressae" should be discovered in the actual knowledge only. But here again the problem arises whether we have to identify them with the "artes", i.e. the immutable truths of the liberal disciplines, or with some concepts. For the reasons mentioned above, it would be strange if Augustine had intended to teach that the "notiones" taken as concepts are infused by God in our actual knowledge. There is the fact that even before joining the Manichaeans, St. Augustine focused his attention on the truth of certain statements in the domain of the "artes liberales". Later, as a Manichaean auditor, he had made the "discovery" that the source of the immutable truths was in himself, since his soul, as a particle of God, was considered as the "summum verum et bonum". Under the influence of Nebridius, argument Augustine understood that God must be the immutable Being, because He is the highest Being. No mutability can be attributed to God, since "the immutable is better than the mutable". A new problem arose in Augustine's mind: the "unde" and "quomodo" of knowing this principle. He found the answer to his problem after the reading of the Platonic books. Later, in his writings of Cassaciaum, Milan, Rome, and Tagaste, it is again the true judgment on which Augustine concentrates. Especially in the <u>De Magistro</u>, he treat his problem "ex professo" and there is no doubt that he endeavoured to ascertain the origin of the true judgment, not that

of the concept. More than this. Augustine had the opportunity to study the beginnings of the infant's intellectual life. He watched the physical and spiritual evolution of his son Adeodatus. In the first book of his Confessions, he gives a description, an analysis and an interpretation of an infant's language. Augustine's observation resulted in the statement that infants gradually express themselves in more and more perfect judgments. From the facts observed one can see how, through different stages, infants come to take an attitude towards different things by means of signs, according to their physical and psychic needs. They express themselves first through natural signs which signify their feelings "in petendis, habendis, rejiciendis, fugiendisve rebus". Then, by means of that "lingua omnium gentium" the infant comes to understand the language of other people, first, that of natural signs, and, finally, the symbolic language of words and sentences. The understanding of the symbolic language in a concrete situation is a landmark of the evolution of an infant. From that time on the dialogue can take place between the infant and the persons who are around[94]. By means of Augustinian principles we are entitled

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[94] C. Golebiewski, Le langage d'après St. Augusth, p. 18-24.

to reconstruct the events which have taken place in the soul of an infant when the first intellectual act is elicited. In harmony with the facts, observed in the intellectual evolution of an infant, Augustine has defined the "ratio" as a "motio ea quae discuntur distinguendi et connectendi potens". In other words, as a power of knowing the things to be learned by means of judgments. What is the first judgment of an infant? Although the "ratio" is made first for knowing the "intelligibilia", i.e. "ea quae discuntur" and especially for the knowledge of God, the highest intelligible Being, de facto, it is more engaged in the knowledge of the sensible world. This is also verified in the very beginning of man's intellectual life. The "ratio" exhibits a twofold mode of knowing: first, the things which are in the soul itself "ipsa per se mente atque ratione intrinsecus"; secondly, the "multa ... ad corpus pertinentia ... ut est, quod novimus esse corpus[95]". In the beginning, the soul of the infant does not exercise the actual knowledge, and, for this reason, no truth is impressed upon its mind. Nevertheless, God's Ideas immediately affect the soul of the infant so that it is endowed with the power of knowing "ea quae discenda sunt". Now in the first act of its intellectual knowledge, the infant does

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[95] Epistola ad Nebridium, 13.4 PL.33.

not concentrate on its own self where the truth could be found, but on the always changing sensible reality, the object of our senses. The first judgment in the intellectual order bears on what Augustine says "novimus esse corpus". The infant comes to know that something is. This refers to "petendis, habendis, rejiciendis fugiendisve rebus". The first judgment emerges from the darkness of ignorance like a faint light which appears in the blackness of the night. But the obscure knowledge that something is implies at the same time likewise an obscure, although indirect knowledge that I am. If we are well aware that, while enjoying the perfect use of reason, the truth of these two judgments cannot be doubted, it is because from the very beginning God's Light impresses the true upon the human mind: "Erat lux vera quae illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum."

In spite of all these facts which show how Augustine had always appealed to the truth of immutable judgments, we suddenly encounter, in few instances, the passages with the already mentioned "notiones impressae". Since we are wont to take the term "notio" in its technical, logical sense, the conclusion is immediately intimated that, according to Augustine, not only the immutable judgments, but also certain concepts are infused by God into the human mind.

And yet we have to ask whether the term "notio" exhibits only one meaning, that of the concept. If not, on

what basis should one credit Augustine with certain concepts impressed by God, although the Augustinian writings swarm with instances in which God is asserted to impress on the mind the truth of judgments?

The first instance of the term "notio" (in the Contra Academicos, 1.4.11) deals with the meaning "common knowledge" or "judgment of the common sense". The common sense is able to judge a definition. So Augustine's pupil Licentius has criticized his teacher's definition of "errare":

> Nam definitio tua vide quanta facilitate excludatur notione communi. Etenim errare dixisti esse semper quaerere et numquam invenire. Quid si quisquam nihil quaerat et interrogatus, verbi gratia, utrumnam modo dies sit temere statimque noctem esse opinetur atque respondeat? Nonne tibi videtur errare? Hoc igitur erroris genus vel immanissimum non complexa est definitio tua[96].

It is obvious that the "notio communis" means, in this concrete instance, a principle, a law according to which the definition should be formulated in such a way as to contain all the members of things which belong to it.

Another pupil of Augustine, requested to define "wisdom", confessed his perplexity while trying to do it, although there is nothing more clear in the mind than the notion of wisdom:

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[96] Contra Academicos, 1.4.11.

> Cujus enim verbi in animis nostris apertiorem notionem natura esse voluit quam sapientiae? Sed nescio quomodo, cum mentis nostrae veluti portum notio ipsa reliquerit, et verborum sibi quasi vela tetenderit, occurrent statim calumniarum mille suffragis. Quamobrem aut definitio sapientiae ne requiratur, aut judex noster in ejus patrocinium dignetur descendere[97].

From this, it follwos that there is a difference between the definition and the notion of wisdom. The notion seems to be an instrument which should help us in defining wisdom. But, although the notion of wisdom is very clear, Augustine's pupils encountered many difficulties in shaping a correct definition of wisdom.

In the De libero arbitrio (2.9.26), Augustine resumed the discussion on the "notio sapientiae".

> Ut ergo constat nos beatos esse velle, ita nos constat velle esse sapientes, quia nemo sine sapientia beatus est. Nemo enim beatus est nisi summo bono, quod in ea veritate, quam sapientiam vocamus, cernitur et tenetur. Sicuti ergo antequam beati simus, mentibus tamen nostris impressa est notio beatitatis, per hanc enim scimus, fidenterque et sine ulla dubitatione dicimus beatos nos esse velle; ita etiam priusquam sapientes simus, sapientiae notionem in mente habemus impressam, per quam unusquisque nostrum, si interrogetur velitne esse sapiens sine ulla caligine dubitationis se velle respondet[98].

With the help of this text, we are enabled to gain a deeper insight into the "notiones", both of wisdom and happiness. How does Augustine justify their existence in our mind?

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[97] Contra Academicos, 1.5.15.

[98] De libero arbitrio, 2.9.26.

There is the fact of our consciousness: we know with certitude that we want to be happy and wise. It is not an opinion only, it is an act of science in Augustinian sense, i.e. a knowledge with absolute certitude - "scimus, fidenterque sine ulla dubitatione dicimus ... sine ulla caligine dubitationis". As such, the judgment in question is a true and an immutable judgment.

Based on the fact of this judgment, Augustine has concluded that there is in our mind an impressed notion of happiness and wisdom. More than that: we know it in some way; otherwise we would not be able to pronounce the judgment that we want to be happy and wise:

> ... nam si eam nullo modo animo cerneres, nullo modo scires et velle te esse sapientem et velle debere, quod te negaturum esse non arbitror[99].

We do not know wisdom and happiness in their own form, since we are not yet happy and wise. We have only a "notio impressa" of wisdom and happiness.

Now it would seem that we have to draw a clear cul distinction between the judgment "I want to be happy and wise" and the "notio impressa" itself. It is precisely in virtue of the "notio impressa" that the immutable judgmat is made: "Per hanc enim scimus... et dicimus beatos nos esse velle ...

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[99] De libero arbitrio, 2.9.27.

per quam unusquisque ... se velle sapiens esse respondet". In what sense does the "notio impressa" influence our judgment? Is it really something distinct from the judgment itself? If it is not, how can Augustine say: "per hanc enim simus..."?

We have already eliminated from Augustine's theory of knowledge the "notiones impressae", taken as innate ideas with which man would be born.

Nor does it seem probable, for the reasons mentioned above, that Augustine had intended to teach the infusion of concepts, even in actual knowledge. It is certain that the "notio sapientiae et beatitatis" cannot mean the concept "stricto sensu" of happiness and wisdom. Such concept would abolish all diversity of opinion in that matter. And yet we are confronted with so different views as to what constitutes true happiness and wisdom.

But it may be that the "notio impressa beatitatis et sapientiae" was identified by Augustine with the generic concept of wisdom and happiness, with that of the good to be known and possessed?

No doubt when we say "I want to be happy and wise", the generic concept of wisdom and happiness is implied in that

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[99] De libero arbitrio, 2.9.27.

judgment. But, on account of the reasons mentioned above, we are not entitled to affirm that, according to Augustine, this concept is infused by God. It is safer to say that the "notio impressa" should be taken objectively, like the "artes", as the immutable truth impressed upon the mind by God. The true is identified by Augustine with the good. By means of the truth which is in the mind we know the highest truth, i.e. God. Likewise by means of the good which is in the mind we want to possess the highest good, i.e. God, at least implicitly. If the "notio impressa" has to be identified with the true impressed upon the mind in a judgment, it is the reason of the certitude of our judgments. No wonder that Augustine could say:

> Per hanc [notionem impressam] enim scimus, fidenterque et sine ulla dubitatione dicimus beatos nos esse velle; ita etiam priusquam sapientes simus, sapientiae notionem in mente habemus impressam, per quam unusquisque nostrum, si interrogetur velitne esse sapiens, sine ulla caligine dubitationis se velle respondet[100].

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100 De libero arbitrio, 2.9.26.

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Since there is a strict connection between the De Magistro and Augustine's experiences, the true judgment will be considered, first, in Augustine's evolution before his conversion; secondly, in the De Magistro itself.

PART I

Before his conversion, Augustine had approached the problem of truth, first through his Manichaean ideas.

Then, acquainted with some elements of the Catholic faith, he had tried in vain to solve the problem of the truth of judgment rationally, in harmony with the Bible and his Manichaean way of thinking.

Finally, after reading the Platonic books, he had found a satisfying solution to the problem, in accordance with both reason and the Bible.

Chapter 1. — Acquainted through Cicero's Hortensius with the problem of the truth of judgment and with its Platonic solution (pre-existence - reminiscence), Augustine gave the problem a Manichaean solution. The soul, being a particle of God and as such the "summum verum et bonum", is the source of truth. God and souls are mutable beings, a kind of corporeal light, composed of substance and accidents. God can be seen by the soul when it concentrates on itself by withdrawing from matter which is derived from the Principle of Evil.

Chapter 2. — Nebridius criticism destroyed Augustine's notion of a mutable God: God is the highest Being. As such, He must be immutable, because the immutable is better than the mutable. Now the Manichaean dualism implies God's mutability. As a Christian by faith only, Augustine endeavoured to understand the Catholic doctrine opposed to Manichaeism. Thus he concentrated on the "unde" and "quomodo" of knowing that the immutable is better than the mutable. Although the Bible gave him a certain solution, without the notion of being, He was unable to understand God's spirituality, the nature of illumination, the notion of creation, the notion of evil and St. Paul's method of knowing God through creatures. Now Augustine wanted to reconcile God's immutability with a materialistic notion of his nature, since a being without lines, colour and bulk would be nothing.

Chapter 3. — After the reading of the Platonic books Augustine grasped the notion of the true being. He found at the foundation of his judgments about beautiful things the immutable standards to which beautiful things must conform. Here again he was confronted with the principle which says that "the immutable is better than the mutable" since mutable things are judged by immutable standards. He found the "unde" of knowing that principle: being mutable his soul could not be the source of truth. Immutable truths must be derived from an immutable source. Such is God only. He is the

Immutable Truth of the True Being. He who is. He is Light but of a spiritual nature, without lines, colours and bulk, not extended in time and place. Our soul depends on that Light as to its being and knowledge. God is the Creator of all mutable things and the Illuminator of rational souls. Augustine found the solution to his problem of the "quomodo" of knowing the truth. Although we see the immutable truths we do not see God face to face. We know God through creatures, because our judgments about them imply immutable standards, impressed immediately by God upon our mind.

PART II

In the De Magistro and in his early writings, Augustine continued to develop and to express in a literary form his great discovery which he had made after the reading of the Platonic books.

His studies center around the "unde" and "quomodo" of knowing the truth of judgment in order to make an ascent to God as the source of being, the light of the mind and the object of our happiness.

Chapter 4. — In the De ordine, Augustine had elaborated his experiences into a theory of an ascent toward God according to St. Paul's teaching: "per visibilia ad invisibilia". He concentrated on the objects of the liberal disciplines which deal with things and signs. Since words can be considered either as things or signs, Augustine studies words

first, as things. Words are certain sounds which exhibit different numbers, because they can be measured. Our judgments about the sensible or concrete numbers presuppose the presence in the mind of intelligible numbers, with the basic intelligible "unum". From the latter, Augustine ascends to the highest "unum" - that "in illo summo ordine reum", or God, Who is the beginning of all things and the highest law of our thinking and living. The ascent culminates in the vision of God. But it is not a vision face to face, since God "scitur melius nesciendo... cujus nulla scientia est in anima nisi scire quomodo eum nesciat."

Chapter 5. — In the De Magistro, Augustine concentrated again on words, but from the standpoint of their meaning which points to things signified. There are among the latter the immutable truths. The average man is convinced that it is the teacher who imparts these truths to the mind of the pupil.

Augustine shows that their "unde" is to be sought not in man, but in God alone. First, no man can be a true teacher of another man. This becomes evident from the analysis of the process of understanding. The function of the words heard is not to teach, but to remind of what is already present in the mind. Secondly, God is the only teacher of man, not only because He is the giver or Creator of the intellectual soul, but also because He illuminates the mind by impressing on it

the things to be known. There is no formal demonstration of this thesis in the De Magistro.

As to the "quomodo" of our knowledge, Augustine maintains that the things of the mind, always present in the soul, are seen in the interior Light of Truth. This Truth is God Himself. In its initial stage, God's illumination is applied to the fundamental truths of our intellect. But the latter are ordained to a perfect knowledge, to God to be known and loved. This end cannot be reached without Christ. Different degrees of our knowledge depend on our capacity of knowing and the moral disposition of our will. The perfect sapiential knowledge finds its term in the love of God. The imperfect sapiential knowledge is a merely theoretical knowledge without love.

The chapter which follow complete the De Magistro. They discuss the Augustinian reminiscence, the foundation of his ascent, the nature of God's illumination and the union of the mind with God's Ideas.

Chapter 6. — The role of words consists in reminding of the things present in the soul. In the Augustinian reminiscence, there is no Platonic pre-existence with the sin committed in another world and the union with the body as a punishment for the sin. Augustine's theory is based on the creation of the soul in the body and the union of the soul with God's Ideas in which all truths are contained. There is

here room for the reminiscence of permanent things. This does not destroy the notion of memory which bears on transient things and on the past, because immutable truths are recalled or reminded by means of the act of understanding which is transient and had taken place in the past. From this it follows that the first act of the intellectual knowledge in infants does not exhibit the feature of reminiscence.

Chapter 7. — Although in the De Magistro Augustine does not speak formally of immutable truths but rather of the things of the mind, he certainly meant the former. This is evident from the context, from Augustine's evolution and from the early writings.

Chapter 8. — Based on the immutability of the first principles, Augustine gradually endeavoured to make a demonstration of God as the Illuminator. He did it implicitly in the De beata vita, in the Contra Academicos, in the De ordine and in the Soliloquia. The disproportionbetween the immutable object and the mutable knowing subject requires a special illumination. This is illustrated in a comparison of our intellectual knowledge with the vision of the sense of sight. In both cases, the light of a sun is necessary. In our intellectual knowledge, "...credendum est ea non posse intelligi nisi ab alio suo sole illustrentur". With the help of this light, the soul draws the conclusion "...quod Deus est, quod intelligitur, quod caetera facit intelligi". The same dem-

conclusions are drawn in an explicit demonstration of the De libero arbitrio, book II. The starting point is our faith in God's existence, because the rational demonstration by itself is not able to unite the soul with God. The next step is the demonstration itself: God exists if there is a being "quo mea ratio est inferior, sed quo nullus est superior". The immutable truths known by the mind point to that Being. This Being illuminates the mind or impresses the immutable truth on it and it is the source of being or all mutable things. The act of creation implies examplars or ideas in God.

Chapter 9. — God's Ideas affect the soul without intermediary in a twofold way: by the act of creation, they confer on the soul the "ratio" as a power of knowing the truth and,by the act of illumination, they impress the truth on the soul in the actual knowledge.

The power of knowing or the "posse uti ratione", takes place in infants, does not involve ready-made concepts. In the definition of the "ratio", Augustine stresses the power of knowing the truth of judgments. The truths are contained in God's Ideas, impressed on the soul and in this way are known by it with the help of the visible world and signs, when the organs of the senses have been developed.

As to our actual knowledge, Augustine is rather interested in the origin of the truth than in that of the concept. The "notiones impressae" should be understood as

immutable truths impressed by God, in analogy with such expressions like "scientiae, disciplinae, artes" which usually exhibit that meaning in Augustinian context. This is confirmed by Augustine's purpose to understand the Christian doctrine as opposed to that of the Manichaeans, by his intellectual evolution which centers around the truth of judgment and by his definition of the "ratio".