PERCEPTION, SENSIBILITY, AND MORAL MOTIVATION IN AUGUSTINE

A STOIC-PLATONIC SYNTHESIS

SARAH CATHERINE BYERS

CAMBRIDGE

Perception, Sensibility, and Moral Motivation in Augustine

A Stoic-Platonic Synthesis

This book argues that Augustine assimilated the Stoic theory of perception into his theories of motivation, affectivity, therapy for the passions, and moral progress. Using his sermons to elucidate his treatises, Sarah Catherine Byers demonstrates how Augustine enriched Stoic cognitivism with Platonism to develop a fuller and coherent theory of action. That theory underlies his account of moral development, including his account of the mind's reception of grace. By analyzing Augustine's engagement with Cicero, Seneca, Plotinus, Ambrose, Jerome, Origen, and Philo of Alexandria, as well as his impact on the debate between early modern theologians Bañez and Molina, Byers sheds new light on a major thinker of the early Christian world whose work is of critical importance for understanding key and recurring themes in Western philosophy.

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Contents

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Notes on the Text

I have used the most recent editions available of the primary texts, with the exception of the *City of God*, which is that of Dombart-Kalb, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina Vols. 47–48 (Turnholt, 1955). A list of editions for all the works of Augustine is in Mayer (1986–1994) xxvi–xl.

When Augustine quotes from the Bible, the English translations of the biblical text provided here are translations directly from Augustine. I have also italicized them for the purpose of distinguishing Augustine's voice from his scriptural text. When I quote biblical passages independently of Augustine, I use the Douai-Rheims-Challoner bible (Baltimore: John Murphy Company, 1899) because it is a literal rendering of the Vulgate; but I update the archaic pronouns and verb forms such as "thou" and "hast." (Augustine's biblical text for the New Testament is usually, though not always, the Vulgate; for the Hebrew scriptures he uses a Latin translation of a Septuagint text, and he has multiple Psalters translated from the Greek.)

Throughout I have used Augustine's (LXX) numbering of the Psalms (which corresponds to the numbering of his *Expositions of the Psalms*) rather than that found in modern bibles.

In my other quotations, I have usually followed existing translations when available, although I have often altered these to make them better convey the sense of the original. The most recent translation is not always the best for the philosophical and philological purposes of this study, so I have sometimes made use of earlier translations. Translations used are listed in the bibliography; the name of the translator is noted at the first instance on which the translation is used, for example: "Trans. Chadwick (1992). All subsequent translations of this text are from Chadwick, unless otherwise noted." In subsequent quotations, if I have amended a translation, I note this with the name of the translator.

Abbreviations

Note: Often the standard abbreviation for the title of a Greek text is in Latin, because European scholars referred to these titles in Latin for their convenience. In such cases, I have used the standard abbreviations and given the Latinized titles.

Abr.	Ambrose	*De Abrahamo*	*On Abraham*
ac.	Cicero	*Academica*	*On Academic Scepticism*
adn. Iob	Augustine	*Adnotationes in Iob*	*Notes on Job*
an. pr.	Aristotle	*Analytica Priora*	*Prior Analytics*
ap. c. conc. Mol.	Bañez	*Apologia de los Hermanos Dominicos contra la Concordia de Luis de Molina*	*Defense of the Dominican Brothers, Against the Concordia by Luis de Molina*
BA	Various commentators and translators	*Bibliothèque Augustinienne*	Series published in Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1948–2012
ben.	Seneca	*De Beneficiis*	*On Benefits*
c. Acad.	Augustine	*Contra Academicos*	*Against the Academic Sceptics*
c. Adim.	Augustine	*Contra Adimantum Manichei discipulum*	*Against Adimantus, the Disciple of Mani*
c. adv. leg.	Augustine	*Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum*	*Against the Adversary of the Law and the Prophets*

c. ep. Pel.	Augustine	*Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum*	*Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*
c. Faust.	Augustine	*Contra Faustum*	*Against Faustus*
c. Iul.	Augustine	*Contra Iulianum*	*Against Julian*
c. Iul. imp.	Augustine	*Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum*	*Incomplete Work Against Julian*
civ.	Augustine	*De civitate Dei*	*City of God*
clem.	Seneca	*De clementia*	*On Mercy*
comm. IaIIae	Bañez or Herrera (see context)	*Commentarium in Summa Theologiae IaIIae*	*Commentary on the First Part of the Second Part of Aquinas' Summa Theologiae*
concordia IV	Molina	*Liberi arbitrii cum gratiae donis, divina praescientia, providentia, praedestinatione et reprobatione concordia,* IV	Book Four of *The Compatibility of Free Choice with the Gifts of Grace, Divine Foreknowledge, Providence, Predestination, and Punishment*
conf.	Augustine	*Libri Confessionum Tredecim*	*Confessions*
cons. Marc.	Seneca	*De consolatione ad Marciam*	*On Consolation, to Marcia*
const.	Seneca	*De constantia sapientis*	*On the Constancy of the Wise Person*
cont.	Augustine	*De continentia*	*On Continence*
contr. lib. arb.	Bellarmine	*Controversia Prima Principalis de Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*	*The First Principal Controversy About Grace and Free Choice*
corrept.	Augustine	*De correptione et gratia*	*On Grace and Fraternal Correction*
DDS	Apuleius	*De deo Socratis*	*On the Daemon of Socrates*
de orat.	Cicero	*De oratore*	*On the Orator*
de Stoic.	Plutarch	*De Stoicorum Repugnantibus*	*On Stoic Self-Contradictions*
dial.	Augustine	*De dialectica*	*On Dialectic*
div. qu.	Augustine	*De diversis quaestionibus*	*Eighty-Three Different Questions*

DL	Diogenes Laertius	*Bioi kai gnōmai tōn en philosophiāi eudokimēsantōn*	*Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*
doct. chr.	Augustine	*De doctrina Christiana*	*On Christian Teaching*
DP	Apuleius	*De Platone et eius dogmate*	*On Plato and His Dogma*
duab. an.	Augustine	*De duabus animabus*	*On the Two Souls*
en. Ps.	Augustine	*Enarrationes in Psalmos*	*Expositions of the Psalms*
ench.	Augustine or Epictetus (see context)	*Enchiridion*	*Handbook* (Augustine: *Handbook of Faith, Hope and Love*)
ep.	Various authors (see context)	*Epistula*	*Letter*
ep. Io. tr.	Augustine	*In epistulam Ioannis ad Parthos tractatus*	*Tractates on the First Letter of John*
exp.Gal.	Augustine	*Expositio epistulae ad Galatas*	*Explanation of the Letter to the Galatians*
exp. prop. Rm.	Augustine	*Expositio quarundam propositionum ex epistula apostoli ad Romanos*	*Explanation of Certain Propositions from the Letter of the Apostle [Paul] to the Romans*
fat.	Cicero	*De fato*	*On Fate*
fin.	Cicero	*De finibus*	*On Goals*
gest. Pel.	Augustine	*De gestis Pelagii*	*On the Deeds of Pelagius*
Gn. adv. Man.	Augustine	*De Genesi adversus Manicheos*	*On Genesis, against the Manichees*
Gn. litt.	Augustine	*De Genesi ad litteram*	*On the Literal Meaning of Genesis*
gr. et lib. arb.	Augustine	*De gratia et libero arbitrio*	*On Grace and Free Choice*
gr. et pecc. or.	Augustine	*De gratia Christi et de peccato originali*	*On the Grace of Christ and Original Sin*
gr. t. nov.	Augustine	*De gratia testamenti novi ad Honoratum*	*On the Grace of the New Testament, to Honoratus*
inst.	Quintilian	*Institutiones oratoriae*	*Institutes of Oratory*

int.	Aristotle	*De interpretatione*	*On Interpretation*
inv.	Cicero	*De inventione*	*On the Composition of Arguments*
Io. ev. tr.	Augustine	*In Iohannis evangelium tractatus*	*Tractates on the Gospel of John*
ira	Seneca	*De ira*	*On Anger*
LA	Philo	*Legum allegoriae*	*Allegories of the Laws*
lib. arb.	Augustine	*De libero arbitrio*	*On Free Choice*
loc. Hept.	Augustine	*Locutiones in Heptateuchem*	*Figures of Speech from the Heptateuch*
LS	Long, Anthony and Sedley, David		*The Hellenistic Philosophers.* Vols. 1–2. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987)
Men.	Epicurus	*Epistula ad Menoeceum*	*Letter To Menoeceus*
mor.	Augustine	*de moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum*	*On the Way of Life of the Catholic Church and on the Way of Life of the Manichees*
MT			Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Scriptures
mut.	Philo	*De mutatione nominum*	*On the Change of Names*
NA	Gellius	*Noctes Atticae*	*Attic Nights*
nat. b.	Augustine	*De natura boni*	*On the Nature of the Good*
nat. et gr.	Augustine	*De natura et gratia*	*On Nature and Grace*
ND	Cicero	*De natura deorum*	*On the Nature of the Gods*
NE	Aristotle	*Ethica Nicomachea*	*Nicomachean Ethics*
NT			New Testament of the Bible
orat.	Cicero	*Orator*	*The Orator*
pecc. mer.	Augustine	*De peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo parvulorum*	*On the Punishment and Forgiveness of Sins and on the Baptism of Little Ones*
PHP	Galen	*De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*	*On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato*
poet.	Aristotle	*De arte poetica*	*Poetics*

Polyb.	Seneca	*De consolatione ad Polybium*	*On Consolation, to Polybius*
praed. sanct.	Augustine	*De praedestinatione sanctorum*	*On the Predestination of the Saints*
prin.	Origen	*De principiis*	*On Principles*
prof. virt.	Plutarch	*De profectu in virtute*	*Progress in Virtue*
prov.	Seneca	*De providentia*	*On Providence*
QG	Philo	*Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesim*	*Questions and Answers About Genesis*
qu. Hept.	Augustine	*Quaestiones in Heptateuchem*	*Questions about the Heptateuch*
rep.	Plato or Cicero (see context)	*De re publica*	*Republic*
retr.	Augustine	*Retractationes*	*Retractations*
rh.	Aristotle	*Ars rhetorica*	*Rhetoric*
s.	Augustine	*Sermo*	*Sermon*
sacr.	Philo	*De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini*	*On the Sacrifices of Abel and Cain*
s. dom. m.	Augustine	*De sermone Domini in monte*	*On the Lord's Sermon on the Mount*
sent.	Epicurus	*Sententiae*	*Principal Doctrines*
Simpl.	Augustine	*De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum*	*Replies to Simplicianus*
spir. et litt.	Augustine	*De spiritu et littera*	*On the Spirit and the Letter*
ST	Aquinas	*Summa Theologiae*	*Summary of Theology*
sym.	Plato	*Symposium*	*Symposium*
Tim.	Plato	*Timaeus*	*Timaeus*
top.	Cicero	*Topica*	*Topics*
tr. vera legit. conc.	Bañez	*Tractatus De Vera et Legitima Concordia Liberi Arbitrii Creati Cum Auxiliis Gratiae Dei Efficaciter Moventis Humanam Voluntatem*	*Tractate on the True and Legitimate Compatibility of Created Free Choice with the Aids of the Grace of God Who Efficaciously Moves the Human Will*
tranq.	Seneca	*De tranquillitate*	*On Tranquillity*
trin.	Augustine	*De trinitate*	*On the Trinity*
Tusc.	Cicero	*Tusculanae disputationes*	*Tusculan Disputations*

util. cred.	Augustine	*de utilitate credendi*	*On the Usefulness of Belief*
virg.	Augustine	*De sancta virginitate*	*On Holy Virginity*
vit. Ant.	Athanasius	*Vita Antonii*	*Life of Antony*
vit. beat.	Seneca	*De vita beata*	*On the Happy Life*

I

Perception and the Language of the Mind

There is a scene at the heart of Augustine's *Confessions* that has had great influence on Western culture[1] and that is linked to other important works in his corpus by its themes: perception, motivation, affectivity, moral conflict, and conversion. Yet, despite the widespread fame of this "garden scene" at the climax of book eight, there is as yet no consensus about what the story purports to relate. Instead we find disagreement, vagueness, or silence about Augustine's meaning in paragraphs twenty-six and twenty-seven, where Augustine says, for example:[2]

> Vain trifles and the trivialities of the empty-headed, my old loves, held me back. They tugged at the garment of my flesh and whispered: 'Are you getting rid of us?' And 'from this moment we shall never be with you again, not for ever and ever.' And 'from this moment this and that are forbidden to you for ever and ever.' … What filth, what disgraceful things they were suggesting! … I hesitated to detach myself, to be rid of them, to make the leap to where I was being called while the overwhelming force of habit was saying to me, 'Do you think you can live without them?' … from that direction where I had set my face and towards which I was afraid to move, the chaste dignity of continence was appearing, serene and cheerful without licentiousness, enticing me honorably to come and not to hesitate.… as if to say: 'Are you incapable of doing what these men and women have done? … Make the leap without anxiety.'

Some modern language translations also convey a sense of discomfort with this part of the *Confessions* by departing from Augustine's words or adding an interpretative heading to the text. Thus the question remains an open one: What exactly does Augustine intend to represent when he says his "old loves" were "whispering at him," and "suggesting" vile acts to him, but that alternately

[1] For some documentation of its influence, see e.g., Courcelle (1965), Schnaubelt and van Fleteren (1999).

[2] The full text of these paragraphs is printed in Appendix I. Trans. Chadwick (1992) adapted. All subsequent quotations of *conf.* are from this trans. unless otherwise noted.

"the dignity of continence was appearing" to him, "cheerful," and "honorably enticing," "as if speaking" and "exhorting" him to come?

The puzzlement here is important because it is symptomatic of a more general uncertainty among historians of philosophy and textual commentators about central themes in Augustine's moral psychology. It is clear enough from the context that this passage pertains to motivation: it describes an agent's attraction to two contradictory types of behavior (continent and incontinent). It is no surprise, then, that topics conceptually dependent upon a theory of motivation – emotions, weakness of will, and moral development – remain contested or under-studied in the literature on Augustine. It is because we lack a precise understanding of the theory of motivation operative in *Confessions* book eight that other famous passages such as *City of God* books nine and fourteen, which pertain to emotions and will, and *Replies to Simplicianus* book one, which pertains to moral development, are generally only partially understood, even by scholars.

At the same time, conditions are ripe for a deep and thorough account of the relations between these topics in Augustine. The last few decades have seen a renewed interest in philosophical psychology and "virtue ethics," yet the way that Augustine's psychology supports his virtue ethics remains largely unexplored.

Using *Confessions* 8.11.26–27 as a touchstone and employing a new method, we shall consider a range of texts from throughout Augustine's corpus and from figures in antiquity who influenced him, in order to arrive at a more precise understanding of his motivational theory. That in turn will open the door to the related themes of affectivity and moral development.

1.1. OUR PRESENT OPTIONS FOR *CONFESSIONS* 8.11.26–27

Before seeking out a fresh interpretation through which to approach this set of topics in Augustine, we should briefly consider why the available exegesis on *Confessions* 8.11.26–27 is not entirely adequate. Often this passage is simply summarized or passed over in the commentaries;[3] but when interpretative stands are taken, they can range from the odd to the informative.

According to one way of looking at paragraph twenty-seven, it describes a vision, "the apparition of a womanly figure, the Lady Continence," which is no "mere poetic personification."[4] This suggests that Augustine saw a lady

[3] E.g., it is passed over in Kotzé (2004) 178–81, Mara (1985) 71–87.

[4] O'Connell (1996) 224, 242–244; (1994) 137. As for what it is that is appearing, O'Connell holds (not consistently) that continence means a state of soul opposed to "any kind of dispersion" in temporal affairs rather than the virtue of chastity in particular ([1996] 224, 242, 247–249, but see 228; [1994] 47). He also claims that Augustine was seeing the "feminine face of God," "the eternal Christ," the Word, the paradigm of virtue, appearing as a "she" ([1996] 247, 243, 248, 250; [1994] 47, 137).

Continence cannot be the face or Word of God because continence herself refers to God in the third person. Nor does *continentia* refer to merely a generic state of recollection. It refers

standing, or perhaps hovering in the air, external to himself. A softened version of the same interpretation would say that Augustine had a representation of such a woman in his imagination. Influential translations deviating from or adding to Augustine's actual words also lend themselves to this kind of interpretation.[5]

A rather different interpretation has been offered by those who point out similarities between *Confessions* 8.11.26–27 and the use of personification in other works of late antique literature. Courcelle contributed much in this vein, and O'Donnell added to Courcelle's list.[6] More recent treatments have focused on similarities to Athanasius' *Life of Antony the Egyptian Monk*[7] and the Manichean *Thesaurus*.[8] According to this way of looking at the text,

primarily to sexual continence, as is clear not only from the *Confessions* themselves (see the notes in Ch. 2.4), but also from the numerous similarities between paragraph twenty-seven and Augustine's usage and analysis of the term *continentia* in *virg.* and *cont.* In *virg.*, written around the time that the *conf.* was finished (401), *continentia* is a synonym for *virginitas* thirty-two times; cf. the definitions of *continentia* in *cont.* 1.1, 2.5, 3.9. Augustine does hold that there is an *analogy* between promiscuity and generalized dissipation in worldly affairs, but the primary sense of the word *continentia*, on which the extended sense is based, is sexual continence; and it is clear that he is using the primary sense in *Confessions* eight. This has been recognized historically and in some recent prominent commentaries: Carey (2008b) 173, O'Donnell (1992) commentary on "membra tua" in 8.11.27, Saarinen (1994) 22, Quinn (2002) 471 n. 27. Therefore, other suggestions (e.g., Starnes [1990] 231) are also misleading.

[5] Chadwick's Oxford translation is a good example. When Augustine says, "aperiebatur … casta dignitas continentiae," Chadwick says, "there was appearing the chaste and dignified Lady Continence." We search in vain for this *domina*, which Chadwick has made the subject of the sentence, in the Latin original. Although there is some personification a few lines later in the text when continence is said to be smiling and as if speaking, this early introduction and overstatement of it departs from the text. (Even if Augustine is here using the figure of metonymy with *dignitas aperiebatur*, that device is typically employed for a reason, and the translation obscures Augustine's emphasis on *dignitas* by making it an adjective rather than the subject of the sentence.) The translation of the equally prestigious *BA* 14 ([1962] 63) renders this sentence literally, but adds a heading to paragraph twenty-seven, which reads, "Discours de la Continence." To the uncritical reader, this colors the passage to suggest that Augustine perceived an image of Continence delivering an oration. Boulding's more recent English translation says, "there appeared the chaste, dignified figure of Continence" (1997), 205. This again seems to have Augustine seeing a sensible object or an image of one, given that the term "figure" (*figura*), which does not in fact appear in this passage, refers to the shape of a sensible object when Augustine does use it.

[6] Courcelle notes that Persius *Satire* V, Tertullian *De Monogamia* 8, and the author of the *Shepherd of Hermas* 3.8.4 personify virtues and vices, including *continentia* ([1950] 192 n. 2–3; [1963] 112–117); O'Donnell (1992) cites Courcelle in his commentary on 8.11.27 and adds that Ambrose offers a faint implication of a personification of continence at *de Isaac vel anima* 8.79. We could add Prudentius to the list: *Psychomachia* ll. 40–98.

[7] So Wills (2004) 122.

[8] So Stock (1996) 106: In the Manichean myth (quoted in Augustine, *nat. b.* 44), God the Father, also described as the powers of light, is said to be transformed into the likeness of many beautiful, holy maidens who appear to the males of the race of darkness. In the ensuing liaison, bits of the divine substance, which had been trapped inside the males, passes from them to rejoin the Father or the powers of light.

Augustine's description is modeled on these earlier devotional or literary texts, and once we recognize that, it can seem to follow that his talk of "appearances" and "speaking" is a literary ornament lacking philosophical significance or historical accuracy.[9]

How shall we evaluate these interpretative lines?

An external apparition would clearly be untenable, because Augustine himself says that the "appearance" of continence and of the "old loves" was "nothing other than a controversy of myself with myself," taking place within his own heart (*in corde meo*).[10] Moreover, because he takes pains to indicate that there were not auditory sense images (he uses a counterfactual subjunctive: "as if speaking" (*quasi diceret*)), we are probably on the wrong track to suppose that he literally perceived a pictorial representation in his imagination.

Let us, therefore, consider the alternative interpretative method, that of seeking to identify literary parallels. Though it is sometimes useful to note similarities between Augustine's personification and that found in other late antique texts, the similarities are not sufficient to tell us what Augustine means in these paragraphs, and this for two reasons. First, the similarity being pointed out by these commentators is often the mere fact that both Augustine and the earlier authors personify virtues and vices, including the virtue of continence. But the personification of abstract nouns, and of virtues and vices in particular, is common practice in ancient literary culture. Thus, if Augustine is in some respects like Tertullian, like Prudentius, or like the author of the *Shepherd of Hermas* in that he uses personification, this mainly tells us that he has had a classical education. We must still ask what his metaphors actually represent in their particular details.

Second, when we attend to the details we find that the dissimilarities between the *Confessions* passage and the earlier literary works are typically just as striking and numerous as the similarities; and this makes it clear that

[9] The issue of philosophical importance is distinct from the historicity question, but the assumption by readers in this line seems to be that once we have identified the metaphors as metaphors, the interpretative work is done.

For the view that the narrative is fictitious, see Stock (1996) 344 n. 207 and Courcelle (1950) 195. Note that if one asserts that Augustine's account is simply fictional, one makes him violate his own hermeneutical theory at the beginning of *Gn. litt.*, which was written immediately after the *conf.* There he asserts that the style in which a text is written indicates the intent of its author, so if a text sounds like it is listing events, then we should take it to be asserting that the events occurred – unless there is absolutely no way to arrive at a coherent meaning by taking it in this way. A text is not limited to only one kind of meaning, however; and so a historical text may also be figurative. In *Confessions* eight, Augustine says *tunc* and *tum* repeatedly, so we should read him as intending the narrated events to be taken as a record of what he experienced, and the metaphors to be aids for understanding the nature of the inner psychological states provoked by the events. Clark's balanced view has much to recommend it: book eight is probably an historical narrative colored by Augustine's concerns and limitations of memory at the time of writing ([1993] 68–69).

[10] 8.11.27. For the meaning of "cor," see notes in Section 6c this chapter and in Ch. 2.3a.

Augustine is not simply imitating those accounts.[11] The fifth *Satire* of Persius is exceptional because it has more in common with Augustine's personification than does any other suggested literary precedent; yet even here we find disanalogies. Persius, like Augustine, ridicules people who are slaves to their own evil dispositions such as avarice, ambition, lust, and greed; he describes these dispositions interiorly "speaking" and "whispering" commands, questions, and warnings.[12] Nevertheless, the accounts differ. The metaphor of "appearance"

[11] His account is substantially different from the *vit. Ant.* The alleged dependence of the "whispering" (*susurrare*) in *conf.* 8.11.26 upon the *vit. Ant.* (Wills [2004] 122) is unconvincing because although the Greek in *vit. Ant.* 5 uses *hupoballein* three times, which *can* be translated "whisper," it was not translated that way either by Evagrius (who uses "to send, to implant or insert" *immittere* and *inserere*) or by the author of the more literal, and presumably older Latin translation (which uses the similar terms *submittere* and *subjicere*, as well as "suggest" *suggerere*). More generally, the *vit. Ant.* differs from *conf.* 8.11.26–27 in that the demons who propose impurity to Antony are quite emphatically separate beings, outside of Antony himself – they live in the air and dance around in it, they make noises that are audible to multiple people at once (e.g. *vit. Ant.* 13.1–4, 21.4, 25.1–4, 26.6, 28.9, 35.3, 36.1–2, 36.5, 39.6). In contrast, Augustine makes clear that this is going on inside himself: it was his own habit (*consuetudo*), as if whispering. Further, *vit. Ant.* 20.5 conflicts with Augustine's self-proclaimed purpose in paragraphs twenty-six and -seven (see *conf.* 8.6.13, which introduces the account).

As for the Manichean myth, the implausibility of its serving as a model is clear from the fact that in his *De Natura Boni*, written concurrently with the *Confessions* (*nat. b.* in 399; *conf.* in 397–400/1), Augustine excoriates the myth as containing *turpitudines incredibiles* which should not even be mentioned or thought about (*nat. b.* 44). Stock suggests that in modeling his account on this one, Augustine was satirizing it ([1996] 106). Not only does this require that we assume Augustine is violating his own advice not to mention the *turpitudines* unnecessarily, but it would make this the only occasion in his corpus where he uses vice (incontinent behaviors) to represent virtue (continence). There is no reason to assume such an anomaly, given that there is another possible explanation of the passage (on which see this chapter Section 7, Ch. 2.4, and Ch. 2.8).

The *Shepherd of Hermas* 3.8.2 describes a vision of seven women standing around a tower, seven virtues, which are daughters of one another, including continence, which is the daughter of faith, and is "girded and manlike"; the only thing similar to Augustine's *Confessions* is the fact that continence is personified as a woman; the claim here that continence is the result of faith diverges from Augustine's description, in which continence *precedes* his "standing on the rule of faith" (*conf.* 8.12.30), and in which continence is presented as highly feminine, rather than masculine.

Tertullian's *On Monogamy* 8 treats continence as the counterpart of monogamy and discusses the laudability of both. The virtues are not personified, beyond Tertullian calling them the two priestesses of Christian sanctity; and he describes Zechariah and John the Baptist as embodiments of these respective virtues. In contrast, *Confessions* 8.11.26–27 is not concerned with monogamous marriage as a path comparable to celibacy; nor does Augustine have anything to say about Zechariah or John.

[12] See ll. 132–160. Reason also whispers (*secretam garrit*) at the character interiorly, warning him that an irrational act is a wrong act, ll. 96–98. Other details of metaphor and phrasing are shared by the two texts. The commands given by Avarice include the repeated exhortation to "Get up!" in the morning; Augustine compares his inability to adopt a continent life as an unwillingness to get up in the morning (*conf.* 8.5.12); in Persius, the dispositions of avarice, greed and luxury are called "interior masters" (*domini*), which keep one in (moral) chains (ll. 129–130); cf. *conf.* 8.5.9, 8.6.13. Other similarities of phrase are pointed out by Courcelle (1963) 116–117.

and "seeing" that is central to Augustine's descriptions is absent in Persius. Moreover, Persius' avarice and luxury are dispositions that have already been acquired when they "speak" interiorly; but when continence "speaks" to Augustine, it is a virtue he does not yet have. Thus, although it is reasonable to think that Augustine's imagery was inspired by Persius', it also seems that he was trying to describe some features of experience that Persius was not.

We see then, that while some interpretations of *Confessions* 8.11.26–27 are helpful in some respects, no one of them is entirely adequate. This lack of a definitive interpretation despite the work of knowledgeable commentators writing in good faith, the silence of other commentators, and the overdone translations in volumes of otherwise excellent quality, seem to point to a problem in our understanding of the deeper levels of the text. The problem might bear analogy with the way that ignorance of syntax blocks successful reading of a sentence, even when one knows what most of the words mean individually.

1.2. A HYPOTHESIS

If we proceed according to the hypothesis that a conceptual schema awaits discovery here, we should next ask what the plausible candidates for such a schema would be. Given that Augustine elsewhere uses terms like "seeing" and "appearing" for not only sensory but also intellectual cognition, the possibility presents itself that when he says "the dignity of continence was appearing," he is describing a "seeing" of something by the mind – that is to say, his realization that continence has *dignitas*. On the other hand, when his old habit of incontinence "suggests" that he "look back" at his past actions, it may mean that he is also "seeing" that there are attractive features in incontinent acts as well. Pursuing this line, we note that the conceptual framework is epistemological – for these are the topics of epistemology. Now Augustine's philosophical roots are neo-Platonic and Stoic; and so the epistemology at work here would have to be one or the other – or a combination of both.

In our search for identifying characteristics, we next revert to Augustine's repeated stipulation that in both cases of "appearing" there was "quasi-speech." Now this makes the presence of Stoic epistemology come forth from the metaphors in an almost alarming way. For as has been much discussed, Stoic epistemology posited that all human perception includes mental language. Moreover, if there is Stoic epistemology in Augustine's text, that might also help to account for its special affinities with Persius' fifth *Satire*; for Persius describes the interior speech and whispering of avarice, luxury, and reason during an encomium on his teacher Cornutus, who, he reports, followed the teachings of Cleanthes, a student of Zeno of Citium, the founder of the Stoic school. As there are allusions to Stoic ethical doctrines in the *Satire*, it is possible that epistemological elements relevant to ethics are also operating in the passage. Augustine's reference to an "appearance" may be a poetic way of referring

to the Stoic impression (*phantasia, visum*). Here then, is a promising line of interpretation. It will be worthwhile to consider the independent evidence that Augustine knew the Stoic epistemology, with its hallmark theory of a universal grammar, before returning to the text of the *Confessions* to see whether he is making use of that theory.

1.3. A PROPOSED METHOD OF INQUIRY: AUGUSTINE'S RHETORICAL TEXTS

The first question, of course, is: did Augustine actually know the Stoic claim that mental language plays a role in human perception? His *On Dialectic* would seem to be the place to look for an answer. In it he summarizes parts of the Stoic linguistic theory of mental "sayables" (*dicibilia* for Stoic *lekta*);[13] and because Stoic accounts stipulated that sayables subsist in rational perceptual "impressions" (*visa*, *phantasiai*), we would expect Augustine to repeat this idea also. Unfortunately, however, the *On Dialectic* is incomplete. It ends before Augustine moves into a discussion of the various types of sayable sentences – though he mentions a few, in their Stoic taxonomic divisions – or alludes to the Stoic claim that sayables subsist in impressions. We do have an idea of the kind of source material from which Augustine must have been working: though his main source (perhaps one of Varro's works)[14] is now lost, his discussion of "sayables" indicates that it was probably a doxography similar in some of its content to Diogenes Laertius' extant Greek account in his *Life of Zeno*, written a century before Augustine.[15] Yet, given the incompleteness of the *On Dialectic*, it can seem that we will never know to what extent he concurred with the Stoics that mental language is operative in perception, or went on to use this account in his theory of motivation.

On the other hand, the picture does not look so bleak if we take into account some relevant facts about Augustine's intellectual context. First, for the Stoics and for authors in late antiquity, rhetoric, linguistics, and epistemology were closely associated disciplines (sometimes classed together under the heading, "logic," Augustine's *dialectica*). Especially for the Stoics, discussions of the forms of spoken language, the forms of mental language, and the process of

[13] Long notes the similarity of Augustine's definition of the *dicibile* to Sextus Empiricus' definition of the Stoic *lekton*; see Long (2005) 36–55, esp. 52; cf. Rist (1994) 23ff. On the authenticity of the *On Dialectic*, see Pépin (1976) 59–60; Jackson and Pinborg (1976) 3–5, 27ff. and passim.

[14] E.g., *On Dialectic* or *The Disciplines*; cf. Long (2005) 37, Pépin, (1976) 112, 121–130.

[15] Compare Augustine's definition of dialectic to that in DL, 7.42 and that in the *Peri Pathōn* of unknown authorship (so Jackson and Pinborg [1976] 121 n. 2). Compare his taxonomy of "conjoined words" (*verba coniuncta*) into complete (*sententiae*) and incomplete units of meaning, and the complete into assertibles and nonassertible expressions such as commands, wishes, and curses, with the further division of assertibles into simple and combined, including conditionals and syllogisms, to DL, 7.73 and 7.69 on the divisions of *lekta*.

perception were contiguous.[16] Second, Augustine was trained professionally as a rhetorician. It stands to reason that in composing his owns texts about rhetoric[17] and his works of rhetoric (sermons),[18] he may have recalled these contiguous accounts. If so, then his rhetorical texts might contain traces of his familiarity with these connections.

1.4. STOIC MENTAL LANGUAGE IN RELATION TO THE HISTORY OF RHETORIC

In order to establish more clearly the relation between ancient rhetoric and Stoic theories of mental language and perception, we should first briefly contextualize the Stoics.

The Stoics developed their account of mental language in the context of sophists and rhetoricians who compiled lists of spoken sentence-types. Protagoras was apparently the first to show an interest in compiling such a list; Aristotle is the most illustrious of those who later did the same.[19] These enumerations of moods and other syntactic categories were intended for use in persuasive oratory and dialectical debate. Though most ancient handbooks on rhetoric are lost to us, it is clear that with the passage of time, these lists continued to accrue new items; and from the fourth century B.C.E. on, they were symbiotic with technical discussions of rhetoric and logic.[20]

The Stoics' own list was evidently intended to be a *complete* list of sentential forms, unlike the previous lists of items *useful* for rhetoric and poetry; thus it showed an interest in language as such. The Stoics' most interesting contribution, however, was to assert that thought itself has a kind of grammar: the forms of spoken language are like a mirror of the forms of thought. By moving the language under discussion to the internal forum, and claiming that there are "sayables" (*lekta*)[21] in the mind, as distinct from spoken

[16] DL, 7.41–44; cf. Cicero, *inv.* 1.46.86, *top.* 13.55, *ac.* 1.8.32 and 1.5.19. Cf. Aristotle, *rh.* 1.1 (1354a1).

[17] The *On Christian Teaching*, which I treat in Chapter 2.

[18] By "sermons" I refer to both the collection known as his "sermons" and his expositions of the psalms. Most of the latter were preached; others were notes intended for preaching on the psalms.

[19] Protagoras distinguishes speech (*logos*) into prayer, question, answer, and command (DL, 9.52–53). Aristotle's discussion of diction (*lexis*) in the *poet.* mentions six distinct patterns of sentences, knowledge of which was proper to the rhetorician – Protagoras' four, plus statement and threat (*poet.* 19.7). Other examples: Antisthenes the Cynic wrote treatises on speech (*lexis*) or styles of discourse, and on "question and answer" (DL, 6.3, 6.15–17); Alcidamas, a rhetorician contemporary with Aristotle, adopted a fourfold distinction of speech acts: affirmation, denial, question, and greeting (DL, 7.54).

[20] See, e.g., "affirmation" and "denial" in Aristotle *int.* 3.6 (16b6), *an. pr.* 1.46 (51b20), 2.11 (62a14).

[21] On the (difficulty in) translation of this term, see Barnouw (2002) 286–289, Bobzien (2003) 86, Inwood (1985) 43, Rist (1969) 147, Reesor (1989) 34. On *lekta* and *pragmata* as synonymous, see DL, 7.57 and for discussion, Atherton (1993) 252.

language (*lexis*),[22] the Stoics asserted the existence of a kind of mental language having intrinsic aptness for articulation. This aptness, implying an orientation toward public communication, complemented their understanding of human nature as social. In this kind of a model, mental language helps to explain why there are grammatical similarities between conventional languages, and how translation between them would be possible.[23]

The only extant version of the Stoics' list of simple sayables names ten.[24] Four are items that we know had already been members of earlier lists compiled by rhetoricians: questions, defined as queries having "yes" or "no" answers, imperatives, the vocative, and petition or cursing, often taken to be a reference to the optative mood.[25] Four other sayables are new in comparison to those lists: dubitatives, which are interrogatives manifesting anxiety or uncertainty by means of the particle *ara* (e.g., "Can it be that pain and life are in some way akin?"),[26] the so-called "pseudo-assertible," which seems to be an exclamation,[27] the oath, and the hypothetical (that was, perhaps, a reference to the subjunctive).[28] Of the remaining two, the first has affinities to Aristotle's logic: this is the class of assertibles, which, when articulated, are declaratives; because they are assertorial, they can be true or false.[29] The final item makes explicit a distinction in form that Aristotle had indicated by examples:[30] inquiries, which are open-ended questions,[31] are distinct from the already-mentioned "questions."

[22] See DL, 7.56.

[23] Cf. Cicero *leg*. 1.10.30. The enumeration of sentence-types seems to imply that in any given spoken language, the number of possible grammatical structures for the meaning of a sentence is naturally limited (even if not limited to one only). Thus sentence syntax is not purely conventional.

[24] Simple as opposed to compounds (disjunctions, conditionals, conjunctions, etc.), on which see Section 6a of this chapter.

[25] DL, 7.66–7. Questions = *erōtēmata*, imperatives = *prostaktika*, vocative = *prosagoreutikon,* petition or cursing = *aratikon*. On *aratikon*, cf. "prayer" in the lists of Protagoras and Aristotle (*euchē*); in the Stoic list, *aratikon* is often taken to be a reference to the optative mood. There is a lacuna in Diogenes' text at this point, so that *aratikon* itself is without definition or illustration.

[26] DL, 7.68. My quotations from DL follow the translation of Hicks (1931).

[27] Diogenes' examples: "How like the herdsman is to Priam's sons [!]" and "Fair (indeed) is the Parthenon[!]" (DL, 7.67).

[28] DL, 7.67–68. Dubitatives = *epaporētika*, pseudo-assertible = *homoion axiōmati*, oath = *horkikon,* hypothetical = *hupothetikon*. The "hypothetical" is undefined and without illustration owing to a lacuna in the text, and it is difficult to imagine what a distinctively hypothetical *form* of a sentence would be, given that the conditional is not an option here (the conditional is a "nonsimple assertible," according to the Stoics, whereas these are simple sayables); so the subjunctive mood seems likely.

[29] Assertibles = *axiōmata;* cf. DL, 7.63, 7.65, 7.68.

[30] Dialectical questions (*erōtēseis dialektikai*) present a choice between two contradictories; open-ended questions are effective for trapping witnesses and outwitting interlocutors (*int*. 11 (20b22–30); *rh*. 3.18.1–6 (1419a1–6); *top.* 8.4 (159a17–24), 8.7 (160a16–34)).

[31] Inquiries = *pusmata*; DL, 7.63, 7.66.

Despite the Stoic preference for laconism,[32] the historical fact that the activity of listing and analyzing sentence-types had originated with the practice of oratory meant that items from the Stoics' list of sayables were incorporated into discussions of "ornaments of speech" in manuals on oratory, as an aid to effective speaking. Cicero's enumeration of "figures of thought and speech" or "ornaments" recommended for stimulating or persuading an audience contains most of the items in the Stoics' list of sayables: the optative/prayer and cursing (*optatio atque exsecratio*), inquiry (*percontatio*), question (*rogatio*), the dubitative (*dubitatio*), exclamation (*exclamatio*), and the assertion.[33] Here we have six of the ten sentence-types in the Stoics' list. We find a similar list in Quintilian and some elements of such discussions in Gellius.[34]

The Stoics went on to specify that this mental language is operative in perception; but before moving on to that point, we should look at Augustine's rhetorical texts for evidence that he made use of the kind of linguistic analysis conveyed in these lists.

1.5. Stoic-Indebted Linguistics in Augustine's Rhetorical Texts

The discipline of rhetoric was influenced by Stoic linguistics' list of sayable sentence-types, and Augustine's sermons are exercises in rhetoric composed by someone with professional training in the discipline of rhetoric. Furthermore, the Stoic *theory* of sayables was known to Augustine, as we see from his *On Dialectic*. Given these facts, it is not terribly surprising that when Augustine composed his own rhetorical works on the psalms, he made use of these linguistic analyses. The psalms that he had to preach upon contain reported speech acts (e.g., "I said: 'I shall never be moved!'" "I said: 'Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly and be at rest?,'" etc.). When he looked at these as material to be preached about, the analyses of sentence-types (exclamations, interrogatives, etc.) he had encountered in the contiguous rhetorical and epistemological accounts apparently came to mind. For he consistently glosses the psalms' reported speech acts as *interior* speech in the reason of the person.[35] This

[32] Zeno's asceticism extended to speech; see DL, 7.20–21, 7.24, 7.42. Cf. Aubert (2007) 41–62.

[33] Cicero, *ornamenta sententiarum, orat.* 39.137–138 and *de orat.* 3.53.203–3.54.207. The vocative, though not mentioned in these lists, is also used as a device in Cicero's actual speeches.

[34] Quintilian, *inst.* 9.1.26ff.; cf. on *figurae*, *orationis lumina*, *inst.* 9.1.11, 9.1.17, 9.2.103. Gellius on *axiōma*, with the Latin terms used by Cicero (*pronuntiatum*) and Varro (*profatum* or *proloquium*), *NA* 16.8.8–10.

[35] See, e.g., *en. Ps.* 86.2, where he says that exterior speech breaks forth from interior thought or meditation (*intus apud se meditari*), that is from a heart, which had been going over many things interiorly in silence (*multa secum in silentio*), and *en. Ps.* 129.12, where thought (*cogitatio*) is described as speaking (*dicere*), with sentential content given several times. *En. Ps.* 76.9 interprets "I was babbling (*garriebam*)" (Psalm 76:7) as a speaking within one's spirit (*cum spiritu suo loquebatur*), silent thinking (*in silentio cogitat*); *en. Ps.* 3.4 stipulates that "with my

practice in the sermons is consistent with his references in the epistemological books of the *On the Trinity* to the word in the mind that is not in any conventional language, the relation of which to the linguistic theory of the *On Dialectic* has already been noted.[36] And it seems clear from Augustine's sermons that he believed Persius' fifth *Satire* was about mental language; he describes the scenario laid out by Persius in terms similar to the *On Dialectic* and to the epistemological books of *On the Trinity*.[37]

Furthermore, when we look at Augustine's rhetorical works, we see him drawing attention to six of the sentence-types that were also enumerated as "sayables" by the Stoics, some of which he had mentioned in the early part of the *On Dialectic*.[38] He draws attention to sentential forms expressing supplicatory prayer (*rogare, orare*), associated with the optative (*vox optantis*),[39] and cursing (*imprecatio, maledictum*),[40] as well as to the inquiry (*interrogare*),[41]

voice I have cried to the Lord" (Psalm 3:4) means "not with the voice of the body, which is drawn out with sound of the reverberation of the air, but with the voice of the heart," that is, a silent voice; *en. Ps.* 30.2.3.10 stipulates that "when I cried to thee" (Psalm 30:23) should be interpreted as a crying "not with the voice but with the heart." On the meaning of "heart" in Augustine, see Section 6c in this chapter and Ch. 2.3a.

[36] On the parallelism between the semantic theory of the *dial.* and the theory developed in the *trin.*, see Jackson and Pinborg (1976) 5; cf. also Ayres (2010) 194.

[37] In *s.* 164.5, where Augustine basically duplicates the passage from Persius' fifth *Satire* that describes internal imperatives uttered by conflicting moral dispositions (avarice, laziness), he glosses the speech of Avaritia as *intelligibilis sermo avaritiae,* which is understood without use of a spoken language (in Augustine's example it happens to be, without an Indian language) – cf. the description of thought as an interior word that is not in Greek, or in Latin, or in any other language of *trin.* 15.10.19. Cf. *s.* 187.3 on the silent word of the mind which is clothed by conventional language when uttered, compared to the incarnation of the Word of God, and *s.* 28.4–5 on the meaning (*intellectum*) conveyed by an utterance, compared to the Word of God (*verbum Dei*).

[38] *dial.* 2–3 mentions commands (*imperare*), wishes (*optare*), and curses (*exsecrari*) as examples of expressions (*elocutiones*), that is, nonassertible units of meaning.

[39] *en. Ps.* 118.4.2, glossing "Oh that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep your statutes" (Psalm 118:5), Augustine explains, "Where you hear, 'oh that' (*utinam*) recognize the voice of one wishing (*vocem optantis*)," and asserts that wishing for something (*si optat homo*), entails praying to God for it (*rogandus est Deus*). Cf. *en. Ps.* 118.19.7: "Whereas there, in the one word 'Oh that,' he signifies a wish (*uno verbo significavit optantis*), he has here expressed himself in the more open words of one praying (*orantis*): 'Oh let my heart be sound' [Psalm 118:80]"; Augustine continues that the two meanings (*sententiae*) are one and the same. Cf. *en. Ps.* 118.5.4 on *optavit*.

[40] On cursing, he makes reference to the Greek, *qu. Gn.* 65: "*ara* means curse (*maledictum*): therefore the accursed person (*maledictus*) is called *kataratos* or *epikataratos*." (*Ara* is homonymous for three different meanings (with differences of pronunciation in each).) Cf. his usage in *en. Ps.* 68.2.7, *en. Ps.* 99.13, *s.* 56.3 *s.* 322.

[41] E.g., *en. Ps.* 118.5.1: "'How shall a young man correct his way? Even by keeping your words.' [Psalm 118:9] He questions himself (*interrogat se*), and answers himself. 'How shall a young man correct his way?' So far it is a question (*interrogatio*)." Augustine's terminology here and in a similar passage of *doctr. chr.* 4.20.39 departs from Cicero by using *interrogare* for open-ended inquiry (cf. Stoic *pusma*). In Cicero, the terminology was kept more distinct:

to the imperative (*modo imperativo pronuntiare*),[42] and to the oath or vow (*iuratio*, *votum*).[43] He also draws attention to the dubitative, and what he says about it is perhaps the most remarkable. He actually corrects a Latin translation of the psalter, explaining that the Greek interrogative particle *ara* is the mark of a dubitative:

> What does it mean, *Perhaps our soul has passed over?* The Latin interpreters have thus rendered, as far as they were able, the Greek word *ara.* For thus the Greek copies have it: *ara*; and since it is an expression of doubt (*dubitantis*), it is expressed [here] by means of a word indicating doubt, which is *perhaps* (*fortasse*); but this is not the exact sense… This [i.e., doubt] the Latins may or usually do express by *putas*, as for example when it is said, 'Do you think I have escaped this?' (*'Putas, evasi hoc?'*). If we say, 'Perhaps I have escaped this,' you see that it does not have this [dubitative] meaning… Nevertheless, understand the meaning to be this: *'Do you think that our soul has passed over the water without substance?'* And why do they say, 'Do you think …'? Because the greatness of the danger makes it hardly credible that they have escaped.…[44]

This passage is reminiscent of the doxography in Diogenes Laertius: the Greek terminology, Augustine's insistence that a dubitative is indicated by an interrogative form, and the matter. The matter that Augustine singles out in order to insist upon the use of the dubitative is possible escape from pain and destruction; similarly, Diogenes' example, "Can it be that life and pain are in some way akin?" has a note of anxiety in addition to mere uncertainty, precisely because the matter is pain, presumably one's own anticipated pain. Nor is there any evidence that Augustine is relying on his Christian intellectual peers for this analysis; we do not find this point about the dubitative in Jerome (who follows an old Latin translation of this Septuagint psalm as "perhaps" *forsitan*), in Origen, or in Ambrose.

That handbooks on rhetoric by Cicero and perhaps also Quintilian[45] can account for Augustine's practice of highlighting and emphasizing some of these linguistic forms seems clear. Augustine's knowledge and use of the relevant

open-ended inquiry is *percontatio*, a kind of questioning appropriate for harassing a witness (*de orat*. 3.53.203, cf. Aristotle, in notes Section 4 this chapter); yes-no question (cf. *erōtēma*) is *rogatio* (*de orat.* 3.53.203; *orat*. 40.137). But Augustine's usage is akin to Quintilian, *inst.* 9.2.6.

[42] *en. Ps.* 78.9 on Psalm 78:6: "… in the imperative mood he gives utterance (*modo imperativo pronuntiet*) to what he says, 'Gird your sword around your thigh, oh most mighty: in your beauty and in your godliness, go on and prosperously proceed and reign'…" Cf. *loc. Hept.* 1.55, *adn. Iob* 36.

[43] E.g., *en. Ps.* 131.4: "to swear (*iurare*) is to promise firmly. Consider this vow (*votum*)…" Cf. *qu. Gn.* 65: "*horkos* is said *iuratio.*"

[44] *en. Ps.* 123.8–9, citing Psalm 123:5. Trans. Tweed (1847–1857) adapted; all translations of the *en. Ps*. follow this edition unless otherwise noted; I habitually update archaic pronouns in this translation (thou, etc.) and note substantive changes when I make them.

[45] Marrou did not think that Augustine's formal training included Quintilian (1958) 48 n. 6; but there is no reason why Augustine could not have known Quintilian.

passages seems evident, given that he refers to the stylistic advice in which these lists of sentence-types were embedded: he triumphantly draws attention to it when the scriptures abide by the stylistic criteria provided by Cicero and Quintilian.[46]

Nevertheless, we should probably infer that Augustine had access to a more complete list of sentence-types than that transmitted by these handbooks. His reference to the imperative and the way that he handles the dubitative, point us back to the kind of doxography that stands behind the *On Dialectic*. Augustine's doxography presumably contained these items along with some of the Greek terminology. Thus the context in which Augustine encountered these sentence-types looks to have been that of "sayables," mental language, and not merely the external speech acts under discussion in the rhetorical handbooks.

During his explications of the sentence-types, it is clear that Augustine, like the Stoics,[47] sees a distinction between form and function; he thinks that the sentence-types refer to meanings that *typically*, though not necessarily, subsist in a grammatical sentence of a certain type. So, while he draws attention to the moods used, he indicates that the meanings expressed therein can sometimes be articulated by another mood.[48] Similarly, he says that repetition is that by which, either in the same words, or in different words, the same unit of meaning

[46] Here are four examples. First, he explains what a "figure" is, and the definition he uses accords with the proper sense urged by Quintilian (*en. Ps.* 77.3). Second, according to Cicero, it is a good idea for the speaker to interrogate himself, and then supply the answer (*orat.* 40.137; *de orat.* 3.54.207); Augustine duly notes it when the psalmist seems to interrogate himself and respond (*en. Ps.* 118.5.1). Third, repetition of identical or similar-sounding words or sentences, the meanings of which may be the same, similar, or quite distinct, is also advisable according to the rhetorical handbooks (Quintilian *inst.* 9.3.66–74; Cicero *de orat.* 3.53.203, 3.54.206; cf. Gellius *NA* 13.24.4); Augustine draws attention to instances of repetition in the psalms: "But these repetitions very much commend the divine locutions" (*en Ps*. 71.2; cf. *en. Ps.* 67.16, and noting that repetition is common in scripture: *en. Ps.* 3.5, *en. Ps.* 13.8, *en. Ps.* 71.2, *en. Ps.* 77.7). Fourth, both Cicero and Quintilian urge that devices be used in good taste (Cicero, *de orat.* 1.12.51); in particular, Quintilian directs would-be orators to wed repetition with weightiness of thought, for in itself the device is an empty affectation (*per se inanis adfectatio*) (*inst.* 9.3.74); Augustine takes care to defend the psalmist against the possible charge of repetition as an "empty ornament of speech (*inane sermonis ornamentum*)" in *en. Ps.* 3.5 and enumerates different ways the repetitions are important because they impart sublime truths or improve the moral and spiritual condition of the listeners (*en. Ps.* 6.11, *en. Ps.* 18.2.2, *en. Ps.* 32.2.2.14; *en. Ps.* 48.1.4; *en. Ps.* 66.8; *en. Ps.* 74.3).

[47] Cf. the observation that the Stoics understood their formal classification of sayables as a regimentation, since they were aware that the same meaning can be carried by two different grammatical structures (Bobzien [2003] 88).

[48] Thus an imperative would normally have the sense of a command; yet when it is directed at God its sense is optative (*en. Ps.* 32.2.2.28); in the case of prophecy, an imperative conveys an assertible about future events (*adn. Iob* 36, *loc. Hept.* 1.55, *en. Ps.* 78.9); exhortation, though typically identified with the imperative mood, can also be accomplished via inquiry (*en. Ps.* 90.2.9; cf. *en. Ps.* 57.10 on admonition) or an assertible (*en. Ps.* 39.15, *en. Ps.* 59.6, *en. Ps.* 43.1).

(*sententia*) is repeated.[49] The sayables are semantic categories, although there are syntactic boundaries for these meanings, as we have seen him insist, for example, in the case of the dubitative.

1.6. LINGUISTICS MEETS EPISTEMOLOGY: SAYABLES SUBSISTING IN IMPRESSIONS

All this looks relevant to our hunt for evidence pertaining to the "quasi-speech" in *Confessions* 8.11.26–27. Some of that quasi-speech is interrogative in form, and Augustine tells us it has a dubitative sense,[50] presumably because the context is anticipated pain: the question that his old loves put to him is whether he can live happily without the actions he has habitually done in the past. Continence, on the other hand, tells him in quasi-speech to cease dubitation and come forward into a life that will make him truly happy.

We are now left with the question of the philosophical significance of his old loves making him "look back," and of continence "appearing," terms that, we have already noticed, look like references to perception.

1.6a. The Stoic Background; Signs of Appropriation by Augustine

The Stoic doxography in Diogenes Laertius discusses the list of Stoic sayables in the context of epistemology. All perception begins with a passively received first "impression" (*phantasia*), namely the way the intentional object initially affects the passive perceiver.[51] In rational beings, these impressions are accompanied by sayables by which the perceiver interprets for herself the content of the impression.[52] Though the doxography suggests that all the various kinds of sayables are candidates for impressions,[53] during the course of Diogenes Laertius' ensuing enumeration of sayables, impressions are not mentioned again, and so we do not actually know how many of these different kinds of sayables orthodox Stoics considered actual constituents of perceptual impressions. A related debatable question is whether more than one sayable could subsist in one impression.[54] The

[49] *en. Ps.* 71.2: "…sive eadem verba, sive aliis verbis eadem sententia repetatur." Cf. *en. Ps.* 78.5, and *en. Ps.* 55.18, where we are told that in repetition, the "sense" (*sensus*) is being repeated, and *en. Ps.* 68.2.5 on the "meaning" (*subiecta*, *sententia*) being repeated.

[50] In 8.11.26, he uses the form *putas ne*; cf. the conflicting "appearance" of continence in 8.11.27, *ut venirem neque dubitarem*. When consent is given in 8.12.29, he describes it as *omnes dubitationis tenebrae diffugerunt*.

[51] See, e.g., DL, 7.45–46 and Cicero, *ac.* 1.40–41.

[52] DL, 7.63, 7.49–50, 7.61.

[53] Diogenes Laertius introduces the list of sayables with the statement, "the sayable (*lekton*) is the manifestation of the rational impression" (DL, 7.63).

[54] Brennan holds (against Inwood [1985]) that a single sayable accompanies a single impression (Brennan [2003] 261 n. 8).

question arises in part because the Stoics had also spoken of compound sayables – disjunctions, conjunctions, factual-inferential statements, and conditionals – in addition to the ten "simple" sayables enumerated earlier. (Augustine shows that he is familiar with at least some of these compounds in his *Against the Academics*.[55]) One might thus imagine the Stoics' perceptual theory allowing for an impression "that this is the case because that is the case," etc.; or one might want to say that such thoughts require two successive impressions.

In any case, the Stoics held that subsequent to receipt of an impression, the mind may either assent or not assent, and that this assent (*sunkatathesis*) is given to the sayables.[56] Because only assertibles are susceptible of affirmation or negation,[57] it follows that on their view every impression that can receive assent must have at least one assertible sayable. An impression constituted *only* by an imperative, for instance, could not receive assent.

This distinction between the "first impression" and "assent" was meant to explain how correct judgment can occur in the case of sensory illusions.[58] Someone who is not fooled by a mirage is simultaneously "seeing" water, which for a rational perceiver would include the thought, "there is water," and refraining from affirming that it is water. The overall effect is that it *seems* to the person that there is water, though she is not committed to the claim that there is. The distinction also had significant ramifications for ethics. Stoics emphasized our responsibility in exercising the power of assent, so that rash judgment was a moral as well as an intellectual error. And in the case of action-inducing impressions in particular (a species of impression with which we shall be concerned in Chapter 2), this epistemology allowed for a distinction between being attracted or tempted to do something and actually deciding to do it, with responsibility being confined to the latter.

That Augustine accepts the Stoic framework of impression versus assent is clear.[59] Impression he renders by *visum*, like Cicero, Gellius, and Seneca. It is clear that consent (*consentire*), which is an act performed by the "higher" part of the reason, or as he sometimes puts it, the mind (*mens*) rather than the soul's discursive rationality (*animus*), does the work that assent did in Stoic

[55] Augustine *c. Acad.* 3.21, 23, 29 uses the disjunction, conjunction, and conditional (pointed out by O'Daly [1987] 167). Cf. DL, 7.71ff.

[56] This point is common in Stoic sources, but see e.g., DL, 7.46ff and *ac.* 1.40–41.

[57] DL, 7.66, 7.68.

[58] The Stoic notion of assent seems to have been developed from Aristotle's use of *hupolēpsis* in *On the Soul* 3.2 (427b15–20, 25–30) to distinguish human judgment from animals' use of the common sense to discriminate (*krinein*) between sensible properties; cf. Stobaeus using *hupolēpsis* for assent in 2.111, 18 (LS 41G).

[59] The distinction is common; see, e.g., *Gn. litt.* 9.14.25 (*anima rationalis vel consentit visis vel non consentit*), *trin.* book nine passim, e.g., 9.10 and 9.15 on the distinction between two senses of mental "word," namely anything that is impressed on the soul, and the approval of such an impression; cf. O'Daly (1987) 87–89.

epistemology: he speaks of people consenting to propositions, and "judgement" (*iudicium*) and consent are treated as synonyms.[60]

What has not been ascertained is whether Augustine assumed that impressions have sentential content. This, of course, is exactly what we want to know, given its relevance to our hypothesis about *Confessions* book eight.

1.6b. An Experiment in Augustine's Rhetorical Texts

Because we have seen Augustine referencing the sayables in his rhetorical works, but Stoic linguistics is connected to epistemology, we might hypothesize that when Augustine encounters psalms that report "I said," he will read them as pertaining not merely to interior speech or mental language, but to mental language subsisting in impressions. We might test this by looking at his handling of Psalm 72:11–13 (LXX). These verses contain reported speech acts, and the Greek term *ara*, which, in 1.5, we saw Augustine treat as a sign of the dubitative, in a manner reminiscent of Diogenes Laertius' example of a dubitative.

In the Septuagint text, the psalmist reports what various people say. In verse 11 we are told that "They said, 'How has God known? Is there knowledge in the Most High?'" It continues, "Look! They are sinners, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches" (verse 12). Next the psalmist reports that he himself reacted to the situation, "And I said '*Ara* in vain I have justified my heart and washed my hands among the innocent'" (verse 13). Because the word *ara* has three different meanings, two of which – "therefore," and the interrogative particle – could make sense in the context, this line is rendered in some of the Latin translations as "And I said, 'Therefore in vain I have justified …'" but in others, "Have I in vain justified …?'" Augustine knows both of these Latin translations,[61] and uses both of them to develop his own distinctive account.

Scattered across various sermons of Augustine, we find an account that is substantially the same. His interpretation involves an interesting set of moves.

First, Augustine uses the Stoics' account of complex sayables as a hermeneutical key for the text of the psalm. As if to make verse 12 more precise, he immediately rephrases it in standard form as a conjunction: "*They are sinners, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches.* [That is,] 'Both they are

[60] He speaks of giving consent to the statement that God is the creator, that human bodies will be resurrected after the final judgment, etc.: *civ.* 5.9, 8.1, 8.10, 11.5, 20.1, 22.27. Cf. e.g. *Gn. litt.* 9.14.25 on *iudicium* as *consentire*.

[61] He uses at least two psalters when commenting on these verses. For verse 13, the psalter that Augustine usually uses has "Have I in vain?" ("Numquid in vano"), but note that this lacks the "I said" (LXX *eipa*): see *adn. Iob* 39, *civ.* 20.28, *en. Ps.* 73.1, *en. Ps.* 124.1–2, *s.* 19.4, *s.* 48.4. Another rendering used by Augustine has verse 13 saying, "And I said, therefore without cause I have justified my heart and washed my hands among the innocent." ("Et dixi: Ergo sine causa iustificavi cor meum et lavi in innocentibus manus meas") (see *en. Ps.* 72.18).

sinners, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches.'"[62] He could have seen the standard form presented in Cicero: "Both he is Fabius, and he will die in the sea."[63] Augustine takes "How has God known?" (verse 11) to be expressing distrust about God's know-how in distributing riches: how can it be the case that God knows what he is doing?, that is, the kernel of the thought is that "God does not know [what he is doing]." Then, Augustine reverses the order of verses eleven and twelve to make a factual-inferential statement:[64] Since (*inde*) both they are sinners and they have gotten abundant riches, therefore (*ergo*) God knows not.[65]

Next he rearranges the verse order again. Not only, he thinks, is there an inference from "Both they are sinners, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches" to "God knows not"; but there is an inference from "Both they are sinners, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches" to "I have in vain justified.…"[66] He makes the latter a subconclusion, and "God knows not" the final conclusion of an argument (*ratio*) moving from the particular to the general: Both they are sinners, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches. Therefore I have in vain justified my heart and washed my hands among the innocent. Therefore God knows not.[67] (The final verse order, then, is 12-13-11.)

Intriguingly, Augustine now situates all this "speech" in the interior forum: it is going on inside the mind of a single person. The psalmist is "passing through a thought" (*per cogitationem transire*); a person is reporting what he was saying inside himself (*dicere apud se; dicere sibi anima*).[68] Recall, however, that "How has God known?" is supposed to be said by "them." So his handling of verses 11–13 presupposes a particular interest in mental speech, which guides his interpretation of the text.[69]

[62] *en. Ps.* 72.18.

[63] *fat.* 12: coniunctio = "Et est Fabius, et in mari Fabius morietur." Cf. *de orat.* 2.38.158 and *ac.* 2.91 and Gellius, *NA* 16.8.8–10.

[64] Factual-inferential = Stoic *parasunēmmenon* (DL, 7.71), which Augustine does not use in the *c. Acad.* Bobzien notes that the factual-inferential was probably added after the time of Chrysippus (2003) 95. Cf. Mates (1961) 33.

[65] *en. Ps.* 72.18; cf. *s.* 15A.2, *en. Ps.* 31.2.25.

[66] E.g. *s.* 301.7 on verses 12–13: "Since (*quia*) I saw that the wicked were rich, I envied them; and I said, 'I have lost out on justice and *in vain I have justified my heart and washed my hands among the innocent.*'"; *en. Ps.* 124.1: "Was I a fool, who wished to live righteously, and to converse innocently among men, since (*quando*) I perceive those who refuse to preserve innocence enjoy so much prosperity?"; *s.* 19.4: "You will think that you are worshipping God for nothing, since (*quia*) that other person also enjoys good fortune without worshipping God at all." (trans. Hill [1990–1997] adapted). For subsequent translations of the sermons, I follow Hill (1990–1997).

[67] See *s.* 19.4, *s.* 48.4–5, *en Ps.* 72.18–20.

[68] So *en. Ps.* 72.17–19, *en. Ps.* 73.1, *en. Ps.* 124.1, *s.* 48.4, *ep.* 140.5.13.

[69] Cf. *s.* 301.7, *s.* 19.4 and *s.* 48.4 reading "I said" for verse 11 rather than "they said." Apparently there was a rare codex, which did indeed read, "I said, 'How has God known?'" in verse 11;

Then, Augustine asserts that the subconclusion and final conclusion have a dubitative sense.[70] The psalmist is "asking, hesitating, doubting" (*quaerens, haesitans, dubitans*) these things.[71] So, using the wording Augustine insisted upon when he explained the meaning of *ara* as a dubitative (appropriately rendered by *putas ne*) in the text we saw earlier,[72] the sense is "Do you think I have in vain justified my heart and washed my hands among the innocent? Do you think that therefore God knows not?" Recall that Diogenes Laertius' example of a dubitative was an interrogative (using *ara*) that implicitly concerned the question whether it is possible to be happy in life, given that life seems to be controvertible with pain. Here in the psalm, Augustine thinks, the question is the problem of evil, namely, whether God, who controls the distribution of temporal goods, is competent or just (has the proper "know-how").[73] That is obviously tied up with the psalmist's happiness, and so Augustine apparently sees the matter as relevant to the dubitative. Yet to make this work as an exegesis of the psalm-text, he must double-dip on the *ara* of verse 13: he must justify the dubitative sense by pointing to the translation of *ara* as an interrogative particle (the codex which reads *numquid*), yet he has assumed the sense of "therefore" (*ergo*) for *ara*, when he asserted that the psalmist was making an inference from verse 12 to verse 13.[74] This is yet another indication that the exegesis is being driven by his own interest in complex internal speech.

Lastly, and most interestingly, Augustine claims that the argument in the psalmist's mind is the matter of an impression (*visum*) in which the psalmist has only "begun to think" these things (*coepisse cogitare*); he has not affirmed them (*non confirmare*), declared (*narrare*) or distinctly put forth the unit of meaning (*sententiam proferre*) that he is thinking.[75] Augustine's purpose here

for Jerome in Letter 39.2 renders verse 11 this way. "I said" is apparently coming from the Greek version known to Symmachus, which has *elegon* (meaning either "I said" or "they said"), where the others in Origen's Hexapla read "they said" (*eipan*); see Patrologia Graeca Vol. 16a. However, the actual translation which Augustine typically quotes omits the introit "And I said" in verse 13. So Augustine's repeated insistence that verses 11–13 are a single soul speaking to itself is a choice showing a preference; here as on other occasions, he knows multiple translations, and forms a habit of using the ones he likes best. See Ch. 7.3b for another, striking, example of this procedure.

[70] So *s.* 301.7's *dubito* on "I have in vain justified my heart" (verse 13), cf. *en. Ps.* 73.1, *en. Ps.* 124.1, and *s.* 48.4 using *numquid*. For "How has God known?" (verse 11), see *en. Ps.* 72.20 (*dubitans*), and in other sermons glossing this line, the notion of doubt is communicated with the metaphor of "slipping feet" (for this as a consistent metaphor for doubt, see Ch. 4.2a): *s.* 48.4, *en. Ps.* 73.1, *s.* 19.4.

[71] *en. Ps.* 72.18 and 72.20.

[72] Section 5 this chapter.

[73] For Augustine's engagement with Seneca's *prov.* on this question, see Ch. 6.2.

[74] Evidently he thinks that he has nevertheless captured the "spirit" of the psalm; perhaps, too, he thinks that since both meanings make sense, they are actual "layers" of meaning in the text.

[75] So *ep.* 140.5.13, *en. Ps.* 72.20.

is to preserve the psalmist from culpability by casting him as someone who has not consented to a false judgment. (The inferences in the argument are invalid, according to Augustine, because they fail to take into account the rewards and punishments of the afterlife.)[76]

We end up, then, with a rather complex epistemological analysis of these three psalm verses. Dubitative, assertible, and compound sentences are thoughts spoken in the mind, which accompany perceptions. Here are some instances of this procedure in Augustine's own words:[77]

> Why does it seem (*unde enim videtur*) to you [psalmist] that God knows not, and there is no knowledge in the Most High? … *They themselves are sinners, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches.* [That is,] Both (*et*) they are sinners, and (*et*) in the world they have gotten abundant riches.… On this account therefore (*inde ergo*) God knows not, and on this account (*inde*) there is no knowledge in the Most High. *And I said, therefore without cause I have justified my heart*. Since (*Quando*) I serve God, and have not these things, they do not serve him, and abound in them, *therefore without cause I have justified my heart, and have washed my hands among the innocent* … these are dangerous words, brethren, offensive, and almost blasphemous: *How has God known?* This is why I say, 'and almost [blasphemous]': he has not asserted (*non dixit*), 'God has not known'; he has not asserted, 'There is no knowledge in the Most High'; but he is asking, hesitating, doubting (*quaerens, haesitans, dubitans*) … he does not affirm it (*non confirmat*).… Will you [psalmist] propound this statement (*sententiam proferre*), that without cause they live justly who live justly, that a just person has lost his service, that God shows more favor to bad people, or cares for no one at all? Will you assert this (*dicere*), declare this (*narrare*)? He restrains himself (*reprimit se*).…[78]

> God did not seem to him to be good (*non ei videbatur bonus*). But why didn't God seem to him to be good (*non ei visus est bonus*)? … 'I saw' he says, 'sinners not worshipping God … I saw that they abound in peace, they abound in happiness. And my impression was (*visum est mihi*) that God does not judge rightly.'[79]

[76] *s.* 15A.2, *civ.* 20.28; cf. e.g., *en. Ps.* 36.1.9, *en. Ps.* 72.21, *en. Ps.* 73.1, *en. Ps.* 136.22, *s.* 250.2, *s.* 306.10. The invalidity he often refers to metaphorically as "crookedness" (*iudicium perversum* vs. *rectum*); e.g., *s.* 48.2 and *s.* 48.4–5. Cf. *en. Ps.* 72.7, *s.* 19.4–5, *en. Ps.* 31.2.25.

[77] See also e.g., *s.* 48.4–5: "Why do bad people have all the luck? … Mark the words of this stumbler, what he said to himself: *'Look, these are sinners; in the world they have gotten abundant riches. And I said, 'How has God known?''* He says it himself in the psalm, it's the man himself speaking … Notice, I repeat, what he adds: *'Have I in vain washed my hands amongst the innocent?'* 'I've lost everything,' he says, 'that I lived a good life for. I set my heart right, I washed my hands among the innocent, just for this, that bad people might do well and I myself might be afflicted.'… *'How has God known?'*… that's why he imagined that human affairs are no concern of God's. So while he was thinking like this, with a crooked and not a straight heart, and being led by an apparently plausible argument to suppose because of this incongruous state of things that the direction of human affairs is not God's business, he would have liked to proclaim this doctrine, to assert it."

[78] *en. Ps.* 72.18–21; trans. adapted.

[79] *s.* 15A.2; trans. Hill adapted.

1.6c. Ramifications for Our Reading of Intellectual History

The impression that Augustine is indebted to Stoic ideas here is only reinforced when we compare his handling of Psalm 72 to earlier Christian commentaries on this psalm. In the writings of Jerome and Ambrose, we do have some evidence of a preexisting commentary tradition treating this psalm as one person's consternation about why good things happen to bad people and vice versa.[80] Yet neither of them says that this person is in "doubt" about anything, nor do they give an epistemological or propositional description of such a person's inner condition. Origen's full commentary is lost, but what he does say about the psalm in extant texts gives us no reason to question Augustine's own engagement with Stoic linguistics and perceptual theory.[81] The preexisting commentary tradition, such as it was, was probably among the things Augustine knew. But as we will see repeatedly in the coming chapters, it is not characteristic of these Christian authors to describe thought as propositional, or to evince familiarity with the idea that mental sentences having particular forms subsist in impressions, whereas this *is* characteristic of Augustine.

Instead, what he does here bears comparison with a passage from Seneca's *On Anger*, which describes propositional thoughts accompanying impressions, arranged inferentially: "having the impression that one has been done a wrong … and to connect [the propositions] that one ought not to have been wronged and that one ought to be avenged…."[82] Augustine's similarities to Seneca in this and other areas, which cumulatively point to the conclusion that he was influenced by Seneca in the field of psychology, have not yet received the attention they deserve.[83] The relationship is not surprising, however, given

[80] Jerome reports in *ep.* 39.2 that the verses of the psalm express how he feels at the death of a virtuous young woman. Ambrose, *On the Prayer of Job and David* 3.3.5, says the psalm is about falling into error or pride.

[81] Augustine attributes the interpretation offered in his *en. Ps.* 72 to himself, in *ep.* 140.5.13. The Origen (trans. Rufinus) *Homilies on Exodus* 3.3 and *In Psalmos XXXVI–XXXVIII homiliae IX* homily on Psalm 37, 2.4, mention an earlier verse (verse 2) of Psalm 72 as an instance of a doubtful (*infirmus, dubius*) or wavering (*trepidare*) person, but this is explained as the person's committing an external sin, and consequently being the butt of jokes by neighbors; the focus is therefore on the external forum, as it is, arguably, in the psalm itself. Origen does not describe the internal state of the doubter, or propositional thoughts; nor does he connect doubt to an impression.

[82] *ira* 2.1.4–5, trans. Kaster and Nussbaum (2010) adapted; subsequent quotations from the *ira* are from the same edition. Note, however, that though *ira* 2.1.4–5 bears comparison with Augustine, Seneca seems to say that the fact that the perceiver made an inference means that assent has occurred. As long as one is thinking only a single sayable it may be merely an impression, but the coupling together of sayables inferentially implies that assent has been given to distinct impressions each of which has one sayable (*ira* 2.1.5, 2.4.1). In Augustine's scenario, the inference is still part of an impression; though the premise ("these are sinners…") has received assent, neither the subconclusion nor final conclusion has.

[83] On the importance of Seneca for Augustine, I differ from Hagendahl and agree with other scholars surveyed by him ([1967] 678–680). Hagendahl held that the scantiness of Augustine's

that Augustine himself intimates that he had better than average knowledge of Seneca.[84]

At first Augustine's using Stoic epistemology so heavily in his sermons might seem like an odd mixture of "theological" and "pagan" material, even granting that the discipline of rhetoric was influenced by Stoic linguistics and that Augustine's sermons are exercises in rhetoric. But given his view that it is appropriate to use the liberal arts in the elaboration of Christian teaching,[85] it is not so surprising. Stoic epistemology in particular would have seemed especially apt, for two reasons. First, we know that Augustine believed that some of the psalms aimed at "the healing of the silent thoughts."[86] Analysis of the various types of thoughts one might have, such as the Stoics had undertaken, could be a useful part of this process of moral self-evaluation and self-improvement. Second, as we have seen, sometimes the psalmist reports that he said things which Augustine deems false or morally wrong; explaining these as sayables in the mind which accompany an impression (that is, automatic thoughts), rather than as sentences spoken exteriorly and voluntarily, allowed Augustine to say that the psalmist did not really mean what he was reported to have "said," but caught himself and refrained from actually affirming anything inappropriate.

Of course, analysis of automatic thoughts with the aim of ethical self-improvement will not make Augustine particularly "Christian" as *opposed* to Stoic,[87] even if he uses psalm-texts as material for doing so. Augustine is sometimes characterized as having taken from the Hebrew scriptures an emphasis on heart rather than reason, but this is a false dichotomy.[88] The psalms themselves often describe "thoughts" as the axes of ethical action and responsibility.[89] (Augustine's *Expositions of the Psalms* use the terms "thought/thinking" (*cogitatio/cogitare*) nearly six hundred times.)

explicit references to Seneca militates against the view that he was a significant influence. But Seneca need not have been frequently mentioned in order to be an influence, and more generally Hagendahl's approach overlooks the cumulative weight of converging pieces of evidence which in isolation seem to him insufficient. For some such evidence not addressed by Hagendahl, see Ch. 2.5, Ch. 3.5e, Ch.4.2c, Ch. 6.2.

[84] *conf.* 5.6.11, complaining that Faustus, who had read a few books by Seneca, had knowledge inferior to his own.

[85] Cf. the discussion in Vessey (2005) 1–9 and Heßbrüggen-Walter (2005) 197–205.

[86] *en. Ps.* 93.2.

[87] See further Ch. 6 prologue.

[88] See Lancel (2002) 209, Peters (2009) 73, 86–88, 95 both comparing Augustine to Pascal. Augustine does say that we love with the heart (*Io ep. tr.* 5.6.2), but there is not a contrast between rationality and love, or mind and heart in Augustine. De la Peza (1962) showed that in Augustine the term *cor* overlaps in meaning with *mens* so that heart is the seat of cogitation. On Augustine's indebtedness to scriptural "heart" (*lev*) as seat of both intellectual and moral life, see Gowans (1998) 19–20, Gewehr (1975) 51–53.

[89] E.g. The Latin psalters from which Augustine quotes in the *en. Ps.*, which are translations from the LXX, use *cogitatio/cogitare* for *dialogismos/dialogizesthai* (translating the Hebrew *chashab* ["he/she plans/devises/intends"] of the MT; I am grateful to Gregory Vall for consultation

1.7. SOME LIGHT SHED ON *CONFESSIONS* 8

We began this foray into Augustine's rhetorical works as a way of testing our hypothesis that *Confessions* 8.11.26–27 is influenced by a Stoic theory of mental language in perception. What we have learned from the sermons is that *Confessions* book eight's dubitative and assertible quasi-speech of the appearance of continence and the old habits' interior whispering of assertibles and a dubitative seem to be just one example of Augustine's wide use of a Stoic-indebted account of perception.

Some of Augustine's similarities to and differences from Persius' fifth *Satire* can now be explained. The points of similarity are owing to the fact that both authors are using a Stoic theory of mental speech: not only is Persius the only one among the suggested literary precedents who, like Augustine, describes sentences "heard" interiorly and actually writes out their content, but, also like Augustine, he gives interrogatives and assertions as particular forms of the interior speech. The difference is that Persius gives us the sayables without mentioning the accompanying impression, whereas Augustine provides this epistemological context by using terms like "appearing" (*aperiri*) and "looking back" (*respicere*) – poetic ways of alluding to impressions (*visa*). This latter fact indicates that Persius is not Augustine's only source for the account of perception used in *Confessions* 8.11.26–27; and we shall have more to say about an additional source in the next chapter.[90]

Furthermore, it looks as though Augustine has added his own interpretative voice to the long history of reflection on linguistics by rhetoricians and philosophers. He stands out, as a rhetorician and philosopher, for having explicitly emphasized that the dubitative is constitutive of impressions concerning personal happiness. The *Confessions* passage appears to be one example of this usage of the dubitative. This conclusion must be somewhat tentative at the moment, and we will want additional evidence; but that evidence is available, and is the subject of Chapters 4 and 5 especially.

Important questions remain about the *Confessions* passage and its status as a representative account of *motivation*, however; and to these we now must turn.

about the Hebrew). See Psalms 20:12, 32:10, 32:11, 34:4, 39:6, 40:8, 51:4, 91:6, 93:11, 139:3, 139:5; my numbering is according to the Latin texts. The emphasis on thinking/thoughts is not an importation of Greek intellectualism via the LXX; there are about one-third more references to thinking (*cogitare*) when Jerome translates directly from the Hebrew than there are in his Gallican Psalter (a revision of the Old Latin text based on the LXX).

[90] See Ch. 2, Sections 2, 4, and 8.

2

Motivation

In our quest for answers about a famous and puzzling passage of the *Confessions* that pertains to motivation, we have found it to be like texts wherein Augustine uses a Stoic-inspired account of propositional perception.

This promises to be interesting in a number of ways. If Augustine's understanding of motivation is indebted to Stoic perception theory, then he may also be closer to the Stoics on emotion than has been previously recognized, given that Stoics thought emotions are caused by perceptions that something good or bad has been, or will be, lost or gained. That would be important because the Stoics' "cognitive psychology" of affective well-being has received special attention, given the present clinical success of cognitive therapies.[1] Furthermore, a breakthrough in our understanding of Augustine's motivational theory should also elucidate his account of moral development, including the vexed question of his changing account of grace, which he thinks affects moral progress.[2,3] More generally, if a Stoic perceptual theory is operative in all these areas of Augustine's moral psychology, this would pose a challenge to lines of interpretation that have questioned the importance of rationality for the Augustinian self and its moral-religious life.[4]

Before pursuing such topics, we must discover how motivation motivates, in Augustine's view. It is because we have not yet done this that distinctive features of *Confessions* 8.11.26–27 remain unexplained. For instance, the *Confessions* passage describes attraction toward doing or omitting to do

[1] For more on this, see Ch. 3.2.

[2] Moral progress is surely dependent upon motivational shifts, and these motivational shifts are brought about by grace, Augustine comes to think; so a better understanding of the role of perception in motivation promises to elucidate his views about how grace acts on the mind.

[3] Cary (2008a), Harrison (2006).

[4] For example, the notion that Augustine is to be classed with "voluntarist" thinkers of the later medieval period, or with modern approaches like that of Kierkegaard; or see recently Conybeare (2006) 144ff.

actions; but the examples we saw in Chapter 1 were not of perceived actions, but of what we might call merely epistemic impressions about states of affairs.[5] Yet there is an obvious difference between seeing that something is the case and seeing that something is to be done. Not everyone who sees that there is a glass of wine on the table drinks it, and not everyone who recognizes a person as arrogant avoids dealings with him. Precisely *how* does motivation differ from merely epistemic perception, on Augustine's view? Then there is a difference between some of the content of the mental language that we seem to have in the *Confessions* passage, and the content in the examples in the previous chapter. The *Confessions* depict the mind's experience of mental imperatives (in addition to assertibles and dubitatives) whereas those examples did not; and imperatives are also found in Persius' fifth *Satire*, which has a Stoic patrimony. Are these imperatives significant for Augustine's account of motivation in particular, and do they indicate a relation to Stoicism? Another unexplained fact is that in the *Confessions* Augustine says that his dispositions that are "suggesting" acts to him are "loves";[6] but love is not part of the Stoic epistemological model that we have seen thus far.

In order to get to the bottom of these matters we should first consider Stoic epistemology as applied in their theory of action. Then we can move on to consider whether, and if so how coherently, Augustine utilizes this and other intellectual traditions such as Platonism and Christianity in the account that the *Confessions* passage presents.

Here again, the method of using rhetorical texts should help us. For Augustine's sermons – in this like Seneca's letters – are often hortatory and therefore can be expected to manifest details of his theory of motivation.[7]

2.1. STOIC "MOTIVATING (HORMETIC) IMPRESSIONS"

When the Stoics applied their epistemology to the topic of human motivation, they posited a distinct kind of impression. Given that not everyone who sees a glass of wine drinks it, and not everyone who judges another to be arrogant avoids dealings with him, a distinct kind of perception is needed in order to explain why the same intentional object moves one person to act, but not another. Terminologically, the action-inducing impression is distinguished from the purely epistemic sort by the qualifier "hormetic" (*phantasia hormētikē*), so

[5] See the examples in Ch. 1.6b (that time was wasted, that God lacks know-how).

[6] Here I follow Chadwick in rendering *antiquae amicae meae* as "my old loves"; as O'Donnell points out, by this phrase Augustine does not refer to imaginative representations of his past girlfriends, but personifies his own long-standing desires (cf. *meretices cupiditates* in *conf.* 4.16.30) (O'Donnell (1992) commentary on 8.11.26). See further Section 7a of this chapter.

[7] So, e.g., *en. Ps.* 70.1.17, asserting that it is the function of the preacher is to admonish people how they should live; cf. *en. Ps.* 53.5, *en. Ps.* 44.3. For evidence that Augustine was familiar with Seneca's moral letters, see *civ.* 5.8, quoting *ep.* 107.11 (Seneca's translation of Cleanthes' *Hymn to Zeus*).

called because it is apt to produce an occurrent impulse (*hormē*) toward an action.[8]

The only extant reference to this kind of impression is found in a passage on Stoic ethics preserved by Johannes Stobaeus.[9] (Stobaeus wrote in Greek; we consider more proximate Latin sources for Augustine in Sections 2 and 4.) It specifies that a hormetic impression is a perception of some action as appropriate to the perceiver, because the action is concerned with something that contributes to his or her well-being.[10] No further information about the impression is provided, but given the work of Lloyd and Inwood, a plausible theory can be formulated about the content of the sayable meanings (*lekta*) that accompany hormetic impressions.[11] The theory presupposes that more than one sayable is necessary for motivation. One would be an assertible stating that it is appropriate to perform some act with regard to the object – for the text also stipulates that impulses are directed at the predicates (verbs) contained in assertibles.[12] There would also presumably be an adjective referring to the act's perceived aptness for contributing to the perceiver's well-being: the healthfulness, utility, pleasantness, or moral excellence/beauty of the object to be attained. These so-called "practical adjectives"[13] are apparently descended from Aristotle's three "objects of choice," and perhaps also from Plato's observation that people pursue what appears to be attractive and "lacking" to them.[14] The adjective

[8] Stobaeus, *Eclogues* 2 (containing the *Epitome of Stoic Ethics*) Ch. 9–9a. See, e.g., Inwood (1985) 224ff., LS 53Q, and Brennan (2003) 266 n. 20 and 268 n. 24. *Hormē* follows upon assent to a hormetic impression; it is comparable to what we call "intention" (cf. Stobaeus 2.86.17–2.87.6 (LS 53Q), "one would correctly define impulse by saying that it is a movement of thought toward something in the sphere of action," trans. LS), but also implies setting oneself in motion to do what is intended; it is a sufficient cause of action, unless there is an external impediment. Cf. Cicero *fin.* 3.15.49: "cognitiones comprensionesque … appetitionem movent," although this fails to indicate a specific kind of impression.

[9] Stobaeus is believed to have worked in the fifth century C.E.; traditionally his source for the Stoic material has been thought to be a text of Arius Didymus, first century B.C.E. (for a summary of the history of transmission, see Pomeroy [1999]; Inwood [1995]).

[10] "What activates impulse (*hormē*), they say, is precisely an impression capable of impelling (= *phantasia hormētikē*) a proper function (*to kathēkon*).

[11] I differ only slightly from the theory of Inwood (1985) 55ff. (referencing Lloyd) by stipulating the presence of an adjective in the assertible, which makes explicit the relevant quality of the object. The inclusion of the adjective seems important given Lloyd's observation that Aristotle's "objects of choice" have an analogous role to the Stoic *kathēkonta* (Lloyd [1978] 236).

[12] Stobaeus 2.88,2–6 (LS 33I).

[13] These qualities are divided by the Stoics into the "preferred indifferents" (*ta proēgmena*) such as health, wealth, pleasure (DL, 7.102–103, 105–106) and the "choice-worthy" (*to haireton*), namely the morally fine (*to agathon* (see DL, 7.99 and 7.101)). Both are able to stir impulse or aversion: DL, 7.104.

[14] Aristotle *NE* 1104b30–35 on the morally fine/beautiful, the useful, and the pleasing; Plato, *sym.* 200e, 201b–c on being in a state of "lacking" (*endeēs*) the good and beautiful, and see further Section 7a of this chapter.

is presumably in the assertible about the fittingness of the action ("It is fitting for me to drink that tasty wine"), or in a distinct assertible which accompanies it ("That wine looks tasty," "It is fitting for me to drink tasty things").

But Inwood suggested, in light of Chrysippus' definition of impulse as "the reason of man commanding him to act," that a complete account of a hormetic impression should posit an *imperative* sayable accompanying the impression.[15] Moreover, Seneca's references to self-command seem to lend weight to Inwood's interpretation.[16] So the hormetic impression of a glass of wine also says, "Drink that wine." Apparently, an action is caused when one both assents to the assertible that it is fitting or that the wine is tasty, and "obeys" the self-command by setting oneself in motion to perform the action, which setting in motion is called impulse (*hormē*).

Abstracting from this and reflecting on it a bit, it seems reasonable to think that the imperative should be inferred from the assertible about fittingness (e.g., "It is fitting, so do it"). Otherwise we have different sayables which are clustered together but logically unrelated, and it will be difficult to give an account of how these are parts of one single impression. Alternatively, if we deny that there is only one impression here and give each sayable its own impression, it may be difficult to explain how each of the various impressions is essential in motivation. Furthermore, if the command were an inference it might be easier to explain what it means to "obey" a self-command (by assent) as opposed to merely thinking a self-command (in the impression). We could say that the self-command has become effective *because* the assertible premise that it is fitting for me to do the act has received assent. But the Stobaeus text does not enter into details like these.

Note that there should in principle also be an "aphormetic impression," which would be an impression that some action ought to be avoided because doing it would be harmful. We must posit this because there is a counterpart to impulse, which is impulse away from an action (aversion, *aphormē*).[17] To return to the example: avoidance of an arrogant person would be possible because of an action-inducing impression having the sayable, "Avoid him!" as well as, "He is arrogant" or "it is fitting for me to avoid that arrogant person."

[15] Plutarch's report of Chrysippus, on *hormē* as the reason of man commanding him to act, using *logos prostaktikos*: *de Stoic.* 11, 1037f (LS 53R). See Inwood (1985) 61–62, also referencing *NE* 1143a4–11.

[16] So *ep.* 113.18: "Suppose that I ought to take a walk (*oportet me ambulare*): I do walk, but only after uttering this command to myself and approving this opinion of mine" (trans. Gummere [1925] adapted). Some other texts of Seneca using the notion of self-command are collected in Inwood (2000), though Inwood himself does not make the connection with the hormetic impression in this work; his focus instead is on the question of the historical development of different concepts of "will."

[17] So "aversion is prohibitive reason" (Plutarch *de Stoic.* 11, 1037f (LS 53R)).

2.2. MOTIVATION AND IMPERATIVAL LINGUISTIC FORMS IN LATIN TEXTS

Did Augustine know a Stoic theory that imperatival mental language was characteristic of motivation? Is this the reason for the presence of imperatives in *Confessions* 8.11.26–27? There is no extant Latin doxography preserving this account of the motivating impression. But there are two extant channels through which he might have been exposed to elements found in this theory of motivation, and there is a nonextant text, known to Augustine, which may well have contained the whole account.

In the first channel was the idea that spoken imperatives are effective in motivating another person to act. This claim was in rhetorical and ethical works known to Augustine. Quintilian reports that in handbooks on rhetoric, "exhortation" (*exhortatio*) has been added to the classical lists of sentence-forms.[18] This addition appears to be from the influence of Stoicism, for exhortation had a specifically Stoic context; it was associated with a branch in ethics, "the hortatory."[19] Cicero mentions this branch of ethics (*cohortatio*) in the *On Goals*, where he also ties it to effective rhetoric.[20] Seneca preserves the most complete account,[21] specifying that hortatory ethics (*adhortatio*) employs a particular kind of discourse: admonition (*monitio/admonitio*), also known as counsel (*consilium*). In the examples of admonition he offers, the form is usually the imperative. (An occasional variation on this is still semantically imperative but syntactically an assertion which serves as a polite way of issuing a command, namely "It is not necessary to do that.")[22]

Given the interplay between lists of rhetorically effective sentence-forms and the Stoic list of interior sayables (*lekta*), a relation that we saw in Chapter 1, it is plausible to think that the "exhortation" listed in Quintilian and employed by Seneca corresponded to the imperative in the list of

[18] Quintilian cites Rutilius (Publius Rutilius Lupus) and Gorgias of Athens (both early first century C.E.)), and Celsus (second century C.E.), as sources *inst.* 9.2.102–103.

[19] A part of ethics rejected by Ariston of Chios, a pupil of Zeno of Citium (Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Mathematicians* 7(= *Against the Logicians* 1) 12). Quintilian gives the same Greek term: *parainetikos*.

[20] *fin.* 4.3.6–7.

[21] Letters 94–95 record a debate about what is required for a morally good life: Is it enough to know general laws, or must one also learn applications? Whereas principles state general norms such as definitions of the cardinal virtues, precepts (*praecepta*) state how the virtues are to be lived out in specific cases (*ep.* 94.1, 94.17, 94.32, 95.63). Seneca follows Cleanthes (against Ariston), arguing that both principles and precepts are required. Cf. the brief mention in DL, 7.125–126, and Aristotle's earlier treatment of maxims in *rh.* 2.21. See also the discussion in John Cooper, who argues that Seneca emphasizes exhortative rhetoric at the expense of philosophical arguments about why Stoic ethical claims are true ([2004] 313ff.).

[22] "Non est quod …" In Seneca *ep.* 94.20, five examples of *admonitio* are in the imperative; and cf. 94.50.

sayables (*lekta*) recorded in Diogenes Laertius (that is, the *prostaktikon*). So, someone who knew of this relation (as Augustine seems to have), might infer that not only is a spoken imperative effective for motivating someone else, but that within the mind of a single person, motivation operates as kind of self-exhortation, a microcosmic and reflexive version of the persuasion of one person by another.[23]

Augustine certainly seems to have been familiar with the idea that the motivation of one person by another is brought about by the use of imperatives. We saw in Chapter 1 that among the linguistic "meanings" (*sententiae*) to which he draws attention in his rhetorical works is the imperative (*modo imperativo pronuntiare*). And in the sermons, when analyzing scriptural sentences for his listeners, Augustine treats the imperative as synonymous with the "exhortative" or "hortatory" (*exhortatio, hortari*),[24] and says that exhortation is speaking to someone in order "to excite will" (*ut excitetur voluntas*).[25] He often pairs the exhortative with "admonishing" (*admonitio/monere*),[26] along with other related concepts and terms used by Seneca.[27] Again, in the *On Christian Teaching*, the kind of speech whereby an orator may move people to action has specific forms: entreaties, rebukes, exhortations, attempts to restrain.[28] At least some of these forms would seem to involve the use of imperatival verb forms, whether phrased negatively (rebukes, attempts to restrain would include "Don't do *x*") or positively (exhortations, entreaties would include "Do *x*").

[23] Cf. *lib. arb.* 3.25.75.

[24] Thus at *en. Ps.* 99.2 *iubet* and *hortatur* are interchanged, and see *en. Ps.* 30.1.24 ("'Love the Lord…' the prophet again exhorts (*hortatur*)"), *en. Ps.* 30.2.3.11, *en. Ps.* 33.1.1, *en. Ps.* 33.2.6; *en. Ps.* 33.2.10 (where Augustine glosses "Approach to him, and you shall be enlightened" as *exhortatio*); cf. *en. Ps.* 36.3.8, *en. Ps.* 38.12, *en. Ps.* 48.1.12, *en. Ps.* 64.3, *en. Ps.* 66.1, *en. Ps.* 67.5, and 67.40, *en. Ps.* 70.2.6, *en. Ps.* 100.1, *en. Ps.* 102.1, *en. Ps.* 145.2 and 145.5, *en. Ps.* 148.3. The jussive is also used: *en. Ps.* 62.15, *en. Ps.* 66.8, *en. Ps.* 94.10.

[25] *en. Ps.* 118.1.1.

[26] For *admonitio* in the imperative mood, see e.g., *en. Ps.* 48.1.9, *en. Ps.* 44.33, *en. Ps.* 77.12 and 77.44, *en. Ps.* 113.1.8, *en. Ps.* 117.2, *en. Ps.* 118.5.2 and 118.15.1, *en. Ps.* 138.26, *en. Ps.* 143.6, *en. Ps.* 144.17, *en. Ps.* 145.9, *en. Ps.* 150.7. For the jussive *ut* or *ne*, see *en. Ps.* 77.1 and 77.11, *en. Ps.* 92.1, *en. Ps.* 94.4, *en. Ps.* 113.2.2.

[27] Such as "rebuke" (*obiurgatio*), "consolation" (*consolatio*), "dissuasion" (*deterrere, revocare*), and "praise" (*laudatio*): *en. Ps.* 38.3: "monendo, obiurgando, hortando"; *en. Ps.* 126.11: "monet, obiurgat"; *en. Ps.* 54.8: "Adesto, loquere, exhortare, blandire, minare, corripe"; cf. *en. Ps.* 36.2. Compare also *en. Ps.* 30.2.2.2 to Seneca *ep.* 94.43, 94.46–47 (*velut edictum* and examples). Augustine also explains admonition as the giving of precepts (*praecepta*) that, like Seneca, he treats as synonymous with counsel (*consilium*): *en. Ps.* 49.6, *en. Ps.* 55.15, *en. Ps.* 59.4, *en. Ps.* 48.1.9 (*consilium dare* and *monere* are interchanged twice). Lastly, in glossing "Your wrestling is not against flesh and blood" (Non est vobis; Augustine's translation of Eph. 6:12 happens to differ from the Vulgate, which has "Non est nobis …") as *admonitio*, Augustine interprets it as the polite construction for the imperative (*en. Ps.* 30.2.3.2, *en. Ps.* 34.1.4); cf. Seneca *ep.* 94.20.

[28] 4.4.6: "obsecrationes et increpationes, concitationes et coercitiones et quaecumque alia valent ad commovendos animos, sunt necessaria."

The second extant channel more explicitly described an *individual's* motivation as imperatival language in the internal forum of the mind, though without explicitly saying that this mental language subsists in a motivating impression. And this increases the likelihood that Augustine would regard motivation as perception in which the mind formulates for itself a mental imperative. Seneca reports: "Suppose that I ought to take a walk (*oportet me ambulare*): I do walk, but only after uttering this command to myself and approving this opinion of mine."[29] Persius, as already noted, describes an individual's motivation as the interior speaking of imperatives. It seems that both of these are presentations of the Stoic theory of motivation in illustrative terms, though neither explicitly provides an epistemological context by using the term "impression" (*visum*) or related terms (as Augustine does with "appearing" in *Confessions* 8.11.27).

Perhaps most importantly, we cannot forget that the Stoic account of the motivating impression itself may well have been presented in the now-lost portion of Cicero's *On Fate*.[30] Cicero tells us that in it he had presented the Stoic account of "assents"[31] in connection with logic or the theory of discourse (*ratio disserendi*), including an analysis of sentences (*enuntiationes*).[32] Because this analysis would likely have distinguished among sayables such as assertibles, dubitatives, and imperatives, and because voluntary action is the theme of the *On Fate* as a whole, it makes sense that Cicero would have singled out the sayable that is characteristic of motivation, namely the imperative.[33] So it is not implausible to think that Augustine had an account of the Stoic motivating impression in the first book of *On Fate*. Moreover, there is an independent reason to think that this work served him as a source of philosophical terminology in the field of action-theory: Augustine's use of "will" (*voluntas*) to render Stoic "impulse" (*hormē*) in works such as the *City of God*, the *On Free Choice*, and the *Confessions* has a precedent in Cicero's use of *voluntas* for *hormē* in the fifth book of the *On Fate*.[34]

From *Confessions* 8.11.26–27, it certainly looks like Augustine held the epistemological theory that human motivation is perception involving imperatives thought by the mind. It is "appearances" in his own mind that "exhort" Augustine and issue imperatives in quasi-speech. But how representative and well-developed is this account?

[29] *ep.* 113.18. Trans. Gummere (1925) adapted.

[30] Clark argued that a single archetype containing the complete *fat.* and translation of Plato's *Timaeus*, among other works of Cicero, was mutilated and the incomplete version then copied in the ninth to eleventh centuries (Clark [1918] 323–326, 340–341). This view is followed by MacKendrick (1989) 351 n. 2.

[31] *fat.* 17.40.

[32] *fat.* 1.1.

[33] The extant *fat.* 18.42–44 does contain the more general point that assent (*adsentire*) requires a foregoing impression (*visum*), and the context here is impulse and action (see 17.40).

[34] See Appendix II.

2.3. MOTIVATING IMPRESSIONS IN AUGUSTINE

Augustine signals that he has an epistemological account of motivation in his commentary on Psalm 118: he is committed to a distinction between different kinds of knowing, one in which we simply know, the other by which we also act.[35] As he tells us elsewhere, the difference between these kinds of knowing is a difference of perceptual impression (*visum*): "from a diversity of impressions the impulse of souls is different," and this is why someone at one time wants to be rich, or wise, or in business, or to fight with the military, but at another time does not want to do these things.[36] And in the *On Christian Teaching*, there is the same distinction between purely epistemic matter for consent, and matter consent to which constitutes a decision to perform an action (*ad actionem adsensio*).[37] We find a great deal more information about Augustine's views on these topics in his own exhortative rhetorical works and his moral treatises.

2.3a. "Suggestio" as a Technical Term for the Motivating Impression

On one of the occasions when Augustine, in a manner reminiscent of Persius' fifth *Satire*, preaches that avarice urges us to do things that we ought not consent to do, he uses the term "suggests." "Avarice suggests, lust suggests, gluttony suggests … he restrains himself from all, answers back to all, turns away from all."[38] Because this term "suggests" also occurs repeatedly in the *Confessions* passage that interests us, it is worth inquiring whether it has a particular meaning related to motivation.

As it turns out, the term "suggestion" (*suggestio*), mentioned as the "first stage of sin" in the early *On the Lord's Sermon on the Mount*,[39] appears with some frequency as a well-defined concept in his sermons and ethical treatises. Though it is obviously not a literal translation of the Stoic term "motivating impression" (*phantasia hormētikē*), it should be understood as a technical term for it. The words *suggestio* and *suggerere* were used in this way by other Latin authors of the fourth century, most strikingly by Rufinus translating Origen's "an impression that calls forth impulse" (*phantasia hormēn*

[35] *en. Ps.* 118.17.3: "…cum itaque alia sint quae ideo discimus ut tantummodo sciamus, alia vero ut etiam faciamus." Cf. *en. Ps.* 118.17.9.

[36] *div. qu.* #40. "Ex diversis visis diversus appetitus animarum est…" My trans. Cf. *en. Ps.* 118.8.5: the first step in motivation to right actions is "that it may appear how useful and honorable they are (prius est enim ut videatur quam sint utiles et honestae)."

[37] *doct. chr.* 4.13.29. Cf. *doct. chr.* 4.4.6, 4.10.25, 4.12.28, 4.13.29, 4.19.38, 4.23.52 *ad actionem quamlibet adsensio requiritur*, an act of consent which effects a change of life (*vitae mutatio*). Cf. *s.* 145.1, making statements about motivation that are similar to both *Simpl.* 1.2.21 and *doct. chr.* 4.23.52: "Qui enim non movetur, nec mutatur," etc.

[38] *en. Ps.* 99.11. Trans. Tweed et al. adapted.

[39] 12.34.

prokaloumenē),[40] and also, occasionally, to mean "temptation," by the Latin translators of the *Life of Antony*,[41] by Ambrose,[42] and by Jerome.[43] Augustine, however, uses the term more precisely than the latter three authors, as a technical term for a motivating impression, and with more details of Stoic epistemology than we find in Origen. This becomes clear when we turn to the *On Continence* and to the copious evidence of the sermons, and then compare this evidence to the usage of these other authors.

In the *On Continence*, the context is action; as its name suggests, the purpose of the treatise is to analyze and exhort readers to this virtue, and this involves stipulating what counts as incontinent action, and what does not. Augustine emphasizes that a mere impression (*visum*) or suggestion (*suggestio*) is not an incontinent act, but consent is blameworthy. In order to distinguish sentential content that has not yet received assent from that which has, he employs a metaphor signifying different degrees of articulation. Mere impressions indistinctly "whisper" or "murmur" (*susurrare*) their content, because the perceiver's relationship to them is still noncommittal. (Recall that in *Confessions* 8.11.26–27, Augustine experiences "suggestions" that "whisper" quasi-speech.) This preconsensual "murmuring" is not something *done* by us, it is just something that we "have."[44] In contrast, interior "speaking" is assent of the mind ("heart"),[45]

[40] Rufinus uses *suggestio* in *prin*. 3.1.4, referring back to 3.1.2's repeated use of the phrase *phantasia hormēn prokaloumenē*. Origen's phrase "impression which calls forth an impulse" is not literally carried over by Rufinus in 3.1.2 or elsewhere; Rufinus plainly does not understand much about the philosophy Origen is using, and sometimes makes mistakes in translating. However, the concept itself of an action-inducing impression is carried over well enough as the proper meaning of *suggestio*, as for example, Rufinus: "Nothing else ought to be thought to happen to us as a result of these good or bad things which are suggested to our heart, except only a being stirred up and an incitement provoking us to either good things or to bad. But it is possible for us … to cast away from ourselves depraved suggestions and to resist the very bad persuasions…" (My trans.) "Nihil tamen aliud putandum est accidere nobis ex his, quae cordi nostro suggeruntur bonis vel malis, nisi commotionem solam et incitamentum provocans nos vel ad bona vel ad mala. Possibile autem nobis est … abicere a nobis pravas suggestiones et resistere persuasionibus pessimis …" (3.2.4); see also esp. 3.3.4.

[41] They occasionally used it (*suggerere cogitationes* for *hupoballein* or *hupotithenai logismous*) in order to describe Antony's experience of temptation. See *vit. Ant.* 5: the non-Evagrius translator once uses *suggerere* for *hupoballein*; Evagrius once uses it for *hupotithenai*. Cf. notes in Ch. 1.1.

[42] Temptations are "suggested" in *Explanatio Psalmorum 12* 1.37, *Expositio Psalmi 118* 16.12, *Expositio evangelii sec. Lucam* 4 and 8, and *De Officiis* 1.5.17.

[43] *Comm. in ep. ad Ephesios* 2.4: "operantes … libido suggessit"; ibid.: "facimus quod indignatio, furor, ira suggesserint"; *Comm. in ep. ad Titum* 1: "insanias quas ebrietas suggerit … iacere … proruere … clamare … dormitare…"

[44] On *sententiam habere*, see e.g., *en. Ps.* 31.2.25; cf. *en. Ps.* 42.6.

[45] "Heart" (*cor*) in Augustine is sometimes, as here, synonymous with mind (*mens*) as the capacity for cogitation/ratiocination and assent. On this sense of *cor*, see de la Peza (1962) 66–67, 73–76, 81–82. And cf. *s.* 265C.1, where *cor = intellectus, ingenium, ratio, cogitatio, consilium*. Cf. *s.* 45.9: "a man cannot perpetrate with his members what he has not said to himself in his heart. He has conceived a word in his heart, and it has been commissioned to act."

an interior act that is a necessary condition of external voluntary action (as he also asserts in the *On the Trinity*):[46]

> The 'inclining of the heart,'[47] what is it if it is not consent? For he has not yet spoken who has not yet consented by inclining his heart to the onrushing suggestions of all sorts of impressions (*visa*) in his heart. If, however, he consented, he has already spoken in his heart.... without the consent of our mind ... our cogitation itself ... is affected in a certain manner by their suggestion and whispering, as it were.[48]

The term *suggestio* appears not only here, but frequently throughout this book; as it is not a term that Augustine uses in the context of epistemic impressions, it seems reasonable to infer that it is a special name for a motivating impression. Notice, too, that the quotation just given also implies that Augustine uses *suggestio* to refer specifically to the sentential contents of impressions. For he says that consent is given "to the suggestions of the impressions" (*suggestionibus visorum*), which sounds very much like the Stoics' stipulation that consent is given to the *lekta* that subsist in rational impressions, and not, strictly speaking, to the impressions themselves (the *phantasiai*). So the "whispering" *suggestiones* of *Confessions* 8.11.26 now look like references to the sayables of action-inducing impressions in particular.

Additional reasons for taking *suggestio* and *suggerere* as references to motivating impressions having intelligible content come in the sermons. We learn that a *suggestio* is something that "happens" to someone (*pati*)[49] prior to consent,[50] and that it is a *phantasma,*[51] which happens "in thought" (*in cogitationibus*)[52] or simply is "thoughts" (*cogitationes*).[53] It is perspicuous that *suggestio* is reserved for perception of actions: what is "suggested" is fraud, adultery, blasphemy, praise of God, etc.[54] As the reference to the "suggested" praise of God makes clear, though Augustine sometimes uses the term interchangeably with

[46] *trin.* 9.7.12–9.9.14: "Nemo enim aliquid volens facit quod non in corde suo prius dixerit" (9.7.13); this word is "brought out" or "given birth to," i.e., consented to, by the mouth of the heart (*os cordis*). Cf. *trin.* 15.10.20.

[47] He is glossing Ps. 140:4's "inclining of the heart" with Stoic epistemological categories.

[48] *cont.* 2.3 and 13.30. "Declinatio cordis quid est, nisi consensio? Nondum enim dixit, quisquis in corde occurrentibus suggestionibus quorumque visorum nulla cordis declinatione consensit. Si autem consensit, iam corde dixit [= 2.3]... mente non consentitur ... nostra cogitatio ... eorum quodam modo suggestione et quasi susurratione tangatur [= 13.30]." Trans. adapted from McDonald (1952).

[49] *en. Ps.* 33.2.8; *s.* 4.9.

[50] *en. Ps.* 48.1.6, *en. Ps.* 75.4–5, *en. Ps.* 84.10, *s.* 32.11.

[51] *en. Ps.* 102.5–6. Cf. DL 7.49–50, 7.61 on the representation in thought (*phantasma dianoias*) as the product resulting from the process of receiving an impression (*phantasia*).

[52] *en. Ps.* 36.3.19, *en. Ps.* 48.1.6.

[53] *en. Ps.* 99.11, *en. Ps.* 122.12, *en. Ps.* 129.12, *s.* 335K.6.

[54] E.g., *en. Ps.* 97.6, *s.* 128.8, *en. Ps.* 103.4.6, *en. Ps.* 145.3.

"temptation,"[55] it is a general name for any action-inducing impression; this must be why he often takes the trouble to qualify *suggestio* with "mala" when he is talking about a temptation, a suggestion toward a morally bad action.[56] And like the Stoic hormetic impression with its practical adjectives, the suggestion "shows" us the attractive thing to be obtained by doing the act: so, for instance, "we are tempted by the delights of earthly things; we struggle daily with suggestions of unlawful pleasures,"[57] or a suggestion "sets out riches."[58]

Augustine indicates that the thoughts suggested are sentential. There is, first of all, a sentence by which the perceiver thinks that doing the action will bring happiness. This is an assertible, either a compound conditional or a simple assertible. In the sermons we find this description: "Something unlawful has come into your mind; do not keep your mind there, do not consent.… Spurn the very suggestion. But it suggested wealth: 'There is great wealth there, much gold; if you commit this fraud, you will be rich.'"[59] Here it is of course implied that the person thinks that being rich will make him happy.[60] Similarly, in *Confessions* 8.11.26, when Augustine is seeing incontinent acts, they imply with their interior speech that if he fails to do incontinent acts, he will not be happy: "From this moment we shall never be with you again, not forever and ever … from this moment this and that are forbidden to you now and forever."

More interesting, however, is the fact that imperatival content is part of suggestions, in addition to this thought about happiness. In Augustine's commentary on Psalm 143, for instance, he says that avarice and innocence alternately suggest actions by saying: "Do it, and take it."[61] And, of course, in the *Confessions* passage the appearance of continence also uses imperatives.[62] Though there are instances in Augustine's corpus wherein he does not explicitly provide an imperative for the *suggestio* being described, his use of the term "suggestion" itself indicates that he probably thought that all these impressions contain an imperative. For when he uses the verb *suggerere* to describe *spoken* language, he typically does so when there is an imperative utterance.[63]

[55] *en. Ps.* 58.1.4, *en. Ps.* 62.17, *en. Ps.* 102.5, *en. Ps.* 120.11, *en. Ps.* 127.16, *en. Ps.* 136.7. Cf. the "first suggestion of sin" (*prima peccati suggestio*) in *en. Ps.* 103.4.6.

[56] E.g., *en. Ps.* 54.5, *en. Ps.* 138.14, *en. Ps.* 75.4, *en. Ps.* 36.3.19, *en. Ps.* 122.12, *s.* 128.8. Suggestions toward morally bad actions are also qualified by "prava" in Origen-Rufinus; see e.g., 3.2.4, 3.3.6.

[57] *en. Ps.* 136.7: "Delectationibus temporalium rerum tentamur, et colluctamur quotidie cum suggestionibus illicitarum voluptatum."

[58] *s.* 94A.2: "lucra ponit."

[59] *en. Ps.* 103.4.6 (trans. Tweed et al. adapted); cf. *en. Ps.* 90.2.7.

[60] Cf. *s.* 150.4: "The bad man says, 'Unless I do something bad, I won't be happy.'"

[61] *en. Ps.* 143.5–6: "'Fac et tolle.' … 'Fac et tolle.'…"

[62] As a reminder, the full text of *conf.* 8.11.26–7 is in Appendix I.

[63] When a scriptural text says that one character issued a command to another (e.g., "Curse God and die!" (Job 2:9)), Augustine glosses it by saying that the character "suggested" a course of action (*en. Ps.* 97.6, *en. Ps.* 103.4.7, *s.* 343.10). When a character makes a statement, Augustine

Moreover, he uses *monere* and *suggerere* interchangeably,[64] *monere* being for him (as for Seneca)[65] associated with the issuing of commands.[66]

Observe that this account of the *suggestio* fits quite nicely with, and helps to fill out the details of, Augustine's account of motivation in *On Free Choice* 3.25.74–75. There, Augustine says that the impulse to do an action cannot be elicited unless there is a preceding impression (*visum*) that elicits it; and he repeatedly uses the term *suggestio* for this impression, indicating that it has imperatival content.[67]

The question I raised earlier in connection with Stoicism,[68] namely, how within the same motivating impression an assertible that an object will contribute to one's well-being is related to the imperative sayable, is not spelled out clearly in Augustine's texts, just as it was not in the Stoic sources. Nevertheless, there is an indication of what Augustine may have thought (or would have thought, had someone posed the question to him). He alludes to a distinction between wistfully thinking that it would be nice to get an object, and actually experiencing a preconsensual mental imperative to get it. The difference apparently lies in one's assessment of the feasibility of the action whereby it could be attained. If the mind notices that the action is practically impossible, one does not experience a *suggestio* in which an imperative subsists, but instead a wistful optative: "'Oh if only I could get to that woman! But I can't, she's carefully guarded, she has a watchful husband, I haven't got an accomplice. If I took the risk I'd be caught.'"[69] In contrast, it seems, if one sees that the desired action is a live option, one thinks that the action is fitting and the imperative follows as an inference. ("She is available; it is fitting for me to go to her; so, go to her.") This interpretation is confirmed by the *Confessions*; for Augustine there compares his dueling suggestions for continent and incontinent actions with someone who is hesitating about whether to "steal from another person's house *if occasion offers*, or … to commit adultery *if* at the same time *the chance is available*."[70]

alters the quoted text to make it an imperative to perform an action, and says that this was a "suggestion" (re the serpent to Eve in the garden, *en. Ps.* 70.2.6)). Similarly, "Praise the Lord, oh my soul" (Ps. 145) Augustine says is an instance of *suggerere* (*en. Ps.* 145.3), and the devil tempting Christ: "Command these stones to become bread" is a *suggestio* (*en. Ps.* 8.13). See also *s.* 335D.3, where one's neighbors "suggest" the use of amulets: "Do it!" and *s.* 16B.1, where the commands of God in scripture ("Do not steal") are said to be God suggesting (*suggerere*).

[64] *en. Ps.* 48.1.9; cf. *en. Ps.* 91.3, where the *monitiones* of God (presumably the ten commandments) have as their contrary the *suggestiones* of the devil.

[65] See notes in Section 2 this chapter.

[66] E.g., *en. Ps.* 44.33, *en. Ps.* 48.1.9.

[67] The imperatival content is alluded to by his use of the terms *praeceptum* and *suggerere*; see notes in Sections 2 and 3a this chapter.

[68] Section 1 this chapter.

[69] *s.* 45.9.

[70] *conf.* 8.10.24 ("si subest occasio … si facultas aperitur"), emphasis added.

To conclude, it is clear that the descriptions of motivation found in the *On Continence*, the sermons, and the *On Free Choice* contain some of the hallmark features of the Stoic hormetic impression as we understand it today from our Greek sources, and that the *Confessions* passage also has these characteristics.

2.3b. Motivating Impressions without "Suggestio"

This conclusion is only reinforced when we move away from the technical term "suggestion," and consider additional descriptions of motivation in the sermons. Such texts describe temptation as speech of the rational soul (*animus*) which is "whispered" or "murmured" in the imperative mood. On one occasion, for instance, we are offered an analysis of the classical scenario in which a person wants to drink but knows she should not.[71] The motivation to drink is "silent discourse" (*sermocinatio tacita*) occurring prior to consent, wherein an intentional object is viewed as possessing the adjective "pleasing," and the mind experiences an imperative:

> The fever tells you, 'Drink cool drinks.' … Silent speech is being addressed to you, it presses the dryness in your throat, [the idea of] a cool drink delights you … Don't yield to it.[72]

We are told that this applies more generally to other cases of motivation.[73]

Similarly, we hear that when desire to commit adultery has sprung up in the heart, one may either consent or not. The lust speaks interiorly, using the jussive subjunctive: "Lust has raised her head … she will say, 'Let's do it.'"[74] The same idea appears in other sermons, where dispositions of concupiscence and avarice are said to interiorly "demand" or "order" one to do something.[75] Among Augustine's other favorite examples is the case of martyrs, who, he supposes, must have experienced some motivation to deny their religion in order to save their lives. On one occasion, he invites his audience to place themselves in the shoes of the persecuted and imagine their first reaction, prior to consent: "Your soul, perhaps, is saying to you, 'Beg him not to strike!'"[76] And

[71] See, e.g., Plato, *Rep*. 439a–c.

[72] *s.* 229E.3: "Febris dicit: 'bibe frigida'… sermocinatio tacita tibi loquitur, ingerit faucibus siccitatem, facit frigida delectationem … Noli illi cedere." See further in the paragraph for *cedere* as *consentire*. Trans. Hill adapted.

[73] Augustine develops this scenario into an analogy for temptations generally. A person with a proclivity to be attracted to wrong actions because of his past habitual sins is said to have a "fever." God, or the eternal law, is represented by a doctor, and an evil act is one which goes against "the doctor's orders." Cf. *s.* 9.10 wherein the dispositions avarice, luxury (cf. Persius), and hatred are said to be fevers, and *en. Ps.* 63.9 and *s.* 88.7 on fever and the physician.

[74] *s.* 335J.2–3. "Surrexit concupiscentia … Dicet illa: 'Faciamus.'"

[75] "Stimulat, instat, exigit, ut mali aliquid facias" (*s.* 77A.3). Cf. *en. Ps.* 57.2, where prior to judgment (*iudicium*), "aliud iubet avaritia."

[76] *s.* 161.6: "Anima tua forte dicit, 'Roga illum, ne feriat.'" trans. Hill adapted.

in a sermon preached in 397, concurrently with the writing of the *Confessions*, the martyr's soul "whispers interiorly" (*anima susurrat intrinsecus*), murmuring (*anima murmurabat*) imperatives and an assertible: "'Deny him; stay alive; you can repent afterward'… That's the soul … You, soul, were murmuring, 'Deny him.'"[77]

2.3c. Augustine's Unusual Sophistication among Latin Christian Writers

What we have seen thus far makes it clear that although Augustine's notion of *suggestio* is in some respects like that of the Latin Christian authors of the third and fourth centuries mentioned in 2.3a, he is distinctive for the greater epistemological sophistication with which he uses it. His own usage, which clearly refers to an impression motivating one toward an action – whether the action is morally good or bad – is closest to what we find in Origen as translated by Rufinus.[78] This is in contrast to Jerome, Ambrose, and the *Life of Antony*, where *suggestio* is a way of referring to temptation, but has no clear epistemological status or description. However, Augustine's epistemological subtlety surpasses even that of Origen-Rufinus: he provides sentential content for suggestions,[79] and Rufinus sometimes makes mistakes in philosophical terminology that Augustine himself does not make.[80] Moreover, whereas Origen, like Jerome and Athanasius, is largely concerned with suggestions occurring by the agency of demons, angels, or God, [81] Augustine is interested

[77] *s.* 13D(= 159A).12. Trans. Hill adapted. "… 'Nega, vive: ages postea paenitentiam'… Anima est … Tu autem, anima, murmurabas: 'Nega illum.'"

[78] See Section 3a this chapter.

[79] The *suggestiones* in Origen-Rufinus *prin.*, in the *vit. Ant.* and in Jerome lack sentential content, though they do sometimes say it is "thoughts" (*cogitationes*) that are being proposed. The *vit. Ant.* also says that objects such as "property," "the pleasure of food," etc. are "suggested" or "sent in" to the mind prior to consent. See *vit. Ant.* 5 and *prin.* 3.2.4, 3.3.4, 3.3.6. Origen-Rufinus *prin.* 3.2.4 mentions Zech. 1:14 (LXX), "And the angel who was speaking in me (*loquebatur in me*) replied," as evidence for the claim that angels can suggest thoughts to humans, but does not develop any account of the "speaking" or tie it to impressions (*visa/phantasiai*).

[80] E.g., Rufinus makes "a certain will or incitement" stand in for *phantasia hormēn prokaloumenē*: "fantasia, id est voluntas quaedam vel incitamentum." Augustine, on the other hand, never makes so basic an error as to use impression (*visum*) and will (*voluntas*) as synonyms (so, e.g., *Simpl.* 1.2.21 calls a motivating impression "the type of impression by which will may be moved" (*tale visum quo voluntas moveatur*); for further discussion of this text, see Ch. 7.3a and Ch. 7.3d).

[81] The *vit. Ant.* uses *suggerere* exclusively for the promptings of the devil (Section 5); Origen-Rufinus takes pains to assert that not all temptations come from demons (some come from the body, *prin.* 3.2.1–3.2.2), but devotes the bulk of his attention to accounts of suggestions by good and bad angels or by God (*prin.* 3.2.4, 3.3.4, 3.3.6). Cf. Origen-Rufinus, *In Leviticum Homiliae* 12.7, 16.6, *In Exodum Homiliae* 1.5. Jerome uses the term mainly for cases of demonic temptation or to describe inspiration by the Holy Spirit; in addition to the

primarily in suggestions that occur as natural epistemological items.[82] Even in the minority of cases wherein he attributes them to the agency of demons, the suggestion is not merely the "casting in" of a thought from outside, but is brought about in conjunction with one's foregoing disposition; it is oneself who cognizes or formulates the act as attractive.[83] And although he will say that God sometimes "inspires" a person to be motivated,[84] he thinks that in such cases the person is being given an epistemological item, the motivating impression. (It is analogous to a miracle in which God makes water flow from a rock:[85] in such a case, it is *water*, the natural substance, that is flowing, despite its supernatural origin.)

These facts indicate that philosophical discussions of epistemology, rather than specifically Christian tenets and contexts, lie at the root of Augustine's account of suggestions. He assimilated the Stoic epistemology on its own terms before moving beyond the Stoics to expand the number of possible origins for such impressions to include (in the minority of cases) God or demons.

2.4. RETURN TO *CONFESSIONS* 8.11.26–27: SUMMARY OF STOIC ELEMENTS

Returning now to a detailed look at our paragraphs from the *Confessions*, let us recap our findings by first recalling the context. Clearly it is about action: incontinent versus continent actions.[86] While Augustine had long ago come to believe that celibacy ("continence"[87]) was something in theory appropriate for a philosopher,[88] he saw it as incompatible with his personal well-being. He had seen the continent state as *laboriosus*, had imagined that in it he would be *miser*, and had conceived of this kind of life as a *poena*.[89] However, after he

texts cited in Section 3a this chapter, see *Comm. in Danielem* 4.13, *Comm. in Proph. Jonam* 1, *ep.* 53.3, *Comm. in Proph. Sophoniam* 2, *Comm. in Proph. Malachiam* 1, *Comm. in ep. ad Ephesios* 3.5, *Comm. in ep. ad Titum* 1.1, *Tract. in Ps. 100* (where the *submissiones* which the devil "suggests" are *cogitationes*). And see especially the similarity between Jerome's *Vita Sancti Hilarionis* 5–8 and the *vit. Ant.* passages cited earlier.

[82] Of the thirty-three Augustinian references to *suggestiones* used for this study, twenty-two are naturally occurring *suggestiones,* and eleven demonic ones. The examples cited in the previous section are for the most part naturally occurring; but for *suggestiones* coming from the devil, see *en. Ps.* 24.3, *en. Ps.* 48.1.6, *en. Ps.* 70.2.6, *en. Ps.* 90.2.6–7, *en. Ps.* 103.4.6, *en. Ps.* 127.16, *s.* 4.39, *s.* 32.11, *s.* 94A.2.

[83] He insists that the devil can only effectively "suggest" to someone's preexisting disposition (see *en. Ps.* 143.5–6; *s.* 32.11).

[84] This is the subject of Ch. 7.

[85] For this comparison, see *en. Ps.* 113.1.12.

[86] *conf.* 8.11.26–7 with *conf.* 8.1.1–2; cf. 6.15.25, 7.16.22.

[87] That continence means celibacy here, see note in Ch. 1.1.

[88] *conf.* 6.14.24–25. Cf. Carey (2008b) 173.

[89] *conf.* 6.12.22; "putabam enim me miserum fore nimis" (*conf.* 6.11.20); and of Ambrose: "caelibatus tantum eius mihi laboriosus videbatur" (*conf.* 6.3.3).

hears from Ponticianus stories about people who decided to live lives of total continence, the virtue appears attractive; and this is the point of paragraph 27.

Notice that what Augustine says he sees in paragraph 27 are the *qualities* that he now recognizes continence to have: *dignitas*, *honestas*, in contrast to the previous negative adjectives. Now *honestum* is the Ciceronian word used to render the Greek *to kalon* in its philosophical sense of the beauty of moral virtue. Thus it corresponds to one of the qualities which the Stoics thought had motivating power. *Dignitas* is similar in sense: Cicero sometimes uses *dignitas* as a synonym for *honestum,* and Augustine links the two elsewhere in his corpus.[90] Continence, of course, is as if speaking. There are four imperatives in addition to three interrogatives[91] and four assertibles. Continence "exhorts" him to come forward – the term *hortatoria* is reminiscent of Seneca's *adhortatio* – and clearly this "coming forward" means to enter into a lifestyle characterized by the omission of one set of actions, and the performance of a different set. It is also clear, from Continence's promises that he will be safe, that continence is appearing as something which will make him happy, that is, contribute to his well-being, in contrast to the earlier adjective *miser*. In short, this seems to have all the essential elements of a Stoic hormetic impression. The point of the paragraph is that the virtue of continence was for the first time seen by him as hormetic rather than aphormetic.

The personifications of the "frivolities and vanities" in paragraph 26 and the end of 27 have most of these same elements, if not all. The "this and that" which he perceives are the actions he has been accustomed to doing. The Stoics thought that impressions could arise from the memory as well as from direct sensory experience, and Augustine shows that he agrees with them about this elsewhere in his corpus;[92] this present case is an example. Augustine the author in retrospect pronounces the acts dirty (*dedecora*), but in this moment being described, Augustine the character in the story is seeing them as necessary for his well-being.[93] The term *suggerere* occurs three times, letting us know that these are indeed action-inducing impressions. The metaphor of interior "whispering" or "murmuring," also used three times, makes it clear that there is sentential content that has not yet received assent. The only thing lacking is a sayable in the imperative mood – unless it is right to think that this is implied by the term *suggerere* itself.

Thus, in *Confessions* 8.26–27, the appearance, suggesting, whispering, murmuring, and quasi-speech of imperatives and other sentences is one instance

[90] Cicero *inv.* 2.55.166 and the specialized sense of *dignitas* as authority, for which good moral character is also implied (*honesta auctoritas*) (*inv.* 2.55.166). Cf. Augustine's *c. Iul.* 4.14.68 on the conjunction of an excellent state of being (*dignitas*) with an honorable state (*honestas*), i.e., a virtuous state (the virtue of temperance (*modus*) is under discussion).

[91] Cf. Ch. 1.4 on the dubitative sense.

[92] See *trin.* 11.6, 11.12, 11.14, and imagination based on memory, *trin.* 9.10, 11.17; *s. dom. m.* 1.12.34; *lib. arb.* 3.25.75.

[93] Cf. Section 3a this chapter.

of a widely used account of motivation, and this account was developed from Stoic epistemology. Augustine (the author) is describing how Augustine (the character in the story) was having successive, contradictory impressions about what kind of action would make him happy. He is interpreting himself to himself via this Stoic motivational model.

Given these findings, we can speak a bit less tentatively about the relative importance of various proximate sources for Augustine. Persius is the only one among the suggested literary precedents for *Confessions* 8.11.26–27 who describes *imperative* sentences "heard" interiorly. But as we have already observed, Persius gives us the sayables without mentioning the accompanying impression, whereas Augustine provides this epistemological context by alluding to impressions (*visa*) in poetic terms. Seneca also describes motivation as interior self-command, but without explicitly making reference to perception. And given that Augustine's use of *suggestio* is more philosophically sophisticated than that of the other Christian authors he knew, those texts could not have been his most formative sources. The lost portion of Cicero's *Academica* is not likely either.[94] The evidence suggests that Augustine knew a doxography of Stoic action theory. This was probably in the lost part of Cicero's *On Fate*, as already mentioned in 2.2, but perhaps in some other nonextant Latin summary of Stoic ethics.

2.5. A NOTE ON THE AUGUSTINIAN "DIVIDED SELF"

Opening up for us now is a window offering a better view on the Augustinian "divided self" than has been available before.[95] For Augustine's description of these two impressions (pro and contra continent actions) is framed by a

[94] The topic of *ac.* is not human action, so there is little reason to think that text missing from the *Academica* would have been devoted to a detailed account of motivation. The lost portion of Cicero's *Academica* is the first book of the first edition ("*Catulus*" = close in philosophical content to books 1–2 of the second edition, of which half of book 1 survives). Augustine probably had this second version; see Glucker (1978) 86 n. 236 and (1995) 116 n. 4. See also Brittain (2006) xvii–xviii, Griffin (1997) 15, 26, Burnyeat (1997) 277–279.

[95] The secondary approaches and opinions are manifold. The account I give here has some similarities with Müller (2009) 364–366 and MacDonald (2004) 83. Some other examples: Rist (1994) 185 compares and contrasts Augustinian and Aristotelian acrasia in terms of first- and second-order desires; Saarinen thinks Augustine relies upon Platonic and neo-Platonic divisions of soul to explain acrasia ([1994] 28–29); Chappell discusses Augustinian "bad will" and various versions of acrasia in Aristotle, using distinctions and interpretative questions inspired by contemporary analytic philosophy ([1995] 112ff., 178–187); Thero asserts both that Augustine is a voluntarist in contrast to an intellectualist, and that he thinks acrasia is caused by error of the mind ([2006] 54); Pang-White speaks of an initial assent of the intellect or the will, and a following choice by the will ([2003] 152–154). Joyce asserts that Augustine had something close to the Platonic view of acrasia in which "the human soul was divided into faculties, one of which was designated 'the will.' The strong distinction between the will and the rational faculty meant that acrasia, though needling, was not an overwhelming problem" ([1995] 316). Byers (2007) I would characterize as mostly correct, but for a better treatment of "parts of the *animus*," see Ch. 4.5.

discussion of how he wishes he could come to a decision, but is unable to do so.[96] This is one of the better-known depictions of acrasia in the history of the west.

Everything we have just seen indicates that the indecision is not a conflict between rationality and noncognitive faculties of the soul.[97] Instead of a conflict between the faculty of reason and the generative power's raw physical craving for sex, Augustine describes a kind of cognitive dissonance, his experience of contradictory impressions. At that moment he was no longer sure that the actions he had until then considered necessary for his well-being actually were so;[98] but neither was he sure that his happiness lay in adopting a new lifestyle, as is evident from the fact that he does not immediately consent to the hormetic impression of continence. To borrow Henry James' distinction between three kinds of celibates – those by nature, those by option, those by essence[99] – Augustine was the second type, and he is here describing his experience of "seeing" both options (continent and incontinent) as choice-worthy. When he says that in this condition "the rational soul commands itself to will … and yet it does not do it,"[100] he means that the person is experiencing in his discursive reason (*animus*) a motivating impression, with its hallmark sayable the imperative, but that because there is not yet consent, there is no will/impulse to undertake an act.

He stresses that he has these conflicting motivating impressions because he has contradictory dispositions (new and old).[101] His "parts of will" are therefore partial commitments to various lifestyles, each of which is organized around some perceived highest good. The sermons again are complementary; they give the same picture of acrasia and have elements in common with Persius.[102]

[96] *deliberatio, pendere: conf.* 8.8.19, 8.10.23, 8.10.24, 8.11.27.

[97] We might expect that it would be, given that Augustine had read Plato's *Timaeus*, perhaps in the translation by Cicero. In that kind of a view, the "parts" of the soul at war in acrasia are metaphysical categories: the soul contains reason, spiritedness, and appetite, which are, respectively, its capacity to think, to experience desire for victory and anger, and to feel bodily desires for pleasure. Here each faculty is limited to only one kind of activity, so neither spirit nor appetite can think, etc.; and each makes use of a specific organ or organ system, with the functionally less sophisticated faculties making use of organs located below the head: *Tim.* 73d, 70a–e, 86d–87a, 90a, 91e. Elimination of moral conflict depends upon the reduced use of the lower organs, resulting in a taming of the associated soul-faculty (*Tim.* 86c–d, 89a, 90b). If we read the *Timaeus*' description of the nature of the human soul onto the descriptions of moral tripartition in books four and nine of the *Republic* (but for cautions about the advisability of doing so, see Rist 1992), this is Plato's understanding of moral conflict. A version of this kind of account is also present in Aristotle *NE* 1.7, 1098a3–7, 1.12, 1102a25–b35, 7.3, 1147a35.

[98] Thus he says that he was listening to them with much less than half of his attention, *conf.* 8.11.26, and that they were putting their questions half-heartedly, 8.11.27.

[99] James (1990) 15.

[100] *conf.* 8.9.21. Trans. Chadwick adapted.

[101] *conf.* 8.5.10, 8.9.21.

[102] While the *language* Augustine uses can sometimes sound like a reference to a *Timaeus*-type model, the meaning or interpretation he gives of his own terminology has more in common

So Augustine is in line with the kind of view found in Seneca's letters and moral treatises, where the term "part" of the mind is sometimes used to refer to a moral disposition;[103] insofar as there is "weakness of will" in Stoicism,[104] it is on this model of conflicting impressions and dispositions.[105] Striking also are Augustine's similarities to Origen's Stoic-style description of the weak-willed person in *On Principles* 3.4.3–4. Here Origen, like Augustine in *Confessions* 8, is arguing against the Manichean account of weakness of will.[106] Indeed, by the time Augustine writes the *Confessions*, he has apparently come to regard

with Stoicism because he speaks of *suggestiones* that carry sentential content. So in *en. Ps.* 143.5, he speaks of a conflict between "you" and "the carnal part within you," but explains this "carnal part" as one of your moral dispositions (namely, avarice, which is reminiscent of Persius' account of acrasia in the fifth *Satire*). Both you and your disposition experience "suggestions" that speak interiorly in the imperative mood; and this is what it means for "you to be divided against yourself." The "carnal part" is therefore not a noncognitive part. Again, he describes the soul "rebelling against itself," and being divided *ex parte, ex parte*: but he explains the part to be resisted as envy that endures over a period of time (therefore a disposition, or as he calls it, a "fever") that "suggests" courses of action (*en. Ps.* 63.9). In another sermon, the presumably habitual anger (*ira*) which you have for your enemy "shouts at you and contradicts you," that is, contradicts what "you" are intending to say interiorly (*s.* 315.9–10). Manifestly, avarice, envy, and anger are here not being described as functions of nonrational parts of the soul.

[103] So Seneca, *ep.* 113.15, *iustitia pars est animi*.

[104] Inwood (1985) 5 and LS 321 say that there is no such thing as a divided self in Stoic psychology; but they are referring to a model in which the conflict is between the power of reason and noncognitive faculties. See Boeri on Sorabji and Gosling, regarding oscillation between judgments or impressions ([2005], 396, 406) and Joyce (1995) 333.

[105] *tranq.* 1.4–17 recounts examples of acrasia, which Seneca calls "fluctuation" (*fluctuatio*) and "instability of good character/intention" (*bonae mentis infirmitas*). Various dispositions (frugality, luxuriousness, etc.) are in conflict. As in Augustine's *Confessions* and sermons, these opposing aspirations are sometimes described as a speaking to oneself ("Placet: '…' "); but they do not constitute actual decisions, as is clear from the fact that Seneca says they are not dangerous, that is, have not received consent.

[106] *prin.* 3.4.4: "A conflict of thoughts (*cogitationum*) arises in our heart and certain representations [of actions] are suggested to us (*verisimilitudines suggeruntur*) which incline us now this way and now that … this is found to be the case with all men, whenever a doubtful matter comes into consideration and they look ahead and deliberate which is the better or more useful choice to make. It is in no way surprising, therefore, that if two representations occur to a man in turn and suggest contrary modes of action they should drag the mind (*animus*) in different directions.… so long as it is uncertain what is the true and useful course, the mind is dragged in different ways." Trans. Butterworth (1973) adapted. While the phraseology of the mind being "dragged" is reminiscent of Plato (*rep*. 439a–b; cf. *Phaedrus* 247b), Origen has already rejected the theory of tripartition as an explanatory account, saying that there is no evidence for it in the scriptures. Moreover, in contrast to the account he gives here, which is indebted to Stoicism when he speaks of diachronic representations, Plato's account of acrasia in *rep*. (436b, 439b) explicitly depends upon the thesis that the soul is *simultaneously* dragged in contradictory directions. For the Manichean context, see *prin.* 3.4.2; so both Origen and Augustine speak of the acratic person being one self, yet fighting against himself (Origen-Rufinus *prin*. 4.3.3: *a semet ipso discordans*; Augustine *conf.* 8.11.27: *ista controversia non nisi de me ipso adversus me ipsum*).

the cognitive dissonance model of acrasia as the *only* viable philosophical alternative to the problem of moral identity which dogs the Manichean theory.[107] Moreover, given his sources, it seems likely that Augustine would have regarded the "warring thoughts" model of acrasia as common to diverse philosophical schools, and therefore as the time-tested, correct account. The Epicureans per Cicero weigh in on the side of it, speaking of conflicting and incompatible counsels (*consilia*).[108] Perhaps more importantly, the Platonic model as it is presented in Cicero, who was probably a source for Augustine's knowledge of the *Timaeus* and some paraphrases of the *Republic*, suggests that the "inferior part" of the soul can be reasoned with and can understand interior speech, a rational operation.[109] (Arguably the model of acrasia is ambiguous in Plato himself.)[110]

We will have more to say about Augustine's understanding of Platonic "parts" of the soul in particular, and its relation to his understanding of Plotinus, in Chapter 4. For it is in the context of preliminary passions that Augustine alludes to what he calls "Platonic" soul "parts."

[107] He tells us in *conf.* 8 that he thinks the philosophical benefit of his warring impressions model is its ruling out of the Manichean view that one's 'bad side' is not really oneself, but a foreign substance or second soul coexisting with the true self. This account of acrasia which we are seeing in the *Confessions* and sermons marks a shift from his earlier position on how to refute the Manichean position on weakness of will (*duab. an.* 13.19 opts instead for a distinction between "exterior" and "interior" soul parts, where one part accesses the sensible and wants pleasure, and the other, intelligence, accesses the intelligible and wants the *honestum*). On different chronological stages in Augustine's understanding of "soul parts," see further Ch. 4.5.

The *Timaeus*, though obviously different from the Manichean account in a number of respects, allows that bodily conditions can penetrate into the lower parts of the soul and thereby make a person involuntarily morally base (87a–b).

[108] *fin.* 1.18.58.

[109] Where Cicero speaks of a soul-part "devoid of reason" *rationis expers*, his actual examples of what it means for reason to "enslave" this part use a model of interior persuasion (*sermo intimus*), suggesting that the inferior part can be reasoned with and can understand interior speech, a rational operation (So *Tusc.* 2.21.47–22.51). To Augustine reading Cicero, it probably would have seemed that the Platonic model of acrasia could be interpreted as a conflict between right reason, and dispositions which lack reason in the normative though not the descriptive sense. The notion that a warring soul would be characterized by conflicting interior thoughts that are speechlike, which Augustine saw in Persius and Seneca, would seem to be compatible with this Platonism.

O'Daly (1987) 12 n. 37 was right to be skeptical of Hagendahl's hypothesis that Augustine relied on *Tusc.* 1.20 for his acquaintance with the Platonic tripartition of the *Republic* (O'Daly, however, does not suggest an alternative source text). In fact, *Tusc.* 2.20.47–22.51 is more relevant.

[110] In *Republic* book four, the spirited faction of the soul can concur with reason when reason whispers "You must not"; and the possibility is held out that both spirit and appetite can have the belief (*doxa*) that they should listen to reason (*rep.* 442d; 440b, e). This has provoked literature attributing reason to the appetitive power; a summary list of it is in Gerson (2008) 45 n. 10. Cf. the discussion in Gill (2006) 306–308 and Carone (2005) 368ff., and Rist's (1992) cautions against reading the *Timaeus* onto the *Republic*.

2.6. CONSENT AND REFUSAL OF CONSENT

On the Stoic view, assent is given to the propositional content of the impression (the sayables). We saw that in the *On Continence* Augustine describes the decision to act, the consent to a motivating impression, metaphorically as "speaking" or "pronouncing" interiorly, whereas interior "whispering" or "murmuring" is propositional content which one has not yet judged to be true.[111] Now the rhetorical texts allow us to say more about this distinction.

From one sermon, it looks as though Augustine thinks that consent is an effective interior speaking of an imperative. When someone is presented with two options for action, the soul or mind consults (*interrogare*) itself and then chooses (*eligere*), which choice is a response to itself (*respondere tibi anima tua*) that is a speaking to itself (*tibi dicere anima tua*) in the imperative:

> If anyone were to say to you, 'Either give me what you're hoarding in the ground [i.e. some treasure], or right now I'll remove your eyes' … ask yourself; your soul will answer you for your body: 'Give it all away, preserve my windows [eyes].' That's what your soul says to you: 'I've got two windows in your face, through them I can see this light; give the gold away, lest my windows be blocked up.' So you give everything away for your eyes.[112]

Given Augustine's account of motivation, which we have seen earlier, we infer the following. The perceiver who hears the offer of saving his eyes at the expense of his treasure must cognize that auditory experience interiorly. Such cognition, assuming the person had even a slight attraction to saving his treasure, would actually require two suggestions, each carrying its own imperatival content ("Save my eyes!" and "Save my treasure!"). Consent to one and refusal of consent to the other has as its content an imperative that affirms or repeats the suggestion to save the eyes, and contradicts the suggestion to save the treasure; that is represented by Augustine here as, "give the gold away, lest my windows be blocked up."

Other sermons clearly use this model. When lust speaks interiorly, using the jussive subjunctive ("Let's do it"), Augustine advises: "You must fight back by contradiction.… You must answer, 'Let's *not* do it.'"[113] We are told that the person who responds in this way does not consent and has therefore not been

[111] Section 3a this chapter.

[112] *s.* 265C.1. For the term *eligere* to describe this act, see 265C.2. Trans. Hill adapted. Cf. *s.* 301A.5: "Here comes some threat to the Faith; you're told, 'If you persist in it, I will take away everything you have.' I interrogate your soul. If you say in your soul (*in animo tuo*), 'Let him take what I have (*Tollat quod habeo*); I'm not giving up the Faith,' you are both holding on to something [sc. the Faith], and renouncing something [your possessions]." Trans. Hill adapted.

[113] *s.* 335J.3. "Pugna tu contradictione.… Responde tu: 'Non faciamus.'" Trans. Hill adapted, emphasis added.

defeated by lust.[114] Elsewhere he echoes this: to refuse consent is to "answer back" (*respondere*) to suggestions,[115] accomplished by interior use of the jussive, in refutation of the preceding suggestion.[116]

Rhetorical texts like these again serve as a hermeneutical key for the *Confessions*. When Augustine describes how "the shadows of dubitation dispersed" in paragraph 29 of *Confessions* book eight, it is clear that he is saying he gave consent to the impression of continence; for he says that he resolved (*placitum, propositum*) to live a continent life thenceforward. This consent has imperatival sentential content, which commands him to take on the virtue of continence, and contradicts the suggestion of incontinent acts: "make no provision for the flesh in its lusts."[117] Notice the repetition of the same sentential content in the impression and in the act of assent – though whispered and doubted in the case of the impression, but held as true and resolved upon in consent – which is precisely what we would expect if Augustine were using a Stoic model in which consent is given to the sayable subsisting in an impression. The impression ("appearance") of continence in paragraph 27 has the quasi-speech, "Stop your ears to your impure members on earth and mortify them";[118] the consent to continence in paragraph 29 is constituted by his interiorly saying, "make no provision for the flesh in its lusts."[119] Similarly, the impression of incontinence in paragraph 26 is a *suggestio* of incontinent acts, saying that his happiness requires that he continue doing them: "Are you getting rid of us? From this moment, we shall never be with you again, not forever and ever; from this moment this and that are forbidden to you now and forever"; the refusal of consent to this impression in paragraph 29 is constituted by the sentence, "[Let us walk] not in eroticism and indecencies."[120]

We are left with the question of what the difference would be between thinking an imperative in an impression, and thinking an imperative as consent. The "self-consultation" that Augustine locates in between the two is presumably an important part of the answer to this question. We are connecting the dots here because Augustine is not explicit about this, but it seems that the mind second-guesses the eudaimonistic claim made by the impression. Given that in texts where Augustine distinguishes impressions from consent, he often marks

[114] Ibid. Cf. *s.* 154.12: "Lust rebels, and you don't consent. You take a fancy to another man's wife, but you don't give your approval … you pronounce against the sententential content [of the *suggestio*] (*profers aduersus eam sententiam*)… 'I don't want to,' you say, 'I won't do it.'"

[115] *en. Ps.* 99.11.

[116] *en. Ps.* 103.4.6, e.g.: "What is 'the head of the serpent'? [It is] the first suggestion of sin … 'Let the world's wealth perish (*pereat*), lest it be the loss of my soul.' In saying this (*haec dicens*), you have watched for the head of the serpent, and you have trampled on it'" (glossing Genesis 3:15). Trans. Tweed et al. adapted.

[117] Using Rom. 13:14.

[118] Using Col. 3:5.

[119] Using Rom. 13:14.

[120] Using Rom. 13:13.

out the difference as one of ratiocination (*animus*) for impressions *versus* an evaluative activity of higher reason (*mens*) for consent, and given that he thinks it is proper to *mens* to rank goods hierarchically (ranking both their ontological status and their relation to the normative goal of life),[121] it seems that the transition from impression to consent would involve the mind's comparison of the relative value of the goods at stake in performing or not performing the action. The proposed act may require a choice between a temporal and a moral/eternal good in the sense that it is an intrinsically immoral act,[122] such as lying in order to save one's life. Or it will require a choice between temporal goods.[123] Once the evaluative reason judges that the goods that the impression "sets out" as being attainable by the action will in fact contribute to one's happiness, then one repeats the imperative without any mental reservation. This is consent to the motivating impression.

2.7. WHAT HAS LOVE TO DO WITH *LEKTA*? A COHERENT SYNTHESIS OF STOICISM, NEO-PLATONISM, AND CHRISTIANITY

Some questions still remain about *Confessions* 8.11.27, however. Granted that Persius, when under the influence of Stoicism, is the only precedent who personifies virtue and vice with the same details of interior speech that we find in Augustine, the reader is still struck by certain features that are not found in Persius (nor in the other literary precedents mentioned earlier).[124] The personification in Augustine's text depicts continence as attractive but pure, alluring and challenging him to come, with arms open to embrace him, fertile; and the "appearance" is associated with mental pleasure (continence is *blandiens*, *hilaris*, and a "mother of joys"). Here the eros-theory of the *Symposium* comes to mind. Similarly, when Augustine says that he was seeing continence "in" the examples of chaste people who had been described to him by Ponticianus, Plato's claim that we love goodness and beauty "in" particulars as a means to loving the standard for these, the *kalon* itself, seems operative. Because the *kalon* is also one of the objects of choice in the Stoic account of motivation, we have here a point of overlap between the Stoic and Platonic threads in Augustine's account. Yet distinctively Platonic content is provided by Augustine's references to the aesthetic appeal of moral purity.

Again, while the notion of a motivating impression and the syntactic forms Augustine attributes to his *suggestiones* are inspired by Stoicism,

[121] See e.g., *civ.* 1.32 on *praeponere*, *trin.* 15.4.6, *civ.* 1.22.

[122] Cf. *conf.* 3.8.15.

[123] Note that this would be accidentally a moral choice; Augustine seems to assume that all actions in the concrete circumstance are morally evaluable, because even intrinsically neutral acts such as driving a car are done either as instrumental for living a virtuous life, or for some other goal which is wrongly perceived as the highest good.

[124] See Ch. 1.1.

there is distinctively Christian *content* in the sayables of the suggestions in *Confessions* 8.11.26–27. For instance, the impression of continence contains the imperative, "Cast yourself on him … he will heal you," a reference to God.

It is not necessary to belabor either of these facts, because Augustine's Platonism and Christianity are not in question. However, brief attention should be paid to them. This analysis will permit us to consider the more important question of the philosophical viability and merits of the synthesis that Augustine forges from these three traditions.

2.7a. Eros and Motivation

The theme that action is caused by love runs through Plato's *Symposium* from Phaedrus' opening speech, and is articulated most completely by Socrates, who says that eros is of procreation and begetting children in the beautiful, the "children" being acts (*erga*).[125] The account of someone climbing a "ladder" of love objects – that recurs in Plotinus, presumably Augustine's proximate source for this material[126] – makes a distinction between purely epistemic perception, and motivating perception. The person at the bottom of the "ladder" – who loves corporeal objects and organizes his life around attaining them – is not ignorant that the ontologically superior objects *exist*, but he does not perceive them as *beautiful things that he lacks*. So the maturation process is a perceptual shift in which ontologically superior (more stable) things, and things having moral beauty,[127] come to be seen by the perceiver as necessary to his happiness.

That Augustine, too, considers love a fundamental ground of action is evident from the *City of God*, which has as its theme two societies characterized by two different ways of living, that is, acting, created by two loves (*amores*); and he explicitly asserts that love is a necessary condition and contributing cause of action in his sermons. So, "Love, and you do (*dilige*, *et facis*). To the extent that you love, to that extent you do; insofar as you will have done less, you love less."[128] Despite a lingering tendency in the popular mind to see in

[125] E.g., 178d, 179a–b183d, 191a–b, 197a, 211d, 216e.

[126] Though with some variation in the order of the "rungs": e.g., Enn. 1.6.1–2, 1.6.7, 1.6.9. *Pace* Nussbaum (2001) 531 n. 3, it is not a "vexed question" whether Augustine read Plotinus or not; he quotes from Plotinus by name at e.g., *civ*. 9.17 and also says that he has read Plotinus in *beat. vit.* 1.4 (of course, he read him in a Latin translation). Instead, there has been debate about how much Porphyry Augustine read in comparison to Plotinus.

[127] The ontologically superior things are souls, human institutions and laws, theoretical sciences, and the Form of Beauty itself.

[128] *s.* 19D(= 130A).5: "Dilige, et facis. In quantum diligis, in tantum facis; in quantum minus feceris, minus diligis." Trans. Hill adapted. Cf. *en. Ps.* 85.24 ("if our love (*amor*) grows cold, our action will grow cold"), *s.* 53.11: "Take charity away, and that's the end of your doing anything (*Tolle caritatem et perit quod agis*)," *en. Ps.* 49.15: "be the mind inflamed with love,

Augustine's terminology (*amor, dilectio, caritas*) loves of different natures, he thinks that all these loves are forms of desire for a perceived good; what differentiates them are the objects loved, not something intrinsic to the love itself.[129] Hence, he explicitly says that various terms for love can be used synonymously.[130] Though he often reserves *cupiditas* and *concupiscentia* for eros directed at something that is wrongly perceived as an end for the agent, and *caritas* for desire for God or for virtue,[131] the fact that this is not absolute – as when he speaks of the blameworthy desire for money as "charity for money" (*pecuniae caritas*)[132] – belies his philosophical position. Even God's merciful love for us, the hallmark of *agapē* as opposed to eros in Nygren's influential dichotomy, is treated as an instance of eros: God is enamored with the image of himself, pure beauty, in us.[133] Love of neighbor, wishing the good of the other, is similarly a case of being enamored with and trying to enhance the image of God in the other's soul.[134]

How does Augustine avoid philosophical redundancy when he (Platonically) claims that love is a source of action, but (Stoically) claims that a hormetic impression provokes action? He holds that love and the hormetic impression have different intentional objects: the former is directed at the things (substances or states of affairs) to be attained or brought about by action, the latter at the action itself. The motivating impression answers the question, "How is one motivated to do an action?" and love answers the question, "Why is one motivated to do an action?" Both elements are necessary, he thinks, to fully explain an action. Some of Augustine's examples of the sentential content of impressions cited earlier make this relation clear. We remember, for instance, that a suggestion to commit fraud says "Commit this fraud, and you will be

let the same love hurry off the limbs to its use." Cf. also *en. Ps.* 31. 2.5: "What is it in any of us that prompts action, if not some kind of *amor*?"

[129] At *trin.* 9.2.2, the definition of love (What is loving (*amare*) something except wanting to possess it in order to enjoy it?) matches that of the *div. qu.* #35, and both echo the Platonic definition of eros; cf. *trin.* 14.6.8. Again, *civ.* differentiates the two societies by the objects of their love (*amare*): God is the object loved by good people, while the earthly city craves or clings (*inhians*, *inhaerens* – note the erotic metaphor) to earthly pleasures as if they were the only ones (*civ.* 14.28, 15.15, 14.7). Cf. *en. Ps.* 121.1 on *amor immundus* vs. *amor sanctus* as love of perishable things vs. love of God. So, e.g., in *conf.* 4.8.13 friendship is understood as a species of the genus of desire for something to be gained in the interactions: either virtue, or knowledge, or mental or physical pleasure, or convenience (reminiscent of Aristotle's distinction between three kinds of friendships, corresponding to the three objects of desire); this is followed by a *Symposium*-like discussion of participation/gradation of objects to be loved (*conf.* 4.12.18).

[130] *civ.* 14.7. So in *s.* 53.11 *caritas* is glossed as strong desire, provoking action: "charity, by which we long, by which we struggle to attain, which kindles our hunger and gives us a raging thirst …" Cf. *desiderium* for *caritas* in *ep. Io. tr.* 4.6.2 and *en. Ps.* 38.6.

[131] Cf. *en. Ps.* 9.15.

[132] *conf.* 5.12.22.

[133] See *ep. Io. tr.* 9.9.2, 8.10.2–3, 9.3.2.

[134] *ep. Io. tr.* 8.5.1, 8.10.1–2, and passim.

rich"; but Augustine adds that it is a person who *loves riches* who is motivated to commit fraud.[135]

The Stoics recognized this distinction between things and actions: the practical adjectives (such as "pleasing," "healthful") are perceived qualities of objects or states of affairs, and it is these that, in conjunction with imperatives, stir motivation. But Augustine thinks that by grounding his account in eros theory, he is improving upon the Stoics' stipulation that the practical adjectives are practical because of *oikeiōsis,* a term by which the Stoics refer to a living thing's affinity for its own well-being, its predisposition to sustain and perfect itself.[136]

While Augustine knows and endorses the claim that we have a natural inclination toward self-preservation,[137] he says that in humans there is *added to this* the power of intellect, which can discern intelligible standards (*regulae*) of truth, justice, goodness, and beauty.[138] So he presumably thinks, like Plotinus, that the Stoic account of human happiness is inadequate because it lacks a robust account of a proper object for the intellect.[139] In the case of the well-being of the body, *oikeiōsis* entails an orientation toward outward things (food, etc.) which fill a lack in the human being.[140] However, in the case of the mind's well-being, there is no object the possession of which is itself satisfying for the mind.[141] Apart from this, Augustine obviously thought that there was an evidential problem for the Stoic theory: human beings learn from their experiences of disappointment that only by the intellectual possession of something

[135] So, e.g., *s.* 229S (sermon has no paragraph divisions): "If anyone desires money, he's moved by money, he wants to acquire it." ("Si quis desiderat pecuniam, movetur ad ipsam pecuniam, vult illam adquirere.")

[136] See e.g., Cicero *fin.* 3.6.20–7.23, *ac.* 2.8.24–25; cf. *fin.* 5.10.27, 5.11.30, 5.11.33, DL, 7.85ff. See also the discussion in Inwood (1985) 185ff. and Pembroke (1971) 130.

[137] So *conf.* 1.20.31.

[138] *en. Ps.* 99.5 on "a principle of unity, termed spirit or soul, present in all living things, urging them to the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain, and the preservation of their own soundness (*ad conservandam incolumitatem suam*)," stipulating that intellect is something additional. On the mind's power to discern and judge in accord with the *regulae*, see *civ.* 5.11, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 21.16, 22.24, 22.29; *lib. arb.* 2.12.34.

[139] Plotinus, 1.4.2.

[140] So, e.g., Cicero, *fin.* 5.9.24; DL, 8.86.

[141] Though the Stoics do not deny that human reason is partly speculative, the ultimate end of life is to act with right reason in the selection of what is natural and the performance of all befitting actions (DL, 7.88) and so speculative understanding is secondary in importance to the moral virtues (see, e.g., *fin.* 5.13.38; cf. discussion in Engberg-Pedersen [1990] 46). Plotinus and Augustine of course think that this activism follows from the Stoics' materialism: since all matter is corruptible and mutable, there can be no proper object of understanding in a materialist system. See also the discussion of problems concerning *how* virtue contributes to self-preservation in the Stoic model (Schofield [2003] 243 n. 24); cases where the exercise of a virtue (such as courage) requires one to be killed or commit suicide might seem to be difficult examples, given the ambiguity of Stoic accounts of the afterlife (on which see Frede [1999], 51; Rist [1969] 257–258).

which is good in every respect and cannot be lost because it is eternal, can they be satisfied.[142]

With regard to ethical motivation such as we see in *Confessions* 8.11.27, then, although Augustine agrees with the Stoics that for humans possession of the virtues is constitutive of well-being, he declines to reduce the virtues to mere qualities of the mind itself. A hormetic impression of continence is possible because continent actions conform to an intelligible, stable standard of continence, and the mind has an orientation toward this standard owing to its possession of "traces" of the eternal standards in its *memoria*, which enable it to recognize ethical qualities in particular actions. The moral qualities of actions are real, therefore, because they correspond to both the extramental (eternal) standard and to the innate preconceptions in the mind. The mind's predisposition to be filled, finally, by the contemplation of the standards themselves (that exist in God) is the specific difference of human nature, and in human ethical motivation takes on the role which *oikeiōsis* did for the Stoics. So, being motivated to perform an action because one thinks it is the noble thing to do ("for the sake of the *honestum/kalon*") – that is, an instance of ethical motivation – Augustine thinks is only possible if someone perceives (rightly or wrongly) some action as conforming to a stable criterion that transcends temporal customs and vicissitudes.

Even in cases of nonethical motivation, the mind's ability to recognize the *ontological* goodness of objects, which goodness is a *necessary – though not sufficient – condition* of their being *relationally* good for a human agent (good for me in these circumstances), depends upon its possession of the standards of natural goodness in the *memoria*.[143] So in a simple motivation "to eat food," or "to get warm," Stoic self-preservation is in play; but given that Augustine wants to say, unlike the Stoics, that these objects are (ontologically) good, the term eros could also be used in an extended sense: this is a desire for good things that complete oneself, considered as an animal. Hence, Augustine's old habits of sexual activity are described as his "old loves" – love of bodies and of the comforts of familiar companionship. For other nonethical motivations, such as the natural desire for "peace" that he describes at length in *City of God* book nineteen, there is a *Symposium*-like attraction for beauty (symmetry, proportionality, "the tranquility of order") in temporal arrangements of the sensible realm.

So it is a metaphysical backdrop, a theory of innate ideas, and an erotic longing for intelligibles as such[144] that Augustine adds to the Stoic perception theory.

[142] The entire *Confessions* is an apology for this position; cf. *civ.* 22.1. See also *s.* 156.7: "The Stoic … is quite mistaken; I mean it's simply untrue, it's absolutely incorrect that a person who has the enjoyment of the virtue of his soul is happy."

[143] The "standards of natural goodness" are the Forms of natural kinds, which exist in God's mind along with the Forms of the virtues.

[144] Contrast Conybeare's (2006) 141–144 dichotomy between "reason" and Neoplatonic intellectualism *versus* erotic metaphor in Augustine.

Because the Stoics' perception theory does not itself logically entail materialism (though they were in fact materialists), Augustine's use of a different metaphysical background does not compromise his appropriation of their epistemology. Nor does his importation of innate ideas and of eros – and eros is not a feeling, incidentally[145] – result in an incoherent eclecticism, given that he places these in the higher mind, rather than in the powers of impression and assent.

Plotinus' *Ennead* 5.3.3 is therefore similar in some ways to Augustine's account of perception. Plotinus here asserts that the terminus of sensory perception is the formulation of mental sentences in the discursive reason but that when such a sentence is about "goodness," the standard (*kanōn*) of goodness used in these sentences is provided by the higher intellect. Unlike Augustine, however, Plotinus does not use this account of propositional perception often, nor does he have a thematic distinction between motivating and merely epistemic impressions, nor does he distinguish between various syntactical forms of sayables in impressions (depending on what is being perceived and how) – whereas Augustine does do these things.

2.7b. Delight and Motivation

Returning to the tradition of Plato's *Symposium*, notice that Plato and Plotinus spoke of cheerfulness or gladness at the approach of the beloved – that is, anticipated delight at the thought of possessing the object loved.[146] Augustine adopted this idea. Love is a desire to possess something; this possession is necessarily enjoyable;[147] the thought of possessing/enjoying it gives anticipatory pleasure, also called "sweetness" (*suavitas*). Thus, in contrast to Seneca, according to whom ethical motivation can occur by the thought of sheer duty without any delight,[148] Augustine thinks that we have to see the action we choose as a means to some object the possession of which delights us.[149]

Unlike Platonism, however, Augustine posits an intermediary between the eros and the delight: you are aware that you cannot actually possess the object without taking some action, so the anticipated delight depends upon the sayables in the motivating impression. Hence, the higher mind (*mens*) perceives an object or state of affairs as falling under the description "good," discursive reason (*animus*) cognizes an action by which it may be attained, and delight is felt in an interior sense[150] as a result of these thoughts. To be suffering

[145] See Section 8 this chapter.

[146] The lover is said to be *hileōs … kai euphrainomenos* at *sym.* 206d; cf. *hēdonē* in *Ennead* 1.6.7.

[147] So, e.g., *div. qu.* #30.

[148] *ep.* 76.28–29.

[149] So in *s.* 159.3 he insists that it is axiomatic that whatever is loved gives delight: "nothing is loved except that which delights (*non enim amatur nisi quod delectat*)."

[150] See Ch. 3.5c.

cogitationes in a *suggestio* implies that one has been in the first place stimulated by desire for an object, and one is then pleased (*blanditur*) by the thought of what it will be like to possess it after having acted to get it.[151] This hybrid of Platonic and Stoic material explains the significance of the Augustinian trio "suggestion-delight-consent" discussed by Mann and MacDonald:[152] delight arises (*surgere*) as a result of seeing something as desirable and cognizing that some action is a way to get the object.[153] Hence Augustine says that the motivating impression, the "type of impression by which will may be moved" is one that "delights."[154] *Confessions* 8.11.26–27, where the impressions to continent and incontinent acts are both associated with "delight" (*delectatio*) or "cheerfulness" (*hilaritas*), is one instance of this. Augustine, owing to his cognitive dissonance, felt in an interior sense alternately that living the virtue of continence would be enjoyable (hence continence is the "mother of joys"), and then that incontinent acts would be enjoyable.

2.7c. New Wine, Old Wine Skins?

The presence of specifically Christian content in the impressions described in *Confessions* 8.11.26–27 can now be better understood and quickly assessed. Is it an integral part of a coherent account of motivation, or does it introduce a discordant note?

The content is there as an instance of the means-ends relations that Augustine thinks are present (often implicitly) in all motivation. It is thematic in the *Symposium*, though less so in Stoicism, that all motivation is teleological: nearly everything is done for the sake of something else, ultimately (in Platonism) for the transcendent good that cannot disappoint. The twist here is that in *Confessions* 8 Augustine makes use of the particularly Christian claim that in cases where moral improvement happens to be at issue, the ethical

[151] Cf. *s.* 335K.6.

[152] Mann (1998) 150; MacDonald (2004) 81.

[153] See *en. Ps.* 48.1.6: "What is his head [the head of the serpent]? The beginning of an evil suggestion. When he begins to suggest evil thoughts, then you thrust him away before pleasure arises and consent follows." Cf. *s. dom. m.* 1.12.34.

[154] *Simpl.* 1.2.22; for further treatment of this text, see Ch. 7. Cf. *en. Ps.* 75.4, where *delectatio* is "suggested," and *en. Ps.* 128.8: a *suggestio* in which "delectat adulterium." Again, on one occasion when speaking of the martyr's interior battle against temptation, he gives the following close-up view of what is going on internally: "The sweetness of this life was saying, 'Deny him.' He wouldn't listen … Overcoming the sweetness of life inside, he overcame the persecutor outside" (*s.* 335J.1). So Augustine will speak of "sweet suggestion," and say that a suggestion "tingles" with psychic delight in addition to suggesting that an action be done. He frequently uses *titillatio* in conjunction with or as a synonym for *suggestio* or *temptatio* (*s.* 93.13, *s.* 139A.2, *en. Ps.* 102.5, *s.* 53A.11, *s.* 145.5, *s.* 151.4 and 8, *s.* 154.3 and 14, *s.* 155.3 and 9, *s.* 301.3, *s.* 305.4, *s.* 335J.2, *en. Ps.* 143.6). In *s.* 98.6 we hear in a generalized account of habituation: "prima est enim quasi titillatio delectationis in corde; secunda, consensio; tertium, factum; quarta, consuetudo."

means, that is, the abilities to do virtuous actions, are given by grace originating in Christ and offered through the Church.[155] Hence "cast yourself upon him … he will heal you" is among the imperative sayables in the impression of continence, and the consent is effected by the reading of a biblical text with the imperative, "…put on the Lord Jesus Christ…." It means, as he indicates earlier in the book, that he should make himself able to do continent actions by being baptized.

However, in cases where moral improvement does not happen to be the issue, this Christian content will not appear, although means-ends relations will. Thus Augustine *compares* his successive impressions of continence and incontinence to deliberation about "whether to kill a person *by poison* or *by a dagger*; whether to encroach *on one* estate belonging to someone else, *or on a different* one."[156] These two examples are of deliberation about various means to doing some one kind of action, but Augustine goes on to compare his situation to that of someone who is attracted to different types of actions that might take her to a more general goal, such as pleasure or happiness: "whether to go to the circus or to the theater if both are putting on a performance," whether "to steal from another person's house if occasion offers, or … to commit adultery if at the same time the chance is available." Hence Augustine seems to think of motivation as generally goal-oriented; the Christian content of the sayables in *Confessions* 8.11.27 is one example of this general feature of his account. The Augustinian theory of motivation itself is not *intrinsically* Christian or theological; rather, Augustine has a theory of philosophical psychology that is developed from Stoic and Platonic claims about motivation, and he also thinks that this anthropological model is coherent with the specifically Christian claim that grace is a means to the development of virtues.

2.8. Summary of Augustine's Motivational Theory: Contemporary Relevance

So Augustine's theory of action is modeled on Stoicism, but contains additives from the Platonic tradition, in the form of desire and delight. For the reasons stated in Section 2.7a, the resulting synthesis should be considered a coherent position developed from these two earlier schools, rather than merely unreflective eclecticism.

In motivation, there is first of all perception of an object as good and good for oneself. In other words, love is provoked; this is not a feeling, but an awareness in higher reason (*mens*)[157] of oneself as indigent in relation to

[155] See further Ch. 7.3d.

[156] *conf.* 8.10.14.

[157] For Augustine, feelings are psychic pains or pleasures experienced in an "inner sense," though they are caused by cognitive apprehension (see Chapter 3.5c). But eros is mental awareness itself: see *trin.* 10.8.10–11.

some perceived good object. If the mind then sees that some action is possible that would result in possession of the object, a motivating impression results, which includes the cognizing of mental sentences about how attaining the object will contribute to one's happiness, and of a command to go after it; this takes place in the discursive part of the mind (*animus*).[158] Psychic delight at the anticipated possession of the object to be gained by doing the action results from the impression, because the perceiver views the action as a way of gaining possession of the object. This delight is experienced in an interior sense. The mind now evaluates its impression, questioning the claim that getting the object (via the action) will contribute to happiness; and it either assents or dissents by issuing to itself an imperative that commands doing or not-doing the action.

Which is the dominant note in Augustine's theory, Stoicism or Platonism? It is clear that the Stoicism is primary for describing the genesis of a concrete action, because an action is provoked by an impression having sayable content and consent. Nevertheless, given that the discursive part of the mind is the least excellent part, in Augustine's view, and given that the psychological underpinning, attraction for objects, is conceived of in Platonic terms, the Stoicism and Platonism are equally important.

From a contemporary point of view, what is intriguing about this synthesis is the way that it coherently combines cognitivism and sensibility in motivation. At the end of the twentieth century, Darwall, Gibbard, and Railton surveyed the past one hundred years of ethics. They focused in part on accounts of ethical motivation that had sought to combine personal interest and affective involvement with cognitivism. Simply put, the problem that such theories might serve to resolve is how, after Hume, to make ethical motivation essentially involve affective response without also making feelings the criteria of ethics. (If feelings were the criteria, whose feelings would be criterial? Why? Surely the feelings of the majority are not necessarily appropriate.) Kant's ethics in the *Grounding*, though careful about establishing human rationality as an objective criterion for ethics, insisted that the desire for happiness and other such "feelings" do not enter into authentically *moral* motivation. This gives rise to legitimate worries about the aridity of a purely cognitive account – that is, the dubious ability of purely cognitive processes to elicit motivation.

Darwall et al. drew attention to twentieth-century "sensibility theories" as potentially offering a middle path through this Scylla and Charybdis. These theories posited that evaluative judgments presuppose acts of perception essentially involving the exercise of affective or conative propensities, analogous to perception of secondary qualities like humorousness. Not everyone

[158] E.g., *trin.* 11.8.12, where *cogitatio* is the discursive use of images; *trin.* 12.12.17, where *scientia actionis* is discursive thought (*ratiocinari*) about things in the sensory world, and *trin* 14.7.10, where the lower power of the mind is the locus of knowledge of "human things," by which we may *do* right actions.

finds a joke funny, only those with the "sense" of humor to appreciate the joke. The humorousness is something that comes to be in the interaction of the joke and the pleasure one feels owing to one's disposition to be pleased by this kind of joke. It is similar with moral judgments, it was argued. For example, the judgment that "It is good/right to intervene in this situation" would be cognitive both in the sense that it was a rational act, a thought, and in the sense that it was susceptible of being evaluated as true or false; but it would also be an act of perceiving a situation as "calling for intervention," where perceiving the needfulness of intervening essentially included feeling outrage or pity, or feeling moved to help.[159]

This has some similarities to what we have seen in Augustine: the intentional object is perceived as related to or requiring some response from oneself, one feels something (in Augustine's case, delight), one's dispositions condition one's perceptions as in the case of Augustine in *Confessions* 8.11.26,[160] and one formulates a propositional judgment such as "It is good to intervene." Arguably, however, the contemporary accounts do not ultimately secure cognitivist ethical judgment. So long as the feeling is essential to making the judgment *be* true – and it is, if moral qualities are secondary qualities – we seem to be thrown back onto the Humean horn of the dilemma.[161]

In the end, Darwall et al. recommended a return to the history of philosophy:

> Too many moral philosophers and commentators on moral philosophy – we do not exempt ourselves – have been content to invent their psychology or anthropology from scratch and do their history on the strength of selective reading of texts rather than more comprehensive research into contexts.[162]

Our recovery of Augustine's well-integrated account thus looks rather timely. Darwall et al. may have had in mind a return to the modern figures who lie behind the contemporary accounts, rather than to premodern authors. But it is precisely because Augustine has a richer (Platonic) account of reason than is found either in modern or in Stoic accounts of rationality that he is able to be "objectivist" about the criteria of ethics and at the same time incorporate personal interest and affective involvement.

[159] Darwall, Gibbard, and Railton (1992) esp. 152 n. 86, 154–156, 163–164 n. 109, citing McDowell, Wiggins, and Johnston.

[160] When his habits bind him to see incontinence as attractive.

[161] Cf. Darwall, Gibbard, and Railton (1992) 157–158 on the difficulty within the sensibility theories of distinguishing a "normal" moral sensibility from an "abnormal" one (1992) 159 n. 99. Cf. ibid. 161–162.

[162] Darwall, Gibbard, and Railton (1992) 188–189.

3

Emotions

We are in a similar situation with Augustine's account of affectivity, as we have been with his theory of motivation. Some partial investigations have yielded diverging interpretations. The lack of consensus about interpretation in both cases is no mere coincidence. As Augustine indicates when he says that emotions are "wills" and "loves,"[1] his theory of motivation underpins his account of emotion. Only now that we understand the former can we come to a more complete understanding of the latter.

3.1. THE QUESTION OF AUGUSTINE'S STOICISM: TECHNICAL TERMINOLOGY TO BE ADOPTED

Prior efforts at understanding Augustine's statements about emotion have focused largely on his relation to Stoicism on the one hand, or Peripateticism and Platonism on the other, since that is how he frames his discussion in *City of God* 9.4, working off of Cicero.[2] One finds such divergent views as: Augustine disagreed with the main lines of the Stoic account; Augustine did not understand the Stoic account, to such an extent that he could not even summarize it accurately; Augustine had a reasonable reading of it, though not without error.

Previous treatments have tended to confine themselves to the mere *presence* of certain words in Augustine's text without enough attention to his actual usage. Furthermore, important features of the *City of God* have yet to be taken up. Finally and more generally, the *City of God* is insufficiently informative about where Augustine really stands. It is necessary to look outside of this text to the kinds of examples he gives in his sermons, which provide descriptions of

[1] *civ.* 14.6–7.

[2] See Spanneut (2002) 282–283; Sorabji (2000) 379–380; King (2012) 12–15; Irwin (2003) 431, 436–437; Brachtendorf (1997); Colish (1985) 223–224; Knuutila (2004) 155, 159; van Riel (2004). For references to these works, see notes in Sections 4c and 5f of this chapter.

emotions like jealousy, anger, fear, and joy. These descriptions cast light on his statements in the *City of God*.

In fact, Augustine's theory of affectivity – it is appropriate to speak of a unified "theory" – can rightly be called a development from Stoic psychological principles. By "development" I mean preservation of core principles, with some disagreement about applications and creative elaboration of new implications and applications. The disagreements are owing to differences in ontology and in diverging notions of "complete" human happiness; the new implications and applications come mainly in the area of preliminary emotions.

Before taking these topics up in turn, we must leave certain preconceptions behind. It would be a methodological error to suppose, for example, that because in the *City of God* Augustine only refers to the Stoics by name when he has something negative to say, this means his position is fundamentally or entirely anti-Stoic. Because this text is apologetical in genre, Augustine focuses on the parts of the Stoic view with which he disagrees, and fails to explicitly endorse the aspects that he accepts, even when these latter are foundational for his own theory. Runia's comments in another context are apropos here: Augustine selectively acknowledges his indebtedness to earlier authors and schools of thought.[3] According to a practice common in late antiquity,[4] the names of authors often are not mentioned when being drawn upon positively. One reason for this, apparently, is that it allows the naked truth of the ideas to stand out, rather than appearing parochial, in the garb of one particular group or school. But names are named when the author believes it is necessary to warn the reader about errors.[5]

There is also a popular assumption about "Stoic apathy" that we will need to abandon before entering into these questions. This is the common belief that the Stoics advocated a complete absence of emotions. This misconception has colored interpretation of Augustine: it is assumed that in the *City of God* Augustine ascribes this view to the Stoics before rejecting it himself. The Stoics did *not* advocate this, however. Nor did Augustine ascribe this position to them, as careful attention to the texts will show.

Finally, precision is important especially in the use of the terms "passion" and "emotion." Earlier treatments of Augustine have often used these English

[3] Runia gives as an example Augustine's use of Philo's exegesis of Noah's ark. In one text, where the immediate context is not polemical against Philo, he uses Philo without mentioning him (*civ*. 15.26). In another text, he gives the same exegesis, but does mention Philo, in order to draw attention to what he considers a deficiency in one aspect of that exegesis (*c. Faust.* 12.39: the fact that the allegory is not Christological with regard to the opening made in the side of the ark). Runia (1993) 322–323.

[4] See e.g., Runia (1995) 120–121, 125.

[5] Small-scale disagreements with other Christian writers about nondoctrinal matters also seem to qualify for the "name no names" treatment, as a kind of refined respect. See Section 6b of this chapter on Augustine's disagreement with Rufinus (unnamed) about terminology in the scriptures.

words without designating meanings for them; thus the relation of the affects under discussion to the Stoic categories has been left unclear, and claims about Augustine's relation to the Stoics have been ambiguous. To prevent this, I will assign technical meanings to some common English words. I use "emotion" for a genus encompassing the species "passions" and "affections," where emotions are caused by judgments, passions are caused by assent to false propositions (cf. the Stoic *pathos*),[6] and affections by assent to true propositions (cf. the Stoic *eupatheia*).[7] These latter two I will also refer to as "morally bad emotions" and "morally good emotions" respectively.

3.2. What Is at Stake with the Question of Augustine's Stoicism?

The interest of this question lies not merely in the scholarly exercise of *Quellenforschung*, important though that is. The extent to which Augustine is "Stoic" is related to the question of his enduring relevance, and of his sophistication in comparison to other figures in the history of philosophical psychology, particularly those of the ancient and late ancient period.

One reason why the Stoic view has been much discussed is the Stoics' advocacy of cognitive therapy, a kind of therapy which, in more recent versions, has had documented success in treating emotional disorders such as depression and anxiety. The central thesis of contemporary cognitive therapy is that thoughts mediate between external stimuli and emotions. That is, it is not events themselves which somehow elicit an emotional response directly, but our evaluative thoughts about such stimuli.[8] Therapy for sadness, hatred, or fear thus involves uncovering and articulating one's evaluative schemas and correcting these when they are false representations of reality. (To give a simplified example, someone with anxiety at work may have it because he has an inaccurate model of himself as incompetent; given this false assumption, many ordinary events trigger the negative thought that he is about to fail, which results in anxiety.)

[6] I have chosen this term because the English word "passion" connotes dangerous or disordered emotion, and also because Augustine typically uses the term *passio* or *perturbatio* (but sometimes *affectus* in the manner of Seneca) when he is referring to morally bad emotions caused by false judgments, though he does not stick to a strict terminological correspondence, on which we see further Section 5f.

[7] I have chosen the term "affection" to refer to morally good emotions, because in both *civ.* and the sermons, Augustine often uses *affectio* or *affectus* to refer to the emotions of the virtuous (avoiding the use of *perturbatio* and *passio*). See *civ.* 14.9 on the emotions of Christ and St. Paul; *s.* 33.1.9 regarding Christ; *s.* 90.10; *s.* 218 on the emotion felt by Christ for his mother; and *Io. ev. tr.* 60.2 on the feelings of Christ.

[8] For a *locus classicus*, see, for example, Beck (1976). Recently it has been noted that some mechanisms operative in cognitive therapy may also be operative in other therapies, complicating the question of causal efficacy of different therapeutic models; see, for example, Gibbons et al. (2009) 802, 810.

The Stoic theory of emotions similarly held that emotions are caused by beliefs about events, rather than directly by events themselves. Emotional therapy is therefore cognitive: it is a process of evaluating and revising beliefs.

A second appealing feature of Stoicism is its philosophical merits as compared to other ancient models – its ability to explain and justify claims that ancients commonly wanted to make. Chief among these was the idea that violent or inappropriate emotions cause catastrophe at the social level (witness their tragedies). Hence, the question of how to have healthy emotions was viewed as important for the cultivation of social and civic life, as well as for individuals' ethical development. Given the social ramifications of emotions such as envy or habitual gloominess, it is not hard to see why the ancients wanted to say that I ought not *allow* myself to become envious or gloomy, and that if I do so I am both exhibiting and worsening my own bad moral character. But what does it mean for an emotion to be "inappropriate" or "healthy"? And exactly how are emotions caused by personal failings or moral virtues?

By positing that emotions are caused by or are judgments,[9] the Stoics provided a more substantive account than was available in ancient models which located the origin of emotions in noncognitive states and bodily conditions. Platonism, especially the *Timaeus*, and the position known as "Peripatetic" often serve as the representatives of this kind of account in Augustine's sources and other late antique doxographies. Although this is something of a caricature of Plato and Aristotle, there is a real distinction between the Stoics' clear and unambiguous claim that emotions are caused by judgments of the mind, and the Platonic and Aristotelian accounts, which are either ambiguous on this point or seem to rule it out – depending upon the text in question.[10] Thus, the label "Platonic or Peripatetic" served as a way of naming a model in which there is a nonrational origin of emotion. But notice that it is when emotions are said to have cognitive causes that it becomes fairly easy to say what makes them "inappropriate": when my judgments are false, then the emotions caused by them are inappropriate. Thus the Stoic theory was able to give an account of how we are accountable for the impact that our own emotional reactions have on the lives of others and the good of society more generally.

3.3. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STOIC ACCOUNT

As has been much discussed, in the Stoic system the judgments that cause emotions concern good and evil.[11] Someone assents to a proposition stating

[9] These two formulations are those of Zeno and Chrysippus; see Galen, *PHP* 4.2.1–6 (LS 65D), 4.3.2–5 (LS 65 K); and for Cicero repeating both formulations, see notes in Sections 3 and 4 of this chapter. For discussion of whether this difference in formulation was indicative of two substantially distinct philosophical positions, see Price (2005) passim and Gill (2005) passim.

[10] Cf. Cooper (1999) 449–450.

[11] See *Tusc.* 3.11.24–25, 4.6.11–4.7.14.

that something that is good or evil has been or will be lost or gained. So, fear is rooted in the judgment that something evil will happen; grief arises from the judgment that something evil has occurred. Desire results from assent to the proposition that something good is to be attained in the future; joy is caused by the belief that something good has happened. Implicit in these beliefs about past and future goods and evils are the beliefs that I will be or am happy or unhappy, owing to the good or evil. Furthermore, these four emotions are genera, and each has its own species-emotions (for example, anger is a *desire* for revenge, where revenge is viewed as a good).

Learning to "control" one's emotions thus requires that one correct false beliefs about good and evil, replacing them with true ones. Because the Stoics held, in Socratic fashion, that only moral goods are true goods, because only virtue is intrinsically *productive* of happiness,[12] cognitive therapy is the training of one's thoughts in the "truth" that all exterior things are not really good, that is, not intrinsically good for us as moral agents and therefore not worth becoming attached to.[13] To borrow a term from contemporary therapy, the Stoics think that many of us are prey to the cognitive distortion of dichotomous thinking. It is not true that there are only two categories of things in the world, good and bad. Reality is much more varied, with a third class of things that are themselves indifferent to human happiness. This class is in turn subdivided into: things absolutely indifferent such as the precise number of hairs on one's head; things preferable because they have "value" (*axia*), for example, excellences of the body, intellectual acumen, social relationships; and things dispreferred (poor health, a low intelligence quotient, lack of friends, etc.).[14]

So, there are *morally good emotions*, which are caused by *accurate* judgments that a good or evil has been or will be lost or gained. For the Stoics, the wise person feels precaution at the prospect of doing something immoral, because that would be a true evil, just as she feels rational desire at the prospect of doing a virtuous act, and joy because she has attained some virtue or completed a virtuous act. These are the only kinds of emotions the sage has – but these, again, are genera encompassing a number of species. There is no grief for the wise, because the paradigmatic wise person, being wise, would never consent to do something wrong. And the wise person knows that only wrongdoing is evil.

In contrast, failure to train one's thoughts in the truth results in morally bad emotions caused by false beliefs that the death of relatives, finding a spouse, being financially secure, living in a country that one can be proud of, and so on are important for happiness. Such a person's fear is craven, his joy

[12] DL, 7.102–104.

[13] The Stoic distinction between virtue and preferred indifferents (i.e., things according to nature) is not actually a distinction between two different types of things, because virtue is defined as simply the activity of properly selecting things in accord with nature; for a discussion of some of the difficulties which arise given this definition of virtue, see Barney (2003) esp. 320–339.

[14] DL, 7.105.

is exhilaration about frivolous matters, his grief is hysterical overreaction to things that are really irrelevant to happiness. These things are not *productive* of human happiness, and only fools assume that they are.

For the sake of clarity, the Stoics stipulated names for the two kinds of emotion, and also for each emotion. They called emotions caused by false judgments "passions" (*pathē*; Cicero: *perturbationes*). They dubbed emotions arising from true judgments "good emotions" (*eupatheiai*; Cicero: *constantiae*). They gave a different name to the passion of fear, which is fear of a dispreferred indifferent, and to the good emotion of fear, which is fear of doing something wrong (*phobos* vs. *eulabeia* respectively), and so on. Cicero did the same in Latin in his doxography of the Stoic account in the *Tusculan Disputations*.[15]

Knowledge of reality is thus supposed to make both the individual person and the society emotionally healthy. As a result of it, social life is not jealous competition for resources, nor vengeful feuds stemming from the loss of these, nor despondency because our nation used to dominate the world, but now its glory has faded. Instead, radical detachment and good moral character foster joy in the truth at both the personal and social level. This, in outline, was the Stoic picture that Augustine inherited from his sources.

3.4. Augustine's Adherence to Core Stoic Psychological Principles

When Augustine claims in *City of God* 9.4 that the Platonists or Peripatetics have substantially the same account as the Stoics on the question of "whether passions befall the wise person," it can look prima facie like he does not even understand the central issues; but a careful reading shows that this is not so.[16]

When we turn to Augustine's sermons in conjunction with his *City of God*, we are struck by the extent to which he understands, assimilates, and develops Stoic cognitive psychology. He disagrees with the Stoics that moral goods are the only goods, arguing instead that ontological goodness is a real kind of good, and that nonmoral goods such as friends and family, freedom from pain, and health are necessary for complete happiness. But he maintains a radical distinction between the relative values of ontological goodness and moral goodness, adopts both the principles and details of the relevant epistemology, and strongly advocates cognitive therapy. Even his criticism of the Stoic attitude toward compassion (*misericordia*)[17] rests in part on his claim that the Stoics are departing from their own principles.

[15] The *pathē/perturbationes* are: undue exultation = *hēdonē/laetitia*; irrational desire = *epithumia/libido*; craven fear = *phobos/metus*; grief = *lupē/aegritudo*. The *eupatheiai/constantiae* are: joy = *chara/gaudium*; rational desire = *boulēsis/voluntas*; fear of doing wrong = *eulabeia/cautio*. See DL, 7.110–114, 7.116; *Tusc.* 3.11.24–25, 4.6.12–13, 4.7.14.

[16] For more on this passage, see Section 5f.

[17] *civ.* 9.5.

Before delving into these matters, we should first ask who Augustine's proximate sources for the Stoic accounts actually were. In the *City of God*, when he alludes to the Stoic-Peripatetic debate about the nature and moral status of emotions, he refers to certain Latin writers:

There are two opinions among the philosophers concerning these movements of the rational soul which the Greeks call *pathē*, which certain of our writers, like [1] Cicero, call *perturbationes*, while [2] others call *affectiones* or *affectūs*, and [3] others again, like him, call *passiones*, which expresses the Greek [word *pathē*] more closely.[18]

The authorities referred to here are (at least):[19] (1) Cicero,[20] (2) Gellius[21] and Seneca,[22] and (3) Apuleius ("him"). Of these, the most important are Cicero,

[18] *civ.* 9.4: "Duae sunt sententiae philosophorum de his animi motibus, quae Graeci *pathē*, nostri autem quidam, sicut Cicero, perturbationes, quidam affectiones vel affectus, quidam vero, sicut iste, de Graeco expressius passiones vocant." Trans. Dyson (1998) adapted; subsequent quotations follow this translation unless otherwise noted.

[19] We do not have a complete catalogue of authors and works read by Augustine, and we know that he read things that are not extant, such as Varro's *De Philosophia*. See also Courcelle (1969) 192–194: Augustine had a six-volume compendium of extracts from Greek philosophers (in a Latin translation). There has been debate about its author (Courcelle [1969] n. 201).

Among the unnamed "others" in the third set could possibly be Ambrose and Jerome, who both use "passio" for emotions that are sins; but it is doubtful that Augustine would allude to them in this context (representative chroniclers/adherents of Stoic pagan philosophy).

[20] In the *City of God*, which he was asked to write because of his reputation as a professor of rhetoric well-schooled in the liberal arts, and in his other works, Augustine demonstrates mastery of all the works of Cicero, including those lost to us, like the *Hortensius.* Cf. Brown (2000) 297–301, Marrou (1958) 18–19, 46. Cicero is his main source and that which he considers the most weighty authority for the "Stoic" view of the passions. He gives, for example, *perturbatio* as "the" translation of *pathos* when he first raises the topic – during a discussion of Apuleius' views – in *civ.*, using it instead of Apuleius' *passio*, which he acknowledges to be the more literal rendering (*civ.* 8.17; cf. 9.4, 9.6). Augustine mentions Cicero sixty-six times in *civ*. alone. There are signs that Augustine relied on *ac.* and *fin.*, as well as the *Tusc.* for his account of affectivity. In book nine of *civ*. he brings up the Stoic distinction between "convenient things" and goods, which is recorded in the *fin.* (3.10.34–35, 3.16.53–3.17.56, 4.9.23), and his criticism of it is very close to Cicero's in that work (see below). Augustine's way of framing the Stoic-Peripatetic debate in *civ.* 9.4 is similar to Cicero's *ac.* 1.10.38 where Platonists and Aristotelians are said to have substantially the same account, and 1.4.17, where Aristotle is classified as a pupil of Plato; cf. *ac.* 2.5.15.

[21] Augustine's use of the phrase *affectiones vel affectus* is nearly exactly what we find in Gellius' *NA* 1.26.11: "… these things which the Latin philosophers call *affectus vel affectiones*, and the Greeks *pathē* …" And Augustine uses the phrase in *civ.* 9.4, wherein he is summarizing *NA* 19.1. But although Augustine considers Gellius a useful authority for which terms are used by Latin philosophers to translate the Greek *pathos*, he does not use the philosophical content of Gellius' summaries in *NA* 12.5, 19.12. In identifying Gellius and Seneca as Augustine's referents for people who render *pathos* as *affectus*, I am disagreeing with Bardy who, in the *BA* 34 (p. 352 n. 1), suggests Quintilian, citing *inst.* 6.2, where Quintilian translates *pathos* as *affectus*.

[22] Although Augustine does not acknowledge Seneca (who uses *affectus* for Stoic *pathos*) by name in connection with affectivity, Seneca is nonetheless an important influence. That Augustine had more than average knowledge of Seneca is clear; cf. Ch.1.6c. Seneca is mentioned three times in the *civ.* (5.8 re. *ep*. 107, and 6.10 (twice)). Augustine sometimes relies on

Gellius, and Seneca. Apuleius has no theoretical account of *pathē*, and the "passiones" he mentions are treated by Augustine as Stoic *pathē* (i.e., morally bad emotions caused by a judgment of the mind), because Apuleius himself characterizes passions as agitations of the mind and of thought (*sala mentis*, *aestus cogitationum, turbationes*), and because the examples of passions which Apuleius gives are also examples of *pathē* given in Latin Stoic sources.[23]

3.4a. Good and Bad Emotions

The first thing one notices in the sermons is that Augustine preserves a distinction between morally good and bad emotions, and as with the Stoics, this is based on a distinction between the radical difference in value of virtue and of other things. Judging that virtue is vastly more valuable causes morally good emotions; the overvaluing of other things constitutes sinful passions. So, there are two different kinds of fear: fearing wisely (*prudenter timere*), and fearing foolishly (*inaniter timere*). To fear wisely is to fear telling a lie, knowing that this is worse than being killed; foolish fear is caused by the false belief that staying alive is more important than virtues such as honesty.[24] There are two kinds of joy. Exultation at having attained external things – winning at games, gaining honors, having material comforts – is prompted by the false belief that one's happiness comes from them (*vana laetitia, falsa laetitia, inaniter laetari*).[25]

Seneca's technical term *affectus* when referring to emotions that he considers to be sins (e.g., *civ.* 8.14 and 14.12 on the demons). This suggests a familiarity with Seneca's moral treatises and letters, where this term is used for morally bad emotions. Again, of the four Stoic passions to which Augustine draws attention in *civ.* 9.5 – *ira*, *timor*, *tristitia*, and *misericordia* – the first and last seem to be included because of Seneca; anger is not emphasized by Cicero, and the distinction between *clementia* and *misericordia* is mentioned only in passing in the *Tusc.*, which therefore does not seem sufficient to explain Augustine's treating it as a hallmark Stoic position, whereas Seneca devotes a treatise to it. (The inspiration for including the second (*timor*) is probably Gellius, *NA* 19.1, which Augustine has just summarized in the previous chapter; *tristitia* is probably due to Cicero's focus on *aegritudo* in the *Tusc.*) Again, in *clem.* Seneca claims that "No sorrow befalls (*cadere*) the sage," and this closely resembles the claim Augustine ascribes to the Stoics in *civ.* 9.4: "The Stoics say that no passion befalls (*cadere*) the sage." Moreover, in *c. Faust.* 25 Augustine's characterization of cruelty as that which thirsts for blood in an exaggerated reaction to injury is reminiscent of Seneca's discussion in *ira* 2.5.1, 2.5.4. At *civ.* 14.15, Augustine's example of the irrationality of anger directed at inanimate objects is similar to Seneca at *ira* 2.26.1–2. Finally, there are similarities between Seneca's account of preliminaries to anger in the *ira* and Augustine's accounts of the same phenomena in his sermons; he makes use of the same metaphors and identifies the same causes of anger as Seneca does: see Ch. 4.2c.

[23] *DDS* 12–13 on *ira*, *misericordia*, *odium*, *laetitia*.

[24] *s.* 65, 1–3 and 6–7. On fear of sin as a good emotion, see also *s.* 142.1, *s.* 161.5 and 7, *en. Ps.* 127.7 (clean fear (*timor castus*) = *per timorem continere se a peccato*, vs. unclean fear = fear of earthly disasters), *en. Ps.* 147.4.

[25] On these kinds of joy, see *en. Ps.* 86.9; on false or vain joy, *en. Ps.* 85.17, *en. Ps.* 118,1.1, *en. Ps.* 137.4, *s.* 142.7, *s.* 171.4, *s.* 299A(= Dolbeau 4).1, *s.* 198(= Dolbeau 26).1, *s.* 51.2, *s.* 142.7, *s.*

Augustine calls this "being insane" (*laetitia quadam insanire*), a description reminiscent of the Stoic claim that all fools are crazy and passions, which characterize fools, are a kind of mental disease.[26] The cause of the other kind of joy (*gaudium, laetitia spiritalis mentis*) is virtue, either your own or the contemplation of someone else's, such as that of Perpetua and Felicity.[27] Sadness or grief is like dung, he assures us. It is fruitful when in the right place, but morally unclean in the wrong place, the "place" being its cause (*unde esse tristitia*).[28] Grief at one's sins is good and useful fertilizer prompting us to become better, a position that he notes is compatible with the Stoic view in principle though not in fact;[29] excessive sadness at the loss of money, what an enemy has done to you, or other such disasters is dung in the wrong place (*tristitia de rebus saecularibus*).[30] Typically he uses conventional language, indicating the conceptual distinction between good and bad emotions by qualifiers (as we have just been seeing), though occasionally Ciceronian terminology for the *pathē* and *eupatheiai* appears.[31]

This position is both consistent with, and clarifying of, his polemical treatment of the Stoics in the *City of God* book fourteen. For there, he does not deny that the *pathē-eupatheiai* dichotomy is a good *conceptual* distinction. Rather, his point is that it can be made even without strict adherence to Cicero's technical terminology.[32] The passage, in fact, reads like an attempt to show that the scriptures *do* preserve the *conceptual* distinction,[33] and when Augustine argues that the secular poets also use nontechnical language, we see his purpose: he is trying to persuade the intellectual elite of the late Roman Empire

335B.3. Cf. the summary of *div. qu.* #30 and #33 in Lee (2000) 143–147 in conjunction with section 4a.

[26] *en. Ps.* 86.9; cf. *en. Ps.* 7.11 (*… deliram insanamque laetitiam*). Cf. e.g., Cicero, *Tusc.* 4.38.82 on *amentia* and *Tusc.* book four passim on *insania*.

[27] *en. Ps.* 42.3 (*causa laetitiae suae iustitia sit*), *s.* 280.1, *s.* 299A(= Dolbeau 4).1; on Perpetua and Felicity see *s.* 280.1 on the contemplation of *virtus mentis* as a cause of *gaudium*. Note his punning on men (*viri*) and virtue (*virtus*), arguing that these women are superior in interior strength to the men present in his congregation: the physical mass of the male (*vir*) body is not correlative with strength of mind (*virtus*).

[28] E.g., *s.* 254.2.

[29] *civ.* 14.8 on *utilis tristitia,* alluding to Alcibiades but noting the Stoic position that the sage, who is morally perfect, has no reason to grieve.

[30] For the distinction between two kinds of sadness or grief: *s.* 254.2 and 4; cf. *en. Ps.* 7.19, *en. Ps.* 29.2.17, *en. Ps.* 31.1.7, *en. Ps.* 68.2.5, *en. Ps.* 91.2, *en. Ps.* 114.4 (on *dolor utilis*); cf. *en. Ps.* 136.5, *en. Ps.* 147.4.

[31] So e.g., we have *gaudium* when contemplating the martyrs' virtues, but the pagan crowds who enjoyed watching them be killed had *laetitia* (*s.* 280.1–2); Job's avoidance of sinning was *cautio* (*en. Ps.* 29.2.7). Cf. the previous notes in this section.

[32] *civ.* 14.8.

[33] *civ.* 14.8 passim; cf. 14.9, where the emotions of Christ, Paul, and exemplary Christians are concerned with moral goods (e.g., "They feel pain for their sins and gladness in their good works") and with the results of these (the afterlife).

that Christian ethics is no less conceptually sophisticated than the Stoics', just because its scriptures sometimes use a different terminology.

3.4b. Cognitive Causes and Intentional Objects of Emotions

Also like the Stoics, Augustine thinks that the assessment of value which causes morally good and bad emotions is, in both cases, an act of the mind. The "irrational" passions are not nonrational, but are caused by false judgment. (Both the affection of joy and the passion of joy are caused by "thoughts," for example.)[34] Hence, when he says a passion is an emotion that is "against reason," he means it contravenes right reason. Consider this passage in *City of God* 8.17:

> [The Ciceronian term] "perturbation" (*perturbatio*) is *pathos* in Greek … *passio*, the literal rendering of *pathos*, is said to be a movement of the rational soul contrary to reason (*motus animi contra rationem*).… If anything of a similar kind appears in the beasts, it is not a perturbation (*perturbatio*), because it is not contrary to reason, which the beasts lack. Again, when these perturbations occur in humans, this is brought about by foolishness or unhappiness (*stultitia vel miseria*); for we are not yet blessed by that perfection of wisdom which is promised to us at the end [in heaven].[35]

Here he signals that he considers Cicero's report of the Stoic definition of passion (*motus animi contra rationem*) to be the standard for how to understand the Greek term *pathos* and its Latin equivalent, *passio*. Cicero explicitly and repeatedly specified that this meant "against *right* reason" (*recta ratio*),[36] and Augustine is using this understanding as the basis for his own critique of Apuleius in *City of God* 8.17.

Such an emotion "perturbs the mind (*mens*)" in the sense that the mind ought to be wise. It is the proper function of the mind to rank (*praeponere*) goods in a hierarchy.[37] The mind that judges accurately ranks moral goods over temporal things. In contrast, the mind that reverses this order is disturbed, disordered (*perturbata*), causing passions by its erroneous evaluations.[38] In poetic language, the emotions of the vicious are evidence of a "crooked" mind; they manifest the fact that the person has "turned the truth upside down,"[39] and given way to erroneous opinions:

> *The swords of the enemy have given way at the end* … these swords are to be understood as various erroneous opinions (*opiniones erroris*) … the psalm continues like

[34] *en. Ps.* 7.11 (*cogitatio*), *en. Ps.* 9.15 and 17, *en. Ps.* 15.9 (*fraudulentum consilium*), *en. Ps.* 118.1.1 (*putare*).
[35] *civ.* 8.17.
[36] E.g., *Tusc.* 4.6.11.
[37] See Ch. 2.6.
[38] Thus in *civ.* 9.4 passions/perturbations obscure wisdom by a mist of error and overthrow wisdom.
[39] *s.* 47.11–13, *s.* 21.9.

this, *The swords of the enemy have given way at the end; and you have destroyed the cities*: the cities, clearly, in which … deceitful and fraudulent thoughts (*consilia*) have something approaching the status of government.… The ordinary people, so to speak, of this city are all the self-indulgent feelings (*omnes delicatae affectiones*) and violent emotions of the mind (*turbulenti motus animi*), whipping up insurrection within a person every day.… These kingdoms are laid waste by the word of truth; the bad thoughts are silenced, base emotions are subdued … then the soul is given peace and the person is put in proper order so serenity and happiness may be laid hold of.[40]

As can be seen here, bad emotions caused by false opinions are corrected by truth: it is a cognitive battle that is being waged between true and false beliefs.

So although Augustine tells his congregations to "fast from anger" during the liturgical season of Lent, [41] what he means by this is to abstain from brooding upon injuries, which would give rise to anger (a point which we find in Seneca)[42] rather than to fast from food or delicacies in an effort to tame nonrational emotions through bodily ascesis, in the manner of a *Timaeus*-style account. We will see further evidence for this in Chapter 6, where we consider Augustine's four recommended therapies for achieving emotional health. These are all practices of "thinking" (*cogitare*), and are indebted to pagan Hellenistic therapies associated with the cultivation of Stoic passionlessness.

Furthermore, it is clear that Augustine believes that the thoughts that cause emotions are sentential. We see this when he accepts the Stoic definition of anger as a desire for revenge: he says that the desire that those who have wronged us should suffer is adherence to the principle that "those who do evil should suffer evil."[43] This propositional content is what we find in Seneca's description of anger, and Augustine's discussion here has other commonalities with Seneca.[44] Again, in the *City of God* book nine, he repeatedly says that what would constitute a passion of fear is consent to the proposition (*sententia*) that life and bodily welfare are superior or equal in value to moral goodness (*iustitia*).[45]

In addition, Augustine thinks that the thoughts which cause emotions cause them because they have received assent. Although it has looked to one commentator like Augustine misses the significance of assent in the Stoic picture, and that he subsequently fails to understand the distinction between an emotion proper, caused by assent, and nonvoluntary preconsensual

[40] *en. Ps.* 9.8 citing Ps. 9:6; for the translation in this instance I deviate from my ususal practice of using Tweed et al. and use Boulding (2000), adapted.

[41] *s.* 207.3.

[42] See Ch. 4.1c.

[43] *civ.* 14.15: "Even anger itself was defined in ancient times as being no more than the lust for revenge … in a certain sense a shadow, we might say, of the principle of retribution: that they who do evil should suffer evil (*qui male faciunt mala patiantur*)." Trans. Dyson adapted.

[44] See Seneca *ira* 2.1.4–5, and cf. notes in Section 4, this chapter.

[45] *civ*. 9.4, twice.

preliminary passions ("first movements"[46]), this is not the case. In the *City of God* book nine, Augustine preserves the conceptual difference between these by distinguishing between affects "of" the rational soul (*animus*), and "of" the mind (*mens*).[47] Because he tells us that consent is given by the mind (*mens*), his *animus-mens* distinction here is meant to preserve the distinction between nonconsensual preliminary (lacking consent) and passion proper (caused by consent). He uses the terms *animus* and *mens* to designate rational powers. The former refers to the discursive rational ability to have impressions. The latter is the power of evaluating and judging the content of those impressions. So a preliminary passion is "of" the *animus* in the sense that it is caused by a rational impression.[48] A passion is "of" the *mens* in the sense that it is caused by assent. The differentiation of *animus* from *mens* in this context is like the Stoic distinction between the faculty of impression and of assent as two "parts" of the mind (*hēgemonikon*).[49] Seneca and Gellius, Stoic sources writing in Latin, indicate this distinction in the same way as Augustine: they say that preliminary passions are of the *animus* and without the judgment of the *mens*.[50] We will come back to the beginning of *City of God* 9.4 and the end of 9.5, where Augustine claims that the Stoics have the same or almost the same view as the Platonists or Peripatetics on whether "passions" befall the wise person, in Section 3.4f and in Chapter 4.

Finally, there is a similarity of intentional object. As we have seen, in response to the question, "What do we get upset or excited *about*?"[51] the Stoics held that emotions are about something we deem to be good or bad for us because it is prohibitive or productive of our happiness, a notion of "relevance" communicated by Cicero with the term "fresh" or "pressing" belief.[52] Grief over a lost husband, for instance, remains strong as long as the opinion that sustains it is "fresh," where freshness refers not primarily to temporality (recentness of the death event) – because the amount of time necessary to get over grief varies from one person to another[53] – but to the individual's perception that the death

[46] Sorabji (2000) 377ff. claims that Augustine was misled by a misrepresentation of Epictetus' account of preliminary passion found in Gellius; it resulted in his thinking that the Stoics and Peripatetics agreed that emotions proper happen to the wise person without her consent. For detailed responses, see the notes in Section 5f of this chapter, and Ch. 4.1.

[47] *civ.* 9.4. He has more than one reason for doing this; see Section 5f of this chapter.

[48] See further Ch. 4 introductory remarks and 4.1.

[49] So Iamblichus, *On the Soul* (in Stobaeus 1.368.12–20) (LS 53K), Aetius 4.21.1–4 (LS 53H).

[50] See Seneca *ira* 1.16.7: the sage's *animus* will be moved from its customary calm; cf. Gellius *NA* 19.1. See further Ch. 4.1.

[51] King rightly points out that emotions are intrinsically objectual for both the Stoics and for Augustine (2010) 4. The term "intentional object" for "what an emotion is about" was made current by Solomon (1983) 171–172, citing the phenomenological tradition.

[52] The connection between relevance (see Cicero's discussion of required "freshness" or "urgency" (*recens, urgens*), *Tusc.* 3.26, 3.28, 3.55–56, 3.61, 3.75, 4.14) and interest in one's well-being is implicit; it follows from the role of *oikeiōsis* in Stoic psychology, on which see Ch. 2.7a.

[53] *Tusc.* 3.31.75.

makes her happiness impossible, because her husband is a necessary good for her. Similarly, Augustine holds that emotions are about things perceived as good or evil *for oneself*, that is, as relevant to one's happiness.[54] In his sermons, grief at the death of a friend is caused by the belief that death is bad (*malum putare*),[55] and implicit in the judgments that cause passions such as fear and grief is the belief that bad things such as being harmed or dying or losing a loved one make happiness impossible.[56] In exaltation or joy, on the other hand, one believes that one has attained something that contributes to happiness.[57]

Does this mean that the intentional object is an object that is being seen "hormetically"?[58] Not in the sense that an emotion is intrinsically motivating. The intentional object is not an action or a thing necessarily being viewed in connection with a proposed action; it is a state of affairs. One is jealous that someone else has more goods than oneself; one is sad that one's friend is dead, and so on. Even in the case of anger, although Augustine repeats the Stoic definition of anger as a desire for taking revenge or punishing (*libido ulciscendi*),[59] it seems clear that he does not actually conceive of it as a desire *to harm* the one who has harmed us, but rather as the belief that they ought to *be suffering*, causing the desire that they be suffering (he says *ut patiantur*).[60] How their suffering comes about (by another's hand, by fortune, by oneself) is not directly at issue in anger, as he describes it. This is consistent with what he says about joy and grief in the *City of God*,[61] where he describes these as mere reactions (enjoyment or pain of soul) to states of affairs rather than as desires to take action. Of course, this general position does not prevent him from holding that emotions may, or often do, consequently lead to thoughts of action. Fear[62] and

[54] For a distinction between seeing something as good *simpliciter* and seeing it as good for oneself, see e.g., *s.* 130A(= 19D).7 speaking about moral goods: it is possible to acknowledge that something is good, but shrink from it; cf. the discussion of pain-free memory of past sins in heaven, *civ.* 22.30.

[55] *en. Ps*. 68.2.5: Peter thought death was bad (*malum putabat*), therefore (*ergo*) he grieved (*dolebat*) at the death of the Lord.

[56] E.g. *en. Ps.* 85.24 and see the references to sadness and fear cited in the notes of Section 4a of this chapter.

[57] *en. Ps*. 147.4 and see the references to joy or exaltation cited in the notes of Section 4a of this chapter.

[58] The question comes up in the context of Stoicism, because in Stoic sources a passion is defined as excessive and irrational "movement (*kinēsis*) or impulse (*hormē*)" (DL, 7.110; Stobaeus *Eclogues* 2.88 (LS 65A); cf. Cicero *Tusc*. 3.4.7, 4.21.47 using "movement" (*motus*) and "impulse" (*appetitus*)); the "preferred indifferents" (*ta proēgmena*) such as health and pleasure (DL, 7.103) and the 'choice-worthy' (*to haireton*), namely the morally fine (*to agathon* (see DL, 7.99 and 7.101) are able to stir impulse or aversion (*hormēs/aphormēs kinētika*): DL, 7.104.

[59] *civ.* 14.15; *Tusc*. 3.3.5.11, 4.9.21.

[60] *civ*. 14.15.

[61] 14.7.

[62] In *civ.* 14.7, fear is said to be a "fleeing" (*fugiens*), which might seem to mean that it is the same as the impulse to get away from something. However, in his sermons where he gives

desire he apparently thinks do typically lead to hormetic impressions that one ought to do something to avoid or attain something or some state of affairs, *if* it is possible and if no one else is bringing about the desired state of affairs for us. We will consider some related questions in Section 5.

3.4c. Passionlessness

Thirdly, Augustine advocates a kind of passionlessness (*apatheia*) that is in keeping with the general definition of this state offered by the Stoics. He has sometimes been thought to reject Stoic passionlessness when he rejects insensibility,[63] but Stoic passionlessness is not insensibility and Augustine knows this. A close reading of his statements on the matter shows that he accepts Stoic passionlessness in principle while disagreeing with the Stoics about which particular emotions count as "passions"[64] and should be avoided.

We know that this is his position for the following reasons. When he considers whether *apatheia* is desirable, he reports different possible definitions of it: (1) lack of morally bad emotions, that is, of "passions" in the Stoic sense, (2) total insensibility, (3) absence of painful emotions in particular (fear and grief).[65] And he says that *if* (*si*) it is taken to mean insensibility, *then* it is a moral failing.[66] However, he never asserts that the Stoics subscribe to this second definition, insensibility. So his rejection of passionlessness defined as insensibility should not be read as a rejection of Stoic "passionlessness." The three possible definitions of passionlessness to which he alludes are Hellenistic definitions: they are the conditions advocated by (1) Stoics, (2) Cynics and Skeptics, and (3) Epicureans respectively.[67] Augustine rejects the Cynic, Skeptic, and Epicurean

more detail, Augustine makes clear that the emotion of fear is a "fleeing of the rational soul" instead of a bodily fleeing (*fuga quippe animi, est timor … animo ergo, non corpore fugiunt*, *en. Ps.* 67.2) though fear can be followed by acts of physically fleeing, hiding, etc. (*en. Ps.* 70.1.5).

[63] Here I differ from O'Daly (1999) 156, who thought Augustine only saw one meaning of *apatheia* (mental inhumanity and bodily insensitivity) and rejected this "Stoic" view, and also from King (2010) 3 and Nussbaum (2001) 542. Spanneut (2002) 282–283 also fails to distinguish different meanings of *apatheia* and of "passion."

[64] Recall the technical meaning of this term being used here, given in Section 1 of this chapter.

[65] *civ.* 14.9: "si (*apatheia*) ita intellegenda est … [1] ut sine his affectionibus vivatur, quae contra rationem accidunt mentemque perturbant.… [2] porro si *apatheia* illa dicenda est, cum animum contingere omnino non potest ullus affectus.… [3] si autem *apatheia* illa est, ubi nec metus ullus exterret nec angit dolor.…" Hence, I differ from King (2012) 12–15: it is not a matter of Augustine classifying the Stoics as philosophers who think that all emotions are bad but then leaving himself a "loophole"; rather, it is a case of his knowing that there are different definitions of *apatheia* among Hellenistic schools.

[66] *civ.* 14.9; cf. *en. Ps.* 55.6.

[67] See DL, 6.15, 6.90 on *apatheia* per Antisthenes, Diogenes, and Crates, with examples of their being heedless or senseless (*aphrontistos*). Similarly, Pyrrho the skeptic was absolutely indifferent (*adiaphoros*) because he suspended judgment on all things, DL, 9.63. In DL, 7.117, the Stoics are said to distinguish between two senses of "apathy" – passionlessness and callousness; the wise person has the first of these, the bad man has the second. For Epicurus on

versions of passionlessness. He actually endorses the Stoic definition, saying that it is characteristic of the saints in heaven: "At this point, let us consider what the Greeks call *apatheia* … If, then, we are to understand this 'passionlessness' to mean a life without those emotions which arise contrary to reason and which disturb the mind (*mens*), it is clearly a good and desirable condition.… This condition of *apatheia*, then, will come to pass only when there is no sin in human beings."[68] So, like the Stoic sage, the saints in heaven have only morally good emotions, which arise from their completely wise and virtuous state.

Augustine does accuse the Stoics of "hardness" (*duritia*), but by this term he does not accuse them of total insensibility; rather, he refers specifically to their refusal of other-regarding painful emotions such as compassion[69] to the sage – a matter to be discussed in Section 5e.

3.5. MOVING BEYOND STOICISM

3.5a. The Content of Judgments: A Revised Ontology and Eudaimonism

As Augustine tells us plainly, the Stoics' claim that everything besides virtue is not good, is unacceptable to him. He does not even think the Stoics "really" believe this, but that they are engaged in a verbal quibble, given that they classify the preferred indifferent things as valuable: "But when they say that these things are not to be called goods but advantages, we are to regard this as a dispute over words, not as a genuine distinction between things.… They do not call them by the same names, but they hold them in the same esteem."[70] Here he paraphrases Cicero, who is following Carneades[71] when he asks: "What difference does it make whether you call wealth, power, and health 'goods' or 'things preferred,' when he who calls them 'goods' assigns no more value to them than you who style exactly the same things 'preferred'?"[72]

freedom from fear and pain or distress (*ataraxia* and *aponia*), see e.g., *sent.* 10 (LS 21D); *Men.* 127–32 (LS 21B); DL, 10.136.

The three different understandings are found in Augustine's extant Latin texts, though not always with attribution to the various schools. Cicero's own position in the *Tusculans* is that the Stoics are right: absence of passions that come from false beliefs is a desirable state. The skeptic understanding (citing Pyrrho) is mentioned by Cicero at *ac.* 2.130 (*apatheia* as *non moveri, ne sentire*); and Crantor decries apathy in the (Epicurean) sense of freedom from pain (*indolentia*) at *Tusc.* 3.6.12 (cf. *Tusc.* 3.15.32–33; 3.17.38 on Zeno the Epicurean's definition of a happy life). Seneca in *ep.* 9.2 makes the distinction between senselessness and absence of bad passions, and Gellius at *NA* 12.5.10 calls inability to feel (*analgēsia*) *apatheia*, saying that it was rejected by the Stoics.

[68] *civ.* 14.9. Trans. Dyson adapted.

[69] *ep.* 104.4 (*duritia qua misericordiam vituperant*); cf. *civ.* 9.5.

[70] *civ.* 9.4.

[71] *Tusc.* 5.41.120.

[72] *fin.* 4.9.23, citing the authority of the Stoic Panaetius for the claim that pain is an evil. Trans. Rackham (1914). Cf. *fin.* 4.26.72, 5.24.72, *ac.* 2.5.15.

Is this Carneadean characterization mistaken or unfair to the Stoics, and will it thereby render the foundation of Augustine's own position, developed from it, faulty? Carneades and Cicero justify their position by an appeal to the Stoics' definition of preferred indifferents and their threefold division of value within this class.[73] According to the Stoics, all the preferred indifferents have value (*axia*).[74] Something has value if it is instrumental for moral virtue – as money and high birth are valuable as resources and a sphere of influence in which to do good – or if it is something to be sought for its own sake, or both. An indifferent that is valuable simply for its own sake is one which "accords with nature" in the sense that it directly contributes to the completion of our nature as rational and moral because it is organically linked to moral virtues: a good natural temperament (*euphuïa*) is valuable because it makes moral virtue easily attained, and moral progress (*prokopē*) is valuable because, though not yet virtue, it is a movement toward it and away from vice. Preferred indifferents that are valuable both for their own sakes and as instrumental for acting well are bodily strength, sound organs, and physical beauty. Things in this category have intrinsic value because they "accord with nature" in the sense that they complete or perfect those aspects of our nature that we share with other animals.

The category relevant to the comparison with Platonic and Peripatetic ontological goodness is the third. External and bodily preferable things have value of themselves, and they are "valuable" in the sense that they complete or perfect our nature. So we can see why Augustine, Carneades, and Cicero would say that the preferred indifferents are the same things in other words as Aristotelian lesser goods. Chrysippus himself is reported to have allowed that the term "good" can be used for these valuable things, so long as the speaker preserved the basic point that these things are not productive of happiness.[75]

With regard to the passions, the complicating factor is that according to the Stoics, there is a continuous hierarchy of value, with virtues at the top. Good things, that is, virtues, are distinct from the preferred indifferents insofar as they are goods, but nevertheless are said to have the greatest value (*megistē axia*) in comparison to the preferred indifferents, which have a secondary value.[76] Because Cicero follows Carneades in assimilating the preferred indifferents to lesser goods, he frequently presents the "Stoic" view as the view that emotions are caused by (or are) judgments that something that seems relevant to one's personal well-being is a *great* (*magnum*) good or evil.[77] This suggests that what

[73] See DL, 7.105–107; Stobaeus *Ecl.* 2.83.10.84,2 and 2.84.18.85.11 (= LS 58D–E).

[74] For the points in this paragraph, see ibid.

[75] Plutarch *de Stoic.* 1048A(= LS 58H); cf. Graver citing Origen *Against Celsus* reporting Chrysippus ([2002], 212).

[76] Stobaeus *Ecl.* 2.84.18–85.11(= LS 58E).

[77] E.g., *Tusc.* 3.25.61 citing Chrysippus; he frequently says that the intentional objects of emotions are "great" goods and evils (*magnum bonum/malum*) while arguing for the superiority

is at issue in the judgments that constitute passions and affections is the *degree of various goods*, rather than a distinction between good and nongood, which is what the Stoics actually held.

Now we come to Augustine's use of Cicero's statements. Augustine's account is an attempt to give metaphysical backing to this Ciceronian allusion to "great" goods. The backing he provides is ultimately Platonic and Peripatetic in its insistence that everything that exists, including the indifferents, has ontological goodness; but his metaphysics does not logically preclude key Stoic ethical distinctions, which he retains. He distinguishes the virtues from other things by the terms "eternal" and "temporal" goods. The eternal goods, like the Ciceronian "great goods," are the virtues. They are called "eternal" primarily because they can be possessed endlessly by the soul.[78] (In a secondary sense, they are called eternal because the possession of a virtue is the conformity of one's mind to an immutable standard of virtue (the Forms/Ideas in the mind of God)).[79] Once virtues are possessed, they can only be lost when he who has them willingly alters his relation to those standards; thus the possession of them is "up to us," as the Stoics had also said of the virtues. So eternal goods are "goods which cannot be lost in a shipwreck": the "inner treasures" of truth and wisdom, and the "jewels of conscience," such as hospitality, chastity, justice, and fidelity.[80] Temporal goods, on the other hand, "contribute to our earthly life";[81] they are mutable goods such as spouses, children, human cultures or

of the Stoic view over the Peripatetic (though Cicero does occasionally say the object is simply "a good" or "an evil" (*Tusc.* 3.11.24–25, 3.31.74 citing Zeno immediately after)). Graver presents evidence for the suggestion that Chrysippus is Cicero's direct source for much of the Stoic material ([2002] 204–207). Compare Seneca *ep.* 75.11 on the intentional object of a passion (*magnum pretium*) to Cicero *Tusc.* 4.11.26: "an eminently desirable thing" (*res valde expetenda*), citing Chrysippus shortly before (4.10.23).

[78] Of course, because Augustine held that the souls of creatures are not actually eternal (outside of time, immutable) but immortal, the virtues *as possessed* are "eternal" only in a manner of speaking. For other examples of Augustine's use of the term *aeternus/-a/-um* when he means unending, see e.g. *civ.* 11.11, 19.4, 20.2; *ep.* 140.7; *lib. arb.* 3.7, 3.9.

[79] So, for instance, we may speak of the justice of God *as God's*, and of the justice of God *as ours*; see *ep*. 140.30. On the standards of the virtues, see e.g., *lib. arb.* 2.10.29, 2.18.52, *Gn. litt*. 12.3.6. The Forms are contained in the Mind of God, the Son, Word, or Wisdom of God (these are different names for the second Person of the Trinity, see *civ.* 10.28, *Gn. litt.* 3.20.31, 4.3.7–8). For the doctrine of the Trinity as distinct from but made intellectually accessible by Plotinus' metaphysics see Rist (1996) 390–391, 394–395; and cf. Augustine *s.* 214.10. The other Ideas include transcendent Forms of natural kinds, *rationes aeternae,* which are reflected in immanent forms (or "numbers", the arrangements of the parts of created things), see e.g., *div. qu.* #46, *Gn. litt.* 2.6.12, 3.20.31, *lib. arb.* 2.11.31. Note that the transcendent sense of "eternal" cannot be the main sense of "eternal" that Augustine has in mind when calling human virtues eternal goods, because if so then trees and all natural but mortal things, which are also patterned on Forms/Ideas, could also be called "eternal goods" – a usage in which Augustine never engages.

[80] *s.* 21.8, *s.* 343.9. I take it that "truth" includes both "truthfulness" and "being in the truth," i.e., holding true beliefs about the most important questions.

[81] *en. Ps.* 32.2.5.

empires, fame, honor, and friendships.[82] Our possession of these goods can come to an end even against our will; it is outside our control, external to our moral character.[83]

Because the external and bodily things are goods, and emotions are about goods, the Augustinian wise person has emotions about a wider range of things than the Stoic sage does: about temporal goods as well as virtues. The hierarchy of moral goods over external goods means, for instance, that we should grieve *more* over someone's moral madness than over the fever of her body,[84] but not, as with the Stoics, that we should fail to grieve over the fever of her body (a dispreferred indifferent) altogether. We should grieve that our friends have died, but less than when they have done something morally wrong.[85]

Ironically, in thus distancing himself from the Stoics he equally distances himself from an important Platonic influence, Plotinus. Plotinus repeats without any qualifications the orthodox Stoic claim that we should not have emotions about nonvirtues such as the Stoics' "preferred indifferents."[86] (This is an instance of Stoic ethical teachings "mixed in" to the *Enneads*, referred to by Porphyry in his *Life of Plotinus*.)[87]

When Augustine adds even more complexity to his eudaimonism by appending an afterlife with continuous personal identity, he further nuances the content of judgments which cause emotions. A morally bad emotion, a "passion," is *caused by a false judgment that a temporal good has the value of the eternal goods*. Now according to Augustine, the value of virtue is such that possession of the virtues *produces* happiness – as with the Stoics. Virtue is also enough for getting to heaven, which is a state of maximal happiness – secure possession of the virtues plus an abundance of temporal goods which make life generally satisfying. (Augustine's distinction between the "happy" and the "happier or happiest" lives conceives of "happiness" Stoically as doing one's proper function; and it uses Aristotle's notion of the ultimate end as a state of total satisfaction when alluding to "happier or happiest lives."[88] Temporal goods, then, make a life happier or happiest, though they cannot produce happiness).[89]

[82] *en. Ps.* 26.2.17, *en. Ps.* 34.1.1.7, *en. Ps.* 58.1.7, and see Augustine on Rome, *s.* 296.7.

[83] See *lib. arb.* 1.3.8–1.4.10.

[84] *en. Ps.* 98.5; cf. *s.* 56.14, *s.* 172.1 and 3.

[85] *civ*. 19.8.

[86] 4.3.32, 1.4.4, 1.4.7. Plotinus calls these the "things according to nature," "outward things," and "necessities."

[87] 1.4. Questions about the extent of Plotinus' engagement with Stoic ethics still need attention. See Gerson (2008) 49–51; Graeser (1972); Theiler (1960) 77–82 (arguing for Plotinus' use of Posidonius). For summary of the arguments about the Stoic orthodoxy of Posidonius, see Tieleman (2003) 199–201.

[88] Cf. *fin*. 5.13.37 for transmission of the total satisfaction model to Augustine (Arist. *NE* 1.7 1097a25ff.; *NE* 1.10 1100a5ff.).

[89] Thus, virtue is not itself sufficient for the "happier" or "happiest" life, though it is for the happy life (it is in this sense that Augustine says that whoever has virtue "has all things" or has all

So as it happens, this overvaluation that constitutes a passion is incompatible with properly valuing eternal goods. For the virtues alone are necessary and sufficient for happiness, but someone who ascribes the value of eternal goods to temporal goods must hold that the possession of temporal goods is necessary to and constitutive of happiness. So in morally bad grief, for example, one judges falsely that a temporal good that has been lost was necessary for happiness; in morally bad joy, one judges falsely that a temporal good that has been attained makes one happy, and so on. This leaves eternal goods in a merely accidental role – they may make a life happier or happiest, but are not necessary to or productive of happiness. Hence, the person who has a passion is willing to sacrifice virtue[90] and therefore a passion is a "sin,"[91] an abandonment of virtue. In an "affection" (a morally good emotion) on the other hand, one assents to a true proposition about the value of some good or evil, whether temporal or eternal. If the emotion is about a temporal good, one judges correctly that a good necessary for maximal happiness has been or will be gained or lost, but at the same time accepts that maximal happiness is not possible in this life. If the emotion is about an eternal good, one judges accurately that something of the kind that is necessary for happiness and sufficient for (remotely) attaining maximal happiness in the afterlife has been gained or lost, or will be gained or lost.

One might object to this set of definitions that it leaves unjustified the censure of certain emotions that Augustine himself would want to censure. Presumably Augustine wants to say, for instance, that if I envy you for being brave whereas I am a coward, then my envy is a morally bad emotion. However, I have not, it seems, overvalued a temporal good. I have wanted the eternal good that you have for myself; and I have done so precisely because I value courage so highly.

Augustine would presumably deal with this objection by pointing out that if I envy you your virtue, then I am also wanting you not to have it, which is contrary to justice; and the conflict with virtue is caused by the fact that I

that is really necessary, *en. Ps.* 48.2.5). See *civ.* 19.3–4, where Augustine quarrels with the Old Academy not over the definitions of happiness and its degrees but over the question of when it may be attained. His view is that happiness (*beatitudo*) is not actually attained in this life, since it requires *secure* possession of the virtues, whereas until death virtue is tenuous given the damaged state of human souls due to the original sin (*civ.* 19.4; note that this is a change from his earlier position, see *retr.* 1.4.3). What is available in the afterlife in heaven, however, is not just the happy life but the happiest life. Heaven is possession of eternal goods – having all the virtues and contemplating God, who contains the Forms – plus an abundance of temporal goods. Cf. *en. Ps.* 85.24 on complete happiness (*beatitudo*) vs. *falsa felicitas*, *en. Ps.* 86.9, *en. Ps.* 147.4.

[90] So *civ.* 9.4: an affective reaction is not morally wrong so long as the person having it is still willing to give up whatever temporal good is at stake, rather than do something wrong (when forced to choose, will choose virtue over the temporal good).

[91] Cf. the definition of sin in *lib. arb.* 2.19.53.

am viewing virtue as a temporal good rather than an eternal good. My envy would manifest that my orientation is toward my own temporal possession of moral qualities, and that I erroneously conceive of these as limited resources for which competition is necessary; hence my orientation is not toward the criteria of the virtues themselves. That is, he would insist that someone who understands why virtue is valuable knows the secondary, metaphysical sense of "eternal" in the name "eternal goods," and thus understands that eternal goods are inherently "public" goods which can be possessed (via contemplation and action conforming to them) by an infinite number of minds at once, since eternal goods are immaterial.[92] It is not a matter of competition. Hence, Augustine emphasizes that unity arises among people who are oriented toward these same eternal or public standards.[93] Another response Augustine might make to this objection would be that, since the actual development of virtues requires the aid of grace,[94] it would be wrongfully impatient to be envious of another person's progress.

Note that there is a different point to be made, however, which Augustine does not himself address. Augustine should also believe that an emotion can be inappropriate even if it is not caused by the belief that a temporal thing has the value of a virtue. For he thinks that temporal goods are of differing magnitudes; they are not all equally good. So if one simply judges that some temporal thing has more or less value than it actually does, then it would still be an inaccurate judgment and could cause an inappropriate emotion. Suppose, for example, that a father was more excited that his favored sports team won, than that his child survived a dangerous medical operation; but suppose also that he would be willing to sacrifice both the win and the child's presence rather than steal or lie. Presumably Augustine would also consider this to be morally wrong, showing immaturity of judgment and disordered loves. But because he does not devote his energy to decrying this weaker kind of inappropriateness, we have to infer what his position would be. Presumably he would say the father's affective response was wrong, but less gravely wrong than a case in which a father was not afraid to steal in order to get the sports tickets.

3.5b. Tranquility and "Moderation" of Affectivity

Because for Augustine temporal as well as eternal goods are worthy of emotional reactions, a wide panoply of possible emotional reactions opens up for the wise person. Every day, multiple times a day, a wise person may have various emotions provoked by the shifting circumstances of temporal goods and the presence or absence of virtue in human acts. The wise person can have any emotion, provided that it is caused by a true judgment about the degree

[92] Cf. *lib. arb.* 2.7.19, 2.18.52, 2.14.38 and passim.
[93] E.g., *lib. arb.* 2.7.19–2.11.30. The point is also made in various sermons.
[94] See further Ch. 7.

of value the intentional object actually has. Is the sage therefore constantly subject to emotional upheavals?

The *City of God* sheds light on this question of tranquility, a feature of Stoic ethics prominent in Seneca and mentioned by Cicero, and thus known to Augustine. Where Seneca says that wounds of the sage are "light," meaning that they only pass as far as the impression or preliminary passion,[95] Augustine says that the wise person may have a real emotion of grief, caused by assent, but that this wound will be light in the sense that *it will not last very long*. Grief at the death of our friends heals more quickly the better we are.[96] It was good for the Corinthians to have been grieved only "for awhile" (*ad horam*) over their wrongdoing.[97]

How does Augustine justify this prescription of brevity? The brevity of grief when someone dies is surely owing to the detachment from temporal things and a focus on the afterlife. And presumably the brevity of the Corinthians' grief over their own moral failings is to be explained by supposing that they attended to the fact that God is merciful and would forgive them. But the very possibility of repentance and the pardonability of wrong actions is part of Augustine's more general insistence on the impermanence and merely relative importance of all temporal situations and events. Thus it seems that we should take Augustine's recommendations of brevity for grief as a signal of his position on emotions more generally:[98] *no emotion should last too long*.

That leaves us with the question of how long is too long. Augustine does not spell this out, although he reports that at his own mother Monnica's death – in an account that is consistent with his general account in the *City of God* and the sermons[99] – he cried for only part of an hour.[100] Presumably this question of the proper length of time to be upset or glad is comparable to the question of the proper amount of money to give in Aristotle's account of the virtue of generosity: the mean is not a rigidly fixed amount of wealth, but is a variable though always appropriate amount knowable by the wise person in the concrete circumstances. Augustine would, I take it, think that it is appropriate to

[95] *ira* 1.16.7.

[96] *civ.* 19.8: "quanto est animus melior tanto in eo citius faciliusque sanatur" [with regard to *luctus, quasi vulnus aut ulcus*].

[97] *civ.* 14.8, citing Paul with approbation.

[98] Cf. e.g., *s.* 172.3: our legitimate tears at the death of a loved one should be quickly dried by our joyful thought that they have gone to a better life in heaven.

[99] I largely agree with Griffiths (2011) 25 who comes to the conclusion of consistency on Augustine's part when analyzing this and other instances of tears in the *Confessions*, although I read *mollitia* in *conf.* 9.12.31 not as "mildness" (so Griffiths [2011] 23) but as "softness" (cf. Cicero *Tusc.* 2.21.47, on which see Ch. 4.5c notes); Augustine I take it is not reprimanding himself for not feeling enough, but for being like stereotypical women and children, who in the ancient caricatures are said to give in to excessive emotional reactions. See Section 4c below for analysis of Augustine's grief over Monnica.

[100] *conf.* 9.12.33.

grieve longer over someone's loss of a career than over their loss of a particular job, or longer over a friend's committing a large-scale injustice than a smaller offense; but he thinks that in neither case should the grief turn into wallowing – continually recalling the evil and feeling badly about it, as if it made happiness impossible.

Thus, "moderation" or "controlling" of the emotions[101] means, for Augustine, turning the thoughts toward a comparative evaluation of goods. Someone's emotion of joy upon winning the lottery will be "moderate" if she is glad but less glad than she would be if a friend generously gave money away to a good cause, or was baptized (for Augustine, a moral cleansing of the soul from vice). Sadness at seeing one's teenage son treat a girlfriend badly would be "moderated by reason" only if it were greater than the sadness one felt over one's house burning down.

3.5c. Pain and Pleasure, Soul and Body

But what does it mean to be "less glad," "more upset," or "have greater sadness"? We have spoken about affects of different durations, but just now I have used the language of intensity. Does this kind of language make sense within Augustine's account?

In fact it is possible to speak this way, because Augustine thinks that although affects have cognitive causes, they are sensible experiences – forms of pleasure and pain. He compares grief to physical pain[102] and asserts that emotions are instances of the general principle that the by-product of harmony is pleasure, while discord is accompanied by pain.[103] By this he means that there is a symmetry or lack thereof between what we want (because we think it is good for us) and what is actually the case. This symmetry or lack thereof is noticed by the mind, and then felt in the soul as pain in the case of grief, desire, and fear, or pleasure in the case of joy.[104] Thus it is possible to feel more intense pain

[101] For Augustine's use of the phrase, see e.g., *civ.* 9.5: "… passiones ita moderandas atque frenandas ut in usum iustitiae convertantur."

[102] "Pain of the flesh is a sort of taking offence by the soul due to [a disagreeable condition of] the flesh and a kind of disagreement with what it is suffering, just as pain of the rational soul, which is called sadness, is a disagreement with those things that happen to us against our will." (*civ.* 14.15). Trans. Dyson adapted. Cf. *en. Ps.* 42.6, *en. Ps.* 68.2.5, *en. Ps.* 87.3. Cf. also *civ.* 14.8–9 when he takes up the question of whether the Christian saint in this life is, like the Stoic sage, free from *tristitia*. He conceives of the question as being a question about freedom from pain, and answers that the Christian is not free from feelings of sadness "in the *animus*"; there is a right way to be pained (*dolere*).

[103] *civ.* 19.12.

[104] Fear, which is thinking that something we do not want to happen to us is going to happen, is painful: *en. Ps.* 57.20 and *en. Ps.* 67.36. Desire for what we have not yet attained is painful: *en. Ps.* 57.20 (*cruciantur desiderio*). Cf. *en. Ps.* 29.2.17 (to be wasted away by desires (*desideria*); to be torn apart by desires (*cupiditates*)). Anger, a species of desire, will also therefore be painful: When Augustine adopts the teaching of the "ancients" that anger is a desire for

or pleasure – a difference in quantity. The greater the magnitude of the good believed to be at stake, the more intense the feeling would presumably be; and of course we would also expect intensity to be linked to duration, with less intense feelings being shorter.

In comparison to Stoicism, this places Augustine closer to Zeno than to Chrysippus, insofar as Zeno said that emotions are movements of the soul (shrinking away from or expanding toward intentional objects) that are *caused by* judgments, but Chrysippus asserted that they simply *are* judgments.[105] Augustine is therefore able to avoid a charge which could be lodged against Chrysippus, namely that the "emotions are judgments" claim fails to address the experiential side of affects. (Chrysippus can fend off another potential objection, that he makes all thoughts emotions, by specifying the propositional content of emotion-judgments as different from other judgments.) But because contractions and expansions of a *material* soul are not an option for Augustine, whereas Zeno was a materialist, he will say instead that the "movement" in question is a pain or pleasure registered by *an interior sense in the immaterial sensate soul*.[106]

So, grief caused by the memory of past sins committed "sticks in the senses" of the one who has sinned.[107] And the pains and pleasures are themselves also called "senses," just as we would say that the sense of touch allows one to have a "sense" (sensory experience) of pain. Pain of soul (*dolor animi*) is a *sensus*, or awareness, of having been harmed.[108] Joy of soul (*gaudium animi*), a

revenge, he also situates the definition in a discussion of pain of the soul (*civ*. 14.15). On the other hand, harmony between what we think should be the case, and what is the case, brings about consolation or delight (*tranquillitas … plurimum consolationis adfert*; *consolatio* is a form of *iucunditas*, *civ.* 18.51; cf. *dulcedinem pacis*, *civ.* 19.11).

[105] See notes in Section 2 of this chapter.

[106] On the soul as sensate, including (in humans) affectively sensate, cf. *civ.* 21.3, 21.10. On this interior sense, see *s.* 159.3–4: "*Take delight in the Lord.* [Ps. 36:4]. Scripture says that. Now the Lord is righteousness.… You see, if you've got interior senses, all those interior senses are delighted by the delights of righteousness.… If you've got an interior sense of taste, listen to this: *Taste and see that the Lord is sweet* [Ps. 33:8]." This affective interior sense is distinct from the Aristotelian "common sense" discussed by Augustine in *lib. arb.,* the *sensus interior* that combines sense-data gathered through the five bodily senses, attributing them to one sensed object, and that perceives those senses themselves (*lib. arb.* 2.3.8, 2.4.10; cf. O'Daly (1987) 88–92, 102–105, 178). This common sense and the sense of shunning or seeking are found in irrational animals as well as humans (*lib. arb.* 2.3.8); but the affective interior sense is only in humans, because affects are caused by operations of reason (so *civ*. 8.17).

[107] *civ.* 22.30: "experientis sensibus inhaerent [mala]."

[108] *civ.* 14.15: Augustine contrasts "animi dolor, quae tristitia nuncupatur, dissensio est ab his rebus quae nobis nolentibus accidunt" with the lack of awareness of a pen banged against a table (*nullus est sensus*). Cf. the juxtaposition of pain of the body and *animi dolor* in *civ.* 21.10. Again, when we think about or are ourselves victims of the injustice of an aggressor, we necessarily undergo psychic pain (*animi dolor*) – unless we have lost all human feeling (*humanus sensus*) (*civ.* 19.7).

delight accompanying a harmonious relationship to God and others, is a *felix sensus*.[109]

Augustine's account of and evaluation of his own emotional response to Monnica's death, which he calls a sense of pain (*sensus*),[110] is a good example of his view. He acknowledges that grief over death is not intrinsically wrong or inappropriate; the fact of death and separation merits grief, which is now "necessary" because there is death and separation after the Fall.[111] But he is critical of himself for having a feeling of grief that is too vehement (*graviter*),[112] that has such power over him (*tantum in me posse*).[113] The vehemence of his emotion, he indicates, is caused by his giving in to the false belief that his own happiness is not possible without the company of his mother; his mind is disordered (*mens turbata*) by the falsity of this belief, to which he has assented.[114] This passion is a wound in his mind (*vulnus*), a term by which Seneca, citing Zeno, had referred to the damage done to the mind by assent to falsehood (passion).[115] Now, any emotion caused by a false belief would be a passion, but Augustine says that this is a particularly intense passion. What makes it so is, apparently, that he has judged that the good of his mother's company is of a very great magnitude. He indicates this when he says that his passion was due to the strong influence of habit – the fact that the solace and support he was accustomed to receive from his mother was habitual had made it seem that it would be impossible for him to continue at all without it.[116]

Ancient accounts that spoke of sensate soul-powers typically associated the functioning of these powers with particular bodily organs or organ systems. Augustine does seem to think that affective sensibility is related to the soul's being associated with some kind of body (either fleshy or "airy").[117] But he does not devote much attention to the claim or dwell on its implications. Furthermore, Augustine typically talks as if all affects are effects of cognitive processes. Even preliminary passions Augustine describes as arising exclusively

[109] *civ.* 14.10 re. the prefall state, with *civ.* 22.21.
[110] *conf.* 9.13.34.
[111] *conf.* 9.12.31.
[112] *conf.* 9.12.30, 9.12.32.
[113] *conf.* 9.12.31.
[114] *conf.* 9.12.30, 9.12.32.
[115] *conf.* 9.13.34; cf. *ira* 1.16.7, and cf. Ch. 5.1d.
[116] *consuetudinis vinculum etiam adversus mentem*; *mente turbata*, *conf.* 9.12.32.
[117] Thus, "the human emotion was not feigned in him who had *a real human body* and a real human soul [i.e., Christ]" (*civ.* 14.9; emphasis added). At *civ.* 14.10 he thinks it is worthwhile to raise the question whether the first humans had emotions in their animal (mortal) bodies which the resurrected saints will not have in their spiritual (immortal) bodies. Notice also that Augustine never disputes Apuleius' attribution of passions to the demons; this may be related to his view that the demons have airy bodies as a punishment (in *civ.* 8.22 it is mentioned as a possibility, and in *s.* 335D.4, of unknown date, it is asserted; cf. *civ.* 21.10).

from a dubitative sayable in an impression, with the feeling being the result of this.[118] So, anger might indeed include the release of adrenaline, and sadness involve chemical changes in the brain; but these processes are caused by thoughts – it is not the other way around. Augustine at one point repeats the Plotinian formula that affects "arise from both sides," that the body and raw sensation are the cause, or at least a contributing cause, of some affects, while reason is the cause of others:[119] "the soul is *not only* so affected by the flesh that it feels desire and fear, joy and grief, *but* it can *also* through itself be stirred by these emotions."[120] But he never develops the "affected by the flesh" side of the story.[121] In fact, his allusion to the flexible Plotinian account is anomalous and seems to be a convenient way of refuting Plato's view in the *Timaeus* (pitting one more sophisticated Platonist against another), as he tells us he intends to do in that passage,[122] rather than indicating an actual commitment to or deep assimilation of Plotinus' two-sides account.

Augustine's characterization of affects as pains and pleasures (having cognitive causes) seems to result not so much from the particular influence of Plato or Plotinus, as from his own general interest in pain and pleasure. A highly sensitive person – and any reader of the *Confessions* knows that Augustine was that – will tend to reflect on his own experience and have a particular interest in pain and pleasure.[123] This is perhaps one reason why Augustine has so

[118] See Ch. 4. Even lust, which he conceives of as essentially involving changes in the generative organs, he will say is caused by thoughts (*putare*); cf. Ch. 4.

[119] 3.6.2, 3.1.9, and the conclusion of the discussion of anger in 4.4.28. For discussion, see Emilsson (1998) esp. 348–350, Rehm (1997) esp. 470. Plotinus' statement likely shows the influence of the *Timaeus* 87a–b, a comparison which these authors do not make; Plotinus may also have in mind the Stoic notion of *propatheia* (i.e., he may be using *Timaeus* 87a–b to explain what happens in a preliminary passion).

[120] *civ.* 14.5.

[121] Another difference between Augustine and Plotinus is that Plotinus wants to restrict feelings themselves to the body, even when caused by the reason, because of metaphysical problems arising from the fact that soul, as form, cannot change (e.g., 1.4.5, 3.6.2); but Augustine has no qualms about saying that the soul is subject to change. Because it is the soul that is sensate, and the body is so only in virtue of the soul, he emphasizes, for instance, that even pain of the sense of touch can be felt without the actual disruption of a bodily sense (as by people dreaming, or by the disembodied dead in hell, prior to the resurrection of the body) (*s.* 280.5 and *civ.* 21.10). Although we would want to insist that such phantom pains are dependent upon sense experience as memories of it, that it is not a point that Augustine is much interested in noting or exploring. Nor do we see him insisting on the need for bodily organs in the analogous case of emotive pains and pleasures.

[122] *civ.* 14.5, citing the *Timaeus* account (cf. also the *Phaedo*).

[123] Augustine's own delicate sensitivity was perhaps heightened by certain elements within his culture and education; see Brown (2000) 16–20, 102, 117, 163, 170, 202. For Augustine's own description of his dramatic affective reaction to literature (Virgil), see *conf.* 1.13.20 and MacCormack (1998) 90, 94, 96–97, 99. It is, of course, ultimately proneness to perceptions of certain kinds that makes for "sensitivity" in affectivity, according to Augustine.

much to say about affectivity, and why, when he considers whether *apatheia* is desirable, he focuses on the Cynic and Skeptical accounts of it as insensibility, emphasizing repeatedly that this is callousness.[124]

One expected corollary of the "feeling in the interior sense" view that Augustine endorses is that the qualitative experience of pain or pleasure does not depend upon whether an emotion is sinful or good. For instance, a good man who is joyful feels no different pleasure from that of a bad man when exhilarated. Good and sinful emotions feel the same,[125] although they arise from different mental relations to truth and falsity.

Augustine's focus on pain and pleasure ultimately spurred him to reflect philosophically on the question of *why morally good people suffer affective pain,* a version of the problem of evil which shapes his response to the Stoics, and to which we shall return shortly.

3.5d. A Life of Cultivated Sadness and Joy

Sadness should not just happen to you, says Augustine,[126] sounding a little like a Stoic making the standard school argument that emotions are "up to us," because they are caused by assent to propositions, and so we should be more cautious in granting assent. But he goes on to say that we should *seek and find* sorrow,[127] signaling one implication of his disagreement with the Stoics on "goodness" (and its opposite, badness), the intentional objects of emotions.

To recommend sadness is of course to be at odds with the Stoic ideal of affective life.[128] Instead, it has affinities to the Platonic tradition. While Plato's ideal philosophers in the *Republic* and *Theaetetus* are temperamentally choleric,[129] his worldview as a whole would seem to imply that melancholy is also an appropriate attitude. The philosopher, attuned to the world of the Forms, would often be saddened by the comparative imperfection of this world.

Augustine's recommendation of sadness is in fact a reference to this kind of cosmic sadness. "This is the land of the dead," we should always be reminding ourselves – both because matter is in constant change, as Plato emphasized, and also because the material world and social life are perpetually dysfunctional and tending toward dissolution as a result of original sin.[130] In this life,

[124] *civ.* 14.9.
[125] E.g., *civ.* 14.8: "eadem aliis verbis."
[126] *en. Ps.* 136.5.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Recall that the Stoics bar sadness from the life of the paradigmatic sage, since the sage never commits moral evil.
[129] *Rep.* 375c; *Theaetetus* 144a–b. Plato apparently conceives of the philosopher as "fighting for the truth" – struggling to attain it, explain it, and bring the situations and institutions of the world into conformity with it. Augustine obviously believes in the importance of this kind of fighting – witness his energy in arguing against Donatists, Pelagians, and other adversaries – but does not make it the signature note of the good life.
[130] *en. Ps.* 85.24.

all temporal goods are "already passing and soon will die,"[131] but they are truly good to some limited extent and are in fact, to Augustine's way of thinking, necessary for maximal happiness. So even when good things are happening to us, we should sit down and "weep for Zion," lamenting that they will pass away, and that we are not yet perfectly happy in heaven.[132] "That's the way of the holy martyrs, the way of all the just, toiling away on earth, weeping casting their seed; this life, after all, is full of tears."[133] It is part of the virtuous life to miss people whom you love, and be saddened by your own sickness or impending death.[134]

Joy, however, dominates over sadness in Augustine's system, for reasons Platonic as well as Stoic and Christian. The primary reference point for the wise person is the set of immutable standards in light of which the moral actions and things in this world are evaluated. Without this, the sadness of comparison would not be possible, and yet that reference itself is an exercise yielding intellectual delight. Again, the sage knows that moral goods are radically superior in value, and sufficient for attaining the maximal happiness of the afterlife, where direct contemplation of God who contains the Forms (divine Ideas) is attained, and where creation will finally be in complete conformity with these. So the wise person's habitual reference to eternal goods makes his grief mingled, as it were, with joy: "The tears of the praying are sweeter than the joys of theatres."[135] "Our sorrow has an 'as if'; our joy does not have an 'as if': because it is in sure hope. Why does our sorrow have an 'as if'? Because like sleep it shall pass away, and the righteous shall reign in the morning."[136] Hence Augustine's sage can maintain joy even under duress of excruciating physical pain: "Men of the world are happy without happiness; but the martyrs were unhappy with happiness."[137]

3.5e. Mercy and Vulnerability

As noted at the outset, part of the appeal of Stoicism is that it provides a relatively sophisticated ancient account of the relation between the emotions of individuals and the well-being of others. If emotions are voluntary because they are caused by an exercise of assent that is up to us, then the Stoics have grounds for saying that destructive emotions such as rage or envy are blameworthy.

[131] *en. Ps.* 9.11.
[132] *en. Ps.* 136.5.
[133] *s.* 313D.3.
[134] *s.* 1721 and 3, *en. Ps.* 85.24, *en. Ps.* 87.3.
[135] *en. Ps.* 127.10. See also *s.* 299.8, *lib. arb.* 1.13.27 and *s.* 298.3: "The bitterness of suffering is still hanging over him, but his thoughts … go beyond that, and he thinks of what there is beyond; not of how it's going [for him at the moment], but of where he's going."
[136] *en. Ps.* 48.2.5. Cf. *en. Ps.* 127.10, *en. Ps.* 31.2.20.
[137] *en. Ps.* 127.5. Cf. *en. Ps.* 117.10 commenting on *"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing"* and *"And not only so, but we glory in tribulation"* (2 Cor. 6:10 and Rom. 5:3) and *s.* 276.2–3.

Yet the Stoic refusal to make compassion a good emotion (*eupatheia*) can look like an unwillingness to accept the vulnerability that follows from this link between the personal and the social, a link which their system otherwise seems to provide. According to Seneca,[138] the sage will have clemency but not compassion. That is, in cases where there are a range of legal punishments to be imposed on a guilty party, a magistrate will do right to choose a lesser punishment when there are mitigating circumstances; the habit of doing so is the virtue of clemeny. Analogously, in private affairs and social life a wise person will be circumspect and take others' particular conditions into consideration, showing kindness to those who need it. In both contexts, however, clemency is *without* an accompanying emotion of grief at others' bad moral states or ill fortune. That is, it is without compassion, which is defined as a species of the genus of grief. Rather than allowing ourselves to be saddened by the moral or physical difficulties of others, we should remember that other people are in the class of "externals," things that are outside of our control. To be upset about things we have no control over would be irrational.

As I discuss in detail elsewhere,[139] Augustine is aware of and in dialogue with Seneca's distinction between clemency and compassion, a distinction that has won the admiration of Nussbaum.[140] He accepts the Senecan criterion of clemency, namely that clemency is virtuous because it does not violate the criteria of justice, but he believes that clemency should have an affective component,[141] which is something that Seneca does not allow. He critiques the Stoic denigration of compassion (*misericordia*),[142] a species of grief, partly because he believes that it is a failure by the Stoics to stick to their own principles. They hold that the sage can have no compassion because compassion is a species of grief and the sage can have no cause for grief, given that he never does anything morally wrong. But their claim that it is irrational to be saddened by another person's bad *moral* state is merely asserted, not established by argument. If the Stoic sage cares about virtue for its own sake, the matter of whether a virtue or vice is one's own or another's is not obviously a deal-breaker, and the claim that a sage can have emotions only about his own virtue looks arbitrary.

Because there is no actual argument that Augustine can detect, he concludes that what is really motivating the Stoic attitude to compassion must be something else – namely, a desire to avoid pain. So Augustine thinks that

[138] Braund (2009) 66–68 (following Griffin [1976] 158–159) sees Seneca as moving away from traditional Stoic ideas about leniency (*epieikeia*) when he praises *clementia*; but this does not take into account the important point made by Cooper and Procope (1995) 125 n. 18. See also the other useful points in ibid. 120, 126 on the connotation of the term *epieikeia* in Aristotle and on the legal context. Cf. Kaster and Nussbaum (2010) 137–140.

[139] This section (Section 5e) is a compressed presentation of the discussion in Byers (2012b).

[140] Nussbaum (2001) 357, 359, 364.

[141] He sees "suffering with" (*contristari, dolere*, *conpati*) as the central issue.

[142] *civ.* 9.5.

the Stoics are (in fact though not officially) advocating a version of Epicurean freedom from painful emotions of grief and fear, though restricted to the case of other-regarding emotions. (He knows, it is obvious from *City of God* book fourteen, that they allow a painful emotion of fear, "precaution of doing wrong," in the case of *oneself*.)

In this regard, Augustine's self-described "Christian" account of affectivity differs from the Stoic not by being altruistic rather than classically eudaimonistic, nor by adding a radically new and different account of the causes of proper emotion, nor by being more "emotive" in principle than Stoicism, but by being consistent in its claim that virtue is the most important thing, and is important in itself.

There is, however, a more substantive difference between what Augustine calls "our system" and the Stoic one, especially when it comes to the matter of compassion for physical sufferings. Here Augustine grounds the biblical injunction to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and otherwise succor those in physical distress in a body-soul ontology that is largely inspired by Plotinus. The soul bears the image of God; the human body bears the image of the soul that forms it; therefore the human being – soul and body – has dignity.

3.5f. Terminological Aberrations and Augustinian Apologetics

Augustine's critique of the Stoics' exclusion of compassion from the *eupatheiai* provides a key that helps us to explain his unorthodox use of Stoic terminology in *City of God* books nine and fourteen ("passions," "perturbations"), a usage that commentators have found puzzling.[143] Two questions can be addressed: why does Augustine seem to be so cavalier about saying that the Stoics' good emotions (*eupatheiai*) are "the same thing in other words" as the Stoics' bad emotions (*pathē*)?[144] And, even granted that Augustine is like Seneca and Gellius when he restricts the preliminary passions to the *animus*, keeping them out of the *mens*, why does he use the terms "passion" and "perturbation" (technical terminology for Stoic passions) for these preliminary passions,[145] as when he claims at the beginning of *City of God* 9.4 that the Peripatetics or Platonists have substantially the same view as the Stoics on whether passions befall the wise person, given that the Stoics allow "passions" in the *animus*? The short

[143] Sorabji thought that Augustine's abuse of the term "passion" showed that he did not understand the Stoic distinction between preliminary passions and passions (2000) 378. Irwin (2003), though arguing that Augustine's representation of Stoicism is largely accurate, suggests that he made a mistake in using the term "passion." Colish's statement that Augustine rejects the Stoic view of the passions also seems to be based upon Augustine's use of *perturbatio* in *civ.* book nine, and on his use of that word (as well as *timor, tristitia*, and *laetitia*) for the feelings of those he proposes as models of virtue in *Io.ev. tr.* (Colish [1985] 223–224). Spanneut (2002) 293 follows Colish.

[144] *civ.* 14.8; Cf. *Io ev. tr.* 60.4: to feel the same things "easdem res sentire."

[145] *civ.* 9.4: "Passions and perturbations … do befall the *animus* of the [Stoic] sage…"

answer is that he is driven by a concern to show that the Stoic sage, even by his Stoic sources' own admission, does not have immediate control over the aetiology of all of his affects, and particularly of his painful affects. This point is part of Augustine's larger apologetical argument in the *City of God*. However, a complete response requires a longer answer.

First we should note that it is important to seek a reason for Augustine's abuse of Stoic terms, for the usage is probably intentional; it is unlikely that colloquial language or varying senses of the terms are simply being carried into the *City of God* unreflectively. It is true that vulgarly, a wide range of phenomena were embraced by the word *perturbatio*. Cicero appropriates this word and makes it a technical term to render Stoic "*pathos*," a morally bad emotion. But in vulgar Latin, it could refer to any disruption of a harmonious arrangement or ideal state.[146] Because preliminaries are a kind of disruption (a change) in the affective state of a person, tending in the nonideal direction of a passion proper, they could informally be called "perturbations."[147] It is also true that the Greek term *pathos*, to which Augustine refers in *City of God* 9.4, vulgarly meant simply a being affected, an experience, and that *passio* is sometimes used by Apuleius (whom Augustine is working off of just prior to this) in this sense of change and passibility as opposed to the immutability of eternity, rather than in the narrower Stoic-assigned sense of an emotion caused by false judgment (Apuleius actually uses both senses in the same passage).[148] So this would make it possible for Augustine to use the term "passio" in the sense of change, being affected in some way, to refer to a Stoic preliminary, while still knowing that a Stoic preliminary is not a Stoic passion. The fact that Seneca and Cicero had described the Stoic preliminary as a "feeling" (*sentire*), a disruption of the sage's usual calm,[149] and as a "little contraction" or "bite," implying that a preliminary is experientially a pain or pleasure, like an emotion proper, though it is not an emotion proper,[150] might also seem to allow for his

[146] See *en. Ps.* 33.2.8, *en. Ps.* 38.3, *en. Ps.* 48.1.1, *en. Ps.* 55.6, *en. Ps.* 77.38, *en. Ps.* 99.5, *en. Ps.* 103.4.12, *en. Ps.* 106.12, *en. Ps.* 128.1, *en. Ps.* 130.8, *en. Ps.* 136.9, *en. Ps.* 148.9, *en. Ps.* 149.7, *s.* 37.15, *s.*252.2, *s.*359.2. Augustine applies the terms to cognitive states, as in false judgments (which conflict with reality) (*s.* 237.3), or uncertainty about what is the case (an unstable stance in relation to the truth) (*en. Ps.* 61.17, *en. Ps.* 109.6, *en. Ps.* 109.12, *en. Ps.* 118.2.1, *s.* 47.11–12, *s.* 51.7), to dissonance with the proper moral order (as with emotions that are sins) (*s.* 275.2, *s.* 211.6, *s.* 216.5), and, less frequently, to an experience of pain resulting from a lack of harmony between various parties or parts of a whole (*en. Ps.* 41.10, *en. Ps.* 76.19, *en. Ps.* 91.2, *en. Ps.* 102.15, *en. Ps.* 102.25).

[147] See the usage in e.g., *en. Ps.* 32.2.1, *en. Ps.* 37.15, *en. Ps.* 42.7, *en. Ps.* 54.5, *en. Ps.* 54.8, *en. Ps.* 145.2, *en. Ps.* 145.5, *s.* 75.10, *en. Ps.* 102.5, *en. Ps.* 127.16, *en. Ps.* 147.3, *s.* 305.4, *en. Ps.* 108.5. Here again he maintains a conceptual distinction between preliminaries and passions by distinguishing between *mens* and *animus*, as he has done in *civ.* (he uses *anima* when the scriptural text he is commenting on says *anima*, though *animus* is his preferred word).

[148] *DDS* 12–13.

[149] *ira* 1.16.7.

[150] Cf. Sorabji (2000), 68 "passion" and "disturbance" in Plutarch and Epictetus.

using *passio* and *perturbatio* to refer to the preliminary reaction, restricting it to the discursive and sensate powers of the rational soul (*animus*) rather than allowing it to be a disorder of the evaluative functions of the higher reason (*mens*). But Augustine was sufficiently aware of the technical Stoic sense of *perturbatio* in Cicero, and of *pathos*/*passio*, and sufficiently in agreement with the Stoics that some emotions are morally bad and that this requires consent, to abide by the terminological rules for these terms in the *City of God*. Indeed, he often *does* observe this rule.[151]

His primary reason for flouting the terminology of *perturbatio* and *passio* in *City of God* books nine and fourteen seems to be that he wants to emphasize the common sensible aspect of various kinds of affects, especially painful affects. We know that he thinks the Stoics are guilty of pain-avoidance when they refuse to give clemency an affective dimension. So in book 9.4, where the issue is fear and he takes up the question, "Do passions befall the *animus* of the sage?" he is granting that the sage does not make an erroneous judgment, and asking whether he nonetheless sometimes feels affective pain without a judgment causing it. His answer is "yes," and this as we have seen was consistent with Cicero and Seneca: the sage having a preliminary passion feels some pain, even though he has not yet consented. This is what Augustine wishes to emphasize: that the sage is subject to pain which she has not chosen. Thus, having ended 9.4 by drawing attention to how preliminary passions are felt subjectively,[152] he goes on in 9.5 to mention a few painful Stoic passions, and to say that the Stoic sage has nonconsensual versions of these in his *animus*. He thereby shows that the *sensible* aspect of these experiences is what he is consistently referring to, and that what he meant in 9.4 was that the preliminary passions are qualitatively similar, as pains, to passions proper.[153] In order to emphasize this, Augustine refers to the preliminary pain by saying that it is an affect or "passion" "of" (caused by) the discursive, impressionistic part of the rational soul (*animus*) only, which does not disorder the consenting mind

[151] E.g., "The city, that is, the fellowship, of the ungodly … is convulsed by perverse forms of those emotions as if by diseases and perturbations (*affectibus pravis tamquam morbis et perturbationibus*)" (*civ.* 14.9). Similarly, Augustine often reserves *passio*, which he identifies as the more literal translation of Stoic *pathos*, for emotions which are sins: "the demons resemble humans … in the fact that they too are subject to the perturbation of passions (*perturbatione passionum*) which dominate stupid and and wicked people" (*civ.* 9.8; translation adapted); "He [Apuleius] confesses – even though he does not wish to, for he holds them in honor – that the demons who occupy the region below the moon suffer diseases of passions and disturbances of the mind (*morbis passionum mentisque turbelis*)." (*civ.* 10.27); cf. "Whoever could see the inward parts of evil men … whoever could examine their souls racked with such mighty perturbations of desires and fears (*tantis perturbationibus cupiditatum et timorum*), would see them to be miserable even when they are called happy" (*en. Ps.* 72.11).

[152] The Stoic, no less than the Peripatetic, trembles (*pavescere*), grows pale (*pallere*), and shudders (*perhorrescere*).

[153] *irasci*, *constristari*, *timere*, *misericordia*: *huiusce modi passiones in animum sapientis admittunt*.

(*mens*). Because the Stoic sage feels pains (as preliminaries) that are not caused by consent, Augustine says there is "almost no difference" (*paene nihil distat*) between the Stoics and the Peripatetics and Platonists; for the Peripatetics and Platonists claim that the sage has feelings that happen to him and that must be subsequently controlled by reason.[154]

Similarly, when discussing the good emotions (*eupatheiai*), he brings forward examples of illustrious men (Cicero, Christ, St. Paul) who extolled or exhibited painful feelings such as mercy, righteous anger, and fear that others may sin, again predicating these feelings of the *animus*. Here he restricts these to the *animus* because although these result from consent, the consent was to a true statement and hence they are not "disorders of the *mens*." He is emphasizing that the good and bad person have the same range of feelings, although they feel as they do from different causes.[155] He makes this clear also in the *On the Gospel of John*, where he uses the same terminology, and says that by these words he is referring to "feelings" (*res sentire*).[156]

But why the emphasis on affective pain? It serves his overall apologetical program. One of Augustine's main goals in the *City of God* is to convince pagan intellectuals that they are under the sway of original sin and can only be freed by baptism. After philosophical reflection upon the question of *why pain exists*, Augustine articulated an historical account of the role of pain and pleasure in human life (before the fall, while humanity is subject to original sin, and in the eschaton) that become part of this project: all pain is a result of the corruption to nature caused by the original sin; pain did not exist before the fall and will not exist in heaven. We see Augustine making affective pain, in particular, a plank in this argument throughout the *City of God*. He says that before the fall people had everything they wanted, thus there were no painful emotions. [157] We are now susceptible to painful feelings of mercy (a form of sadness), anger, and fear,[158] because we witness events that are truly bad – contrary to the order established by the Creator before the fall.[159] In heaven, there will be no painful feelings, because pain is incompatible with perfect

[154] *civ*. 9.4; cf. 9.5, the schools have the same opinion on whether the sage is affected nonconsensually by feelings that are not vicious.

[155] The causes of course being true vs. false judgments, resulting from perceptions influenced by dispositions, *civ.* 14.6–7; cf. 9.5, 14.9.

[156] *Io ev. tr.* 60.4 on *perturbatio, timor, tristitia,* and *laetitia* of the *animus* among the virtuous. When he says that he rejects the arguments of the philosophers who deny that perturbations befall the soul (*animus*) of the sage (*Io. ev. tr.* 60.3), this would then be a reference to the second (Cynic, Skeptic) meaning of *apatheia* as insensibility; he does not refer to the Stoics.

[157] *civ.* 14.10, referring to the prefall paradise of Adam and Eve: "nullum omnino alicunde malum quod contristaret inruebat," "nec inerat quod carnem animumve hominis feliciter viventis offenderet," "ex hoc amore grande gaudium, non desinante quod amabatur ad fruendum."

[158] *civ.* 9.5.

[159] *civ.* 14.10 end on *labor, dolor, mors*.

happiness.[160] (This view of heaven does not, of course, make him a spiritual hedonist who thought that the *motive* for orienting oneself toward God is the attainment of ultimate pleasure.)[161]

Now, when the Stoics show by their refusal to make clemency a *eupatheia* that they wish to separate the sage as much as possible from affective pain, this frustrates Augustine's apologetical project immensely.[162] If they do not acknowledge the ubiquity of effects of the Fall such as pain, how can he convince them that they need a savior? The sage's vulnerability to affective pain must be pointed out and harped upon. So he insists that the *quality* of the feelings in preliminary passions, passions, and affections can be the same – painful – even if the cause and degree are different. Stoic sympathizers who reflect on these points will be driven to admit that their own theory is not consistent when it rules out affective pains such as eupathic compassion simply because they are pains, that the empirical evidence of illustrious men requires them to allow the paradigmatic sage painful other-regarding emotions, and that they must then ask deep questions about the origin of pain and the possibility of its ultimate alleviation. Or so he hopes.

Finally, there is perhaps another reason linked to his apologetical focus in the *City of God* that helps to explain why he does not always stick to the Stoic terminology, even though he wants to use the Stoics' basic psychological

[160] 14.9–10 regarding heaven: "our perfect blessedness which is to come will be free from *stimulo timoris* and from any *tristitia* … the fear that is 'clean' signifies the will by which we shall inevitably not want to sin … *tranquillitate caritatis cavere peccatum*" (trans. Dyson adapted). He is referring to the Stoic good emotion of *cautio,* saying that in heaven it will not be a pain because we will know that we won't sin – it will be an aversion to sin without painful worry that we may sin; cf. *civ.* 14.8: *cautio devitat malum* and *civ.* 20.17.

[161] Here I differ from Miles (1992) 20 and 37. She marks his numerous references to the transitoriness of the pleasure afforded by temporal goods, and to the intensity of delight felt in love of the highest good, and draws the above conclusion. The inference is invalid. Just because a philosopher compares different pleasures, this does not mean that he believes pleasure is the goal of human life. Heaven for Augustine is the contemplation of God/goodness, and living in a renovated creation; experiences of delight are byproducts of these activities.

Miles' statements contradict passages in which Augustine tells us that he thinks hedonism is disgusting and wrong, and shows that he understands hedonism to include not only the pursuit of physical gratification, but also pursuit of the "higher" pleasures sought, for instance, by the aesthete addicted to the cathartic thrill of good drama or by the "intellectual" who accumulates a vast store of unnecessary facts in order to sate his disordered curiosity (e.g., *civ.* 19.1; *conf.* 3.2.2–4; 10.35.54–57; *s.* 150.6). Likewise, it is clear from Augustine's sermons that he regards the avoidance of pain, and not just the pursuit of positive pleasure, as an inadmissible goal if one is to be considered virtuous. He thinks that only the Christian can be authentically virtuous, and that every Christian must be a martyr ("martyr" meaning broadly anyone who endures well any kind of suffering, e.g., the martyrdom of illness, *s.* 299.8, *s.* 313A.2).

[162] Cf. the frustration in *civ*. 19.4: "I wonder at the shamelessness of the Stoics. For they contend that such ills are not really ills at all [referring to a litany of sufferings in this life resulting from the Fall] … these men, in their stupid pride, believe that the ultimate good is to be found in this life, and that they can achieve happiness by their own efforts."

categories. Intellectuals who admire specialized technical terminology will be disappointed when they look at the Bible, just as Augustine himself had been many years before as a rhetor.[163] So he is trying to wean them off of the snobbery that can accompany specialized vocabulary, bridging the gap for them by instantiating in himself both an educated awareness of the ethical discussions, and a colloquial vocabulary.

3.6. A LAST PUZZLE: "WILL," "LOVE," AND EMOTIONS

There is, finally, a puzzling set of statements which looks at first to be related neither to the ontological backing that Augustine gives to Stoic rational psychology, nor to his Christian eschatological account of maximal happiness, and which might seem *prima facie* to be at variance with his general adherence to cognitive psychology.

3.6a. "Will" Is Emotion?

First of all, we have Augustine's claim that "will is in all" the emotions, "rather, they are all nothing other than wills. For … will shifts and turns into these or those emotions."[164] Understanding this is essential for determining the character and consistency of Augustine's account of voluntary emotions, and also for assessing the value of his historical contribution, if in fact he made one here. Is he trying to explain in what way emotions are voluntary? Is he claiming that all emotions are versions of the Stoic *eupatheia* rational desire (*boulēsis*/*voluntas*)?[165] Is he staking their voluntariness on a faculty of "will" rather than assent?[166] He says this while discussing Stoic emotions, and refers to both morally good and bad emotions; but what could he mean?

We might be tempted to assume that the puzzling sound of these statements is owing to a mysteriously Augustinian, biblical,[167] Christian,[168] or

[163] *conf.* 3.5.9. Cf. Brown (2000) 298–303 on the anti-Christian snobbery of the intellectual elites of the late Roman Empire.

[164] *civ.* 14.6: "Voluntas est quippe in omnibus, immo omnes nihil aliud quam voluntates sunt. Nam … in hos vel illos affectus mutatur et vertitur voluntas." My trans.

[165] So King (2012) 13 n. 30.

[166] So O'Daly (1987) 89, cited by Knuutila (2004) 155.

[167] In Augustine's scriptures, *voluntas* and *velle* are used to render the Greek terms *thelēma* or *thelēsis* and *thelein* (see the citations in Augustine, and Jerome's retouched Old Latin translations of Psalms 1:2, 20:3, 29:8, 67:10, 142:10, 146:10; cf. Rom. 7:18–19, 7:21). Both nouns are in the pagan philosophical traditions (*thelēsis* in Stoicism, and both *thelēsis* and *thelēma* in Plotinus (e.g., *Enn.* 1.4.7, 1.4.11 where *thelēma* means generically desire or wish)). The frequency of *thelēma* in the Greek texts of the LXX and the NT therefore seems to be because these use relatively late Greek, and not because of any particular religious ideas. The verb *thelein* becomes common in Hellenistic Greek by 250 B.C.E. (cf. LSJ, "thelō").

[168] Frede (2011) 153, 154 rightly notes that Augustine is very much an ancient figure, and that differences between him and the earlier figures Plato and Aristotle on "will" are not primarily owing to Augustine's Christianity, but to his being a *late ancient* thinker.

protomodern quality in the concept of "will" itself.[169] But these assumptions are discredited by a large number of passages in which Augustine uses the term "will" (*voluntas*).

Across multiple texts we see that Augustine rather consistently uses the word *voluntas* when he is speaking of motivation and using Stoic epistemological categories like impression and assent, and that he, like his Latin Stoic sources, uses *voluntas* for impulse (*hormē*) toward action.[170] (So Cicero uses *appetitus, appetitio,* and *voluntas* for *hormē*.[171] Seneca uses *impetus* and *voluntas* for *hormē.*[172] Rufinus translates Origen: *voluntas* for *hormē.*)[173] Augustine explicitly translates *hormē* as an impulse toward action (*impetus vel appetitus actionis*), and he indicates that by *voluntas* he means the impulse of a *rational* being (as distinct from an animal).[174] In addition, the Stoics spoke of both

Statements that *voluntas* is particularly "Christian," are symptomatic of a larger problem of lack of definition: What exactly is Christianity, as a set of claims in intellectual history? Basically, it is a worldview which posits that God is a Trinity, that there was an incarnation of God in the person of Jesus, and that grace (from Christ) is needed for the attainment of moral virtues because of a moral "fall" or sin at the beginning of human history. So, e.g., mere descriptions of the condition of weakness of will in terms of "wishing/willing" alternate courses of action (so Romans 7) are not themselves peculiarly "Christian." What would be particularly Christian would be the claim that grace from Christ is needed for overcoming such acrasia. Note, however, that the phrase *liberum arbitrium voluntatis* does seem to be concentrated in Christian Latin authors; the phrase seems to be a rendering of the Stoic idea that properly human actions proceed from *prohairesis kai hormē*; see Appendix II.2a on Clement of Alexandria et al.

[169] So, influentially, Dihle (1982) 123, 127, 134, 143; Kahn (1988) 237. But see e.g., the response to Dihle by Mansfeld (1991) 108–11. For an overview of the literature on "will" in Augustine, see Byers (2006) 171–173.

[170] On *hormē* as "will," see Mansfeld (1991) 118–119.

[171] See Appendix II on the *fat.*5.9 in comparison to Augustine. Although Cicero uses the term *voluntas* for the Stoic emotion of rational desire (*boulēsis*) in the *Tusculans*, he also uses *voluntas* and *motus voluntarius* in Stoic contexts for the concept *hormē* (*ND* 2.22.58 explicitly mentioning *hormē*, and *fat.* 11.25). So, what is done *voluntate* is internally caused rather than externally coerced; here the meaning is that something is "up to us" (*eph'hēmin*) when done by *hormē*, or *voluntate,* e.g., *Tusc*. 3.27.64, 3.28.66, 3.29.71, 3.33.80, 4.15.34, 4.31.65, 5.2.5; *off.* 2.9.32; and compare Epictetus' use of *hormē* for the will by which God governs the events of the world (*Discourses* 4.1) to Cicero's use of *voluntas* in *fin*. 4.5.11, 5.20.55; *ND* 3.38–9.92.

[172] E.g., *ira* 2.1.1–5, 2.3.5, 2.4.1; note that he sometimes distinguishes pre- or nonrational *hormē,* which he calls *impetus*, from rational [= following assent] *hormē*, which he calls *voluntas* (e.g., *clem.* 1.1.3, 2.2.2; *ira* 2.1.1–5); one indication that *voluntas* is a stand-in for *hormē* is that *voluntas* is directed at doing an action (*ben*. 1.7.1, 5.12.7, 6.9.2, *ira* 2.30.1). Some of the lexical work in Inwood (2000) is germane here, though his focus is on contemporary philosophical accounts of "traditional will" and "summary will."

[173] *Prin*. 3.1.2. Augustine was not heavily influenced by Rufinus' use of the term in particular, for Rufinus, after translating Origen's *hormē* as *voluntas*, makes the mistake of asserting that *phantasia* is (*id est*) *voluntas* (whereas Origen says, correctly, that *hormē* follows (*akolouthei*) the *phantasia*), and Augustine never makes this mistake. But Rufinus' translation is valuable for showing that the Latin term was used to translate *hormē* prior to Augustine.

[174] *civ.* 19.4 (translating *hormē* as *impetus vel appetitus actionis*); cf. *civ.* 5.9 on *voluntas* as the proper meaning of the cause of action in a rational animal (the *motus* by which animals

occurrent and dispositional impulse,[175] and Augustine similarly uses *voluntas* in both ways.[176] Furthermore, the Stoics gave a taxonomy of various species of impulse, among which were various kinds of desires,[177] and some of Augustine's terminology might best be explained by supposing that he was familiar with this idea.[178] Though he occasionally speaks of a power (*potentia*) in the soul called will, the Stoics also said that *hormē* was a part, or power, of the soul.[179] Translations and interpretations which have Augustine speaking of a "faculty of will," "the will," or "acts of a faculty of will" are reading medieval scholastic categories back onto antiquity, and are not helpful for understanding Augustine.

Eschewing assumptions, therefore (including the assumption that what Augustine is doing here is necessarily *entirely* Stoic),[180] let us try to ferret out his meaning. And because in colloquial English, the term "will" is laden with scholastic and modern baggage which can cloud the issue, we should refrain from using it in what follows, sticking simply to the Latin term, *voluntas*.

Consider first of all Augustine's claim that "emotions are *voluntates*." Given that Augustine and other Latin authors use *voluntas* to render *hormē*, this is recognizable as a Latin rendering and a generalizing of the old Stoic definition of passion, "passion is excessive impulse."[181] Augustine is generalizing from the

lacking reason act (*facere*) is *improperly* called *voluntas*) and *civ.* 12.6 (*voluntas causa efficiens est operis*); and see further Appendix II.

[175] *Hexis hormētikē*, Stobaeus 2.87. Cf. the usage of *voluntas* in Seneca *ben.* 5.25.6.

[176] So *trin.* 11.6.10 on occurrent rational impulse, a passing will to see this one thing (*ad hoc unum interim voluntas videndi*); and for other texts, including on the dispositional sense, see Appendix II.

[177] Stobaeus 2.86–87. The taxonomy is translated and discussed in Inwood (1985) Appendix 2. See further next note.

[178] For the Stoics, impulse (*hormē*) is subdivided into rational and nonrational. Augustine's use of *voluntas* for human impulse (the *appetitus* of *anima rationalis* in *trin.* 11.2.6ff. (e.g. 11.4.7)) versus *appetitus* or *motus* for nonrational animals (e.g., *Gn. litt.* 9.14.25, *civ.* 5.9) is reminiscent of this. The Stoics also spoke of "rational impulse away" from something (*aphormē logikē*), and Augustine uses the terms *voluntas aversa* and *voluntas dissentiens* in a similar way (*lib. arb.* 2.19.53, *en. Ps.* 32.2.2, *s.* 13D(= 159A).4, *civ.* 14.6). The Stoics make desire (*orexis*) a subspecies of impulse; that apparently helps to explain why Augustine says that impulse (*appetitus*) and desirous love (*amor*) are the same kind of thing (*trin.* 9.12.18; Augustine's claim that we "love by will" (*voluntate diligimus*, 14.3.5) is apparently along the same lines). Furthermore, the Stoics classify the intention for a goal (*prothesis*) as a species of rational impulse, and Augustine interchanges a term by which he connotes intention of an action (*intentio*) with *voluntas* (e.g., *trin.* 11.2.5) and uses the phrase *intentio voluntatis*.

[179] Augustine *lib. arb.* 2.18.49–2.19.50, note that Byers (2006) 187 is incorrect here; see Aetius 4.21.1–4 (LS 53H), Iamblichus, *On the Soul* in Stobaeus 1.368, 12–20 (LS 53K), Galen *PHP* 2.5.9–13 (LS 53U), and discussion in Annas (1992) 65–66.

[180] Others have considered whether the notions of love or desire (*erōs, boulēsis*) are captured by Augustine's *voluntas*; see Rist (1994) 186–188, Van Riel (2007). On these kinds of questions, see Section 6b of this chapter.

[181] Excessive and irrational "movement (*kinēsis*) or impulse (*hormē*)" (DL, 7.110; Stobaeus 2.88 (LS 65A)). Cf. Cicero *Tusc.* 3.4.7, 4.21.47 using "movement" (*motus*) and "impulse"

claim about passion – a morally bad species of emotion – to emotions generally. Morally bad emotions are excessive impulses, according to the Stoics; morally good emotions would be nonexcessive, that is, appropriate impulses; so emotions (whether good or bad) are impulses. Thus Augustine has reasoned.

But how does Augustine understand this? As we have already seen, he does not think that all emotions are intrinsically action-guiding – that if I grieve, I will necessarily tear my hair or weep, or that if I am angry I will punch people, or at least pillows. So "emotions are impulses" does not mean that emotions are identical to impulses to act. We seem to have clues about what he means, immediately prior to and after this – he says that *voluntas* is "in" emotions, that it "shifts and turns into emotions."

Even though the Stoic definition appears to say that emotions are occurrent impulses, Augustine glosses "impulse" in the dispositional sense. He means that occurrent emotions arise from hormetic dispositions. This becomes clear when we walk through the passage clause by clause. Here it is, with numbering inserted for ease of reference:

> The quality of a person's *voluntas* makes a difference: for if it is wrongly directed, these emotions will be wrong, but if it is rightly directed, they will be not only blameless but even praiseworthy. Indeed, [1] *voluntas* is in all [emotions]; [2] rather, they are all nothing other than *voluntates*. For … [3] just as human *voluntas* is attracted or repelled in accordance with the variety of objects [*pro varietate rerum*] that are pursued and avoided, so it shifts and turns into these or those [i.e., perverse or praiseworthy kinds of] emotions.[182]

He is saying that occurrent emotions evince dispositions to engage in behaviors of pursuit or avoidance of types of things, and that the moral quality of an emotion derives from that of the underlying disposition. In [1] he says: "*voluntas* is in all of these emotions." Apparently the *voluntas* and the emotion are two different things, but the emotion has something from the *voluntas*, or is made from it. He then corrects himself: [2] "rather (*immo*), they are all nothing other than *voluntates*." Here he is recalling himself to the Stoic definition. But the interpretation he gives of this statement of identity is that [3] *voluntas* is changed into (*mutatur et vertitur voluntas*) these emotions. This seems to be a reference to dispositional *voluntas*; for it is evocative of the way in which he

(*appetitus*). Seneca uses the term *voluntas* when defining anger in *ira* 2.1.4: anger is not just an *impetus* (apparently nonrational *hormē*, a reaction without assent, such as animals would have; cf. *clem.* 1.1.3, 2.2.2), but a stirring up of rational impulse (*voluntas*) via assent to the proposition that "I ought not to have been wronged and ought to be avenged."

[182] *civ.* 14.6. "Interest autem qualis sit voluntas hominis, quia si perversa est, perversos habebit hos motus [antecedents *cupiditas*, *laetitia*, *timor*, *tristitia* in 14.5], si autem recta est, non solum inculpabiles verum etiam laudabiles erunt. Voluntas est quippe in omnibus, immo omnes nihil aliud quam voluntates sunt. Nam … pro varietate rerum quae appetuntur atque fugiuntur, sicut allicitur vel offenditur voluntas hominis, ita in hos vel illos affectus mutatur et vertitur voluntas." My trans.; Dyson and Bettenson consulted.

elsewhere describes dispositional *voluntas* as a ground from which occurrent impulses issue (*exsistere/fieri ab voluntate, ex voluntate*).[183] That sheds light on his statement [1] that voluntas is "in" emotions, which sounds similar to [3]: in [1], the *voluntas* he has in mind must be dispositional. Apparently he means that when we perceive that we have lost or gained, or will lose or gain, a thing that is of the kind we *habitually* pursue or avoid, an emotion follows. In this sense the disposition is "in" the emotion.[184] This is confirmed when Augustine says that the *voluntas* that changes into the emotion is elicited or repelled "in accordance with the variety of objects that are pursued and avoided."

Hence, he next goes through the list of the four Stoic genus-emotions, spelling out their relation to past and future events, along Stoic lines, and saying that each arises from (dispositional) *voluntas*:

> For what is craving and what is elation except our *voluntas* in agreement with what we wish for? And what is fear and what is sadness except our *voluntas* in conflict with what we do not wish for? But when this agreement manifests itself as [occurrent] desiring of the things that we wish for, it is 'craving'; but when it manifests itself as [occurrent] enjoying of the things that we wish for, it is called 'elation.' And likewise, when we are in conflict with that which we do not wish to happen to us, such a *voluntas* is 'fear'; but when we are in conflict with that which happens to us while we are unwilling that it should, such a *voluntas* is 'sadness.'[185]

His point is that conflict between one's dispositional *voluntas* and a perceived state of affairs in the world is accompanied by pain, whereas harmony is accompanied by pleasure.[186] The passage is very difficult to render literally in English without losing the sense;[187] but the meaning is that for someone who has hormetic dispositions, an occurrent emotion is provoked when one is confronted with an intentional object that is the kind of thing one antecedently wanted or did not want. In the last sentence here, Augustine again reverts to the Stoic tag "[occurrent] passions are [occurrent] impulses" (when he says that fear

[183] *civ*. 12.1, 14.13, *conf.* 8.5.10. See Appendix 2.

[184] The other option, to take him as saying that there is an occurrent *voluntas* that then changes into and remains present "in" the succeeding emotion, would not be right: he does not speak this way anywhere else in his corpus when he gives examples of emotions and their genesis.

[185] *civ.* 14.6: "Nam quid est cupiditas et laetitia nisi voluntas in eorum consensione quae volumus? Et quid est metus et tristitia nisi voluntas in dissensione ab eis quae nolumus? Sed cum consentimus appetendo ea quae volumus, cupiditas; sed cum autem consentimus fruendo his quae volumus, laetitia vocatur. Itemque cum dissentimus ab eo quod accidere nolumus, talis voluntas metus est; cum autem dissentimus ab eo quod nolentibus accidit, talis voluntas tristitia est." Trans. Dyson adapted.

[186] Cf. *civ*. 14.15. See further Section 3b.

[187] E.g., notice that Augustine here uses the verb *consentire* in the progressive sense, which cannot be rendered by the single word "consenting" in English. It does not refer to an act of assent. ("Consent" in Augustine's corpus has both the sense of "being in a state of harmony or agreement" and "an act whereby a rational agent gives his assent to something." For this former sense, see, e.g., synonymously for *pax* (*civ*. 19.12–13), and *civ.* 19.13, 2.28, 1.28, 15.13.)

and sadness are *voluntates*), but the identity claim does not do any philosophical work in the account he is giving. It is actually serving as a shorthand way of alluding to his claim about the relation of dispositions to occurrent emotions. (This can be seen from the fact that he does not indicate in anything else that he says that emotions are in themselves impulses to perform actions.) The interpretation I have just offered is bolstered by and sheds light upon his other statements about the relation between dispositional *voluntas* and emotions. When he speaks of people as having bad character – being "bad people" – or the fallen angels as being permanently turned away from God, he speaks of emotions arising from these states.[188]

So, while Augustine's self-correction [2], which identifies *voluntas* with the emotion, shows that he thinks of himself as accepting the Stoic definition of passion, he glosses it by the point that our dispositions condition our occurrent emotional reactions.

But *why* does he give this "dispositional impulse" interpretation of what in the Stoic account looks like the identity claim that a passion is an occurrent impulse? Cicero says at one point that passions arise out of *voluntates* (*oriuntur perturbationes ex voluntatibus*),[189] and this comes immediately after a discussion of proclivities and vices as a kind of material cause of passions.[190] This is surely likely to be one reason. But Cicero's passing use of this phrase may be insufficient to explain why Augustine makes it a gloss of the Stoic definition "passion *is* impulse" – a gloss that Cicero himself does not give.

Perhaps Augustine was also using a doxography, which gave this kind of interpretation. We have evidence on two fronts that Augustine possessed a doxography that is no longer extant. First, in his treatment of the Stoic "good emotions" in the *City of God* 14.8, Augustine uses the Greek technical term, *eupatheiai*. But this word does not occur in any of his extant sources.[191] So when Augustine says that Cicero calls the *eupatheiai* constancies (*constantiae*), he is correlating two sources: some lost source that gave the Greek term, and the *Tusculan Disputations*, which uses *constantiae* for the good emotions.

[188] *civ.* 14.8: "… both good and bad people desire, feel caution, and rejoice, and – to express the same thing in other words – both good and bad people crave, fear, and feel elation. But the good do so well, the bad do so badly, according as the *voluntas* is either upright or wrongly directed in [the two groups of] people" (my trans.). Similarly, the demons' *perversa voluntas* – bad disposition – expresses itself in tumultuous fits of illicit delight, lust, anger, and jealousy (*civ.* 11.33).

[189] *Tusc.* 4.38.82.

[190] *Tusc.* 4.37.81–38.83.

[191] Cicero discusses the concept, but uses only the Latin name (*constantia*, which he himself coins). Seneca, Gellius, and Christian authors (Ambrose, Jerome, Origen-Rufinus) are equally silent on the Greek. John Scottus Eriugena in the ninth century – who, unlike Augustine, relied directly upon Greek texts, and is also known to have used *City of God* – is the first extant author to mention it after Augustine (*Expositions on the Celestial Hierarchy* 8, 15).

Second, Augustine shows signs of familiarity with the Chrysippean analogy of reasonable versus unreasonable impulse as "walking versus running." That analogy is preserved today in Galen,[192] who is relevant here even if he is not Augustine's actual source, because when he reports it he, like Augustine, gives an interpretation of excessive impulses in terms of dispositions. (Although Galen often criticizes the Stoics, this is a passage wherein he is not disagreeing with or "correcting" Chrysippus' view, but trying to explain it on its own terms.) Chrysippus says that the definition "passions are excessive impulses" can best be understood by an analogy of running versus walking: just as in running, one's legs are not immediately obedient to one's wish to stop or change directions, so in a passion the mind is not obedient to right reason, because impulse "outstrips" reason, meaning it results from a judgment in which the value assigned to the intentional object surpasses the value it actually has. So, a passion is an impulse which carries us willy-nilly off the right (natural) course.[193] Similarly, Augustine says actions that are not directed by an intention toward true happiness, are done by people "running with great power and at high speed, but running off course," and he repeatedly describes impulses (*voluntates*, *affectus*) as "feet" that are walking or running.[194] What interests us in this context is that when Galen elaborates on Chrysippus' references to running, he says "running" refers to sicknesses or dispositions of soul: love of money (*philochrēmatia*), love of property (*philarguria*), and the like.[195]

Thus, Augustine's "dispositional" interpretation of impulse as a foreground of occurrent emotion is not *sui generis*, and may show that he is participating in an earlier Hellenistic philosophical conversation. Furthermore, even if this gloss found in Galen and Augustine is not what Chrysippus actually meant by the formula "passions are excessive impulses,"[196] it is clear that Augustine's emphasis on dispositions as the ground of emotions is one he shared with the Stoics themselves. Other passages in Cicero and Seneca report that dispositions

[192] Second century C.E.

[193] Galen, *PHP* 4.2.10–18 (= LS 65J).

[194] *en. Ps.* 31.2.4. On *voluntas* (also *affectus*) as walking, see *trin.* 11.10; *en. Ps.* 38.2; *en. Ps.* 35.18. Though Seneca mentions the analogy in passing at *ira* 2.35.2 (anger is an *impetus* which cannot be stopped; running vs. walking), the repeated use of the metaphor in Augustine is easier to explain if his familiarity with it was not limited to this passage. Moreover, although the metaphor of "walking in the way" or racing toward the goal of life is also biblical (Ps. 1:1; cf. 2 Tim. 4:7, Song of Songs 1:4), Augustine's making *impulse* into "feet" or walking/running seems to be too specific to be explained by these alone.

[195] Galen, *PHP* 4.5.21–25 (= LS 65L), citing Chrysippus' book *Emotional Therapy*.

[196] In Chrysippus, the reference to impulse seems to mean that passions are caused by assent to a hormetic impression. This is apparently what is meant by saying that a passion is a "special kind" of judging, one that differs from merely factual judgments such as "atoms are the principles of things" (see Stobaeus 2.88.8–90.6 (= LS 65A)). Cf. the accounts in Cicero and Seneca, where we have the claim that there are two judgments which constitute a passion: (1) this event is bad/good for me, (2) I should mourn, celebrate, get revenge, etc. Because the second proposition explicitly refers to action, the impression would be hormetic.

resulting from habitual pursuit or avoidance behaviors connected to a class of things ("love of money," "love of women," "hatred of women," etc.) result in morally bad emotions if the evaluation that underlies these behaviors conflicts with right reason, but in good emotions if it accords with right reason.[197]

3.6b. "Love" Is "Will" Is Emotion?

Given that in Stoicism itself dispositional "love of money" and of other things was said to result in passions, it is not terribly surprising that immediately after describing emotions as arising out of dispositional wills (impulses), Augustine goes on to say that,

> Therefore rightly directed will is good love and wrongly directed will is bad love. Hence a love longing to possess what is loved is craving, but that having and enjoying it is elation; [love] fleeing from that to which it is averse is fear, and [love] feeling [pain] if it befalls one is sadness. Accordingly, these [emotions] are bad if the love is bad, and good if it is good.[198]

Yet there is more going on here than can be accounted for by a doxography of Stoicism. For although the Stoic account speaks of dispositional "love of" objects, the way that Augustine understands the meaning of "love" comes from the Platonic tradition, as we have seen in Chapter 2. So, when he says here in *City of God* that "emotion = will/impulse = love," he is trying to articulate how emotions arise from moral character in the context of his synthetic Stoic-Neo-Platonic account of motivation. He also wants to show that scriptural language and biblical anthropology are coherent with this synthetic account, against what he believes are certain erroneous statements made by Rufinus.

Driving Augustine's discussion and way of speaking about love, will, and emotion in *City of God* 14.6–7, then, is the following set of issues. Stoicism says that emotions are impulses; this can be understood (as far as Augustine knows) to mean that emotions arise out of dispositional impulses toward *behaviors* of pursuit and avoidance. Neo-Platonic *erōs*-theory, on the other hand, speaks exclusively of love directed at perceived good *objects* as the root of human motivation, as Augustine notes when he says that "the philosophers" have a high regard for love when it is aimed at good things and oriented toward God.[199] As we saw in Chapter 2, impulse is directed at actions, love is directed at things or states of affairs. Scripture speaks of both of these: of "being of good will (*voluntas*)," which

[197] See, e.g., *Tusc*. 4.11.24–27 where some of the Greek terminology is given (*avaritia*, *mulierositas* (= *philogunia*), *odium mulierum*, etc.), and see further Ch. 7.

[198] *civ.* 14.7: "Recta itaque voluntas est bonus amor et voluntas perversa malus amor. Amor ergo inhians habere quod amatur cupiditas est, id autem habens eoque fruendo laetitia; fugiens quod ei adversatur timor est, idque, si acciderit, sentiens tristitia est. Proinde mala sunt ista si malus amor est, bona si bonus." My trans.

[199] *civ*. 14.7.

Augustine takes to be synonymous with "living [i.e., acting] according to [the standards that abide in] God," and of being a "lover of the good" (*amator boni*), having dispositional love of God and neighbor.[200] So the authority of scripture, as he understands it, indicates that Stoic attention to dispositions toward *actions* and Platonic emphasis on stable love of the right *objects*, are equally important.

Augustine then asserts complementarity between these two philosophical theories when he makes the dispositional love of objects the ground from which habitual impulses toward actions arise. Things (*res*) are either loved or hated. In accordance with this attraction or repulsion to/from diverse objects (*pro varietate rerum*), impulse to action (*voluntas*) is attracted or repelled (that is, either *hormē* or *aphormē* arises). (So, for example, he who *lives* according to God must be [by logical priority] a *lover* of the good.)[201] Over time, with the repetition of actions, the interplay of love for an object and impulse toward action produce a dispositional impulse rooted in habitual love, which Augustine sometimes calls the soul's "adhesion" to some perceived good.[202] In this model, the moral quality of one's dispositional tendency to do certain kinds of actions depends upon the moral quality of one's love, which is itself determined by the actual merit of the objects being loved. So, one is said to be "of good will" on account of the love of the Good (*propter hunc amorem*).[203]

Emotions that arise from dispositional impulse, therefore, ultimately arise from dispositional love of objects, which impulse has sought to get or avoid through action. Given this nesting of dispositions, Augustine has no qualms in using a kind of synecdoche in both cases, calling emotions "impulses" because they arise out of dispositional impulse, and calling emotions as well as dispositional impulses "loves,"[204] because habitual love is the foundation of dispositional impulse. But the meaning is that emotions such as fear and grief are the result of (*veniunt de*) love or hatred of an object[205] that one wants to pursue or avoid.

All of this is coherent with the fact that in the sermons and *City of God* book nine Augustine says that emotions are caused by consent of the mind, to beliefs about the relative values of objects. Augustine thinks that one's perceptions

[200] *civ.* 14.7, citing Matthew 19:19, Luke 2:14, Titus 1:8, and presumably Eph. 4:24 or Rom. 8:27.

[201] *civ.* 14.6: "human impulse is elicited or repelled in accordance with the variety of objects that are pursued and avoided … Therefore, the person who *lives* according to God … necessarily is a *lover* of the good."/ "Et omnino pro varietate rerum quae appetuntur atque fugiuntur … allicitur vel offenditur voluntas hominis … Quapropter homo qui secundum Deum … vivit oportet ut sit amator boni." Trans. Dyson adapted, my emphasis.

[202] *civ.* 12.1, 12.9; *s.* 216.5–6.

[203] *civ.* 14.7.

[204] Cf. *civ.* 12.9: "cum bona voluntate, id est cum amore casto"; *civ.* 12.1, 18.2; *en. Ps.* 31.2.5: "What is it in any of us that prompts action, if not some kind of *amor*?" And compare the citations in the notes in Section 6a of this chapter on impulse and "feet" to these on love and "feet": *trin.* 11.10; *en. Ps.* 33.2.10; *trin.* 9.15; *conf.* 8.4.9.

[205] So *en. Ps.* 127.8, *en. Ps.* 68.2.5.

of value are the cause of love and therefore of impulse. (He also thinks that once hormetic dispositions have been formed, they delimit the range of one's perceptions and therefore of subsequent love and impulse.[206])

Augustine's interchanging of another term for "will," namely *appetitus*, with "love" in the *On the Trinity*, probably shows the use of Plotinus,[207] whose own terminology betrays engagement with the Stoic taxonomy of impulse and desire.[208] In particular, Augustine's interchanging of *appetitus* with love is probably owing to the different senses of *boulēsis* in Plotinus.[209] But

[206] On this point, see Ch. 7.

[207] In Plotinus, there is a discussion about *boulēsis* in the generic sense of wishing or wanting a perceived good, versus the narrow Stoic sense, according to which "boulēsis" names desire according to right reason. He opts for the narrower sense as his preferred proper sense, but also uses the general sense. (For the "proper" sense, see 1.4.6 ll. 13–19, cf. 1.4.11, 1.4.14, 3.6.1. For the generic/colloquial sense of wish, desire, will, see e.g., 1.4.7, 1.4.11, 2.4.8, 3.3.7, 4.3.11, 4.4.20, 5.1.1.) Plotinus goes on to embed this proper sense of truly "rational desire" in his own metaphysical and anthropological context; it ends up being the mystically-oriented *erōs* of the *Symposium*-tradition. (So generic desire, for him, is the natural desire that is implicitly for The Good/The One; desire according to right reason, the proper sense of *boulēsis*, is *consciously* for this Good (see 1.6.8, 2.3.13, 3.6.1, 6.8.13 ll. 12–24).) At the same time, in other passages Plotinus introduces a third meaning of the term *boulēsis*, making it do the same conceptual work as Stoic *hormē:* it is aimed at the doing of actions. (E.g., 2.1.1, 3.3.5, 4.8.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.6, 5.2.2, 6.7.8, 6.8.1, 6.8.5, 6.8.13 ll. 6–7, 6.9.4 l. 14; and for *hormē* as aimed at the doing of actions, 3.1.1 ll. 28–29.) For Plotinus, the voluntary (*hekousion*, *eph'hēmin*, taking up terms from Aristotle and the Stoics) is that done by *boulēsis* (6.8.1, 6.8.3), which Plotinus treats as an opportunity to make claims about normative liberty attainable by following our natural desire for God (the desires of the true self, freedom from slavery to externals). This *boulēsis* toward action may have been translated as *voluntas* by the Latin translator of these *Enneads*, given that Cicero's vocabulary for action internally caused (vs. externally coerced/necessary), is "done by will" (*voluntate*), willingly (*voluntarius*).

[208] Plotinus shows that he is conversant with the Stoic taxonomy: impulse (*hormē*), generic desire (*orexis*), normatively rational desire (*boulēsis*), and irrational desire (*epithumia*) are discussed together and sorted along Stoic conceptual lines (See 3.1.1 ll. 18–25, where *hormē* is mentioned first as undetermined kind of impulse; *epithumia* and *boulēsis* are then mentioned as species of *orexis*; cf. 4.7.13 l. 4 where *hormē* is interchanged with *orexis*; 6.8.3–4 where *boulēsis* is interchanged with *orexis*).

[209] Augustine's term *appetitus* looks comparable to Plotinus' *boulēsis*, because he uses it for both the impulse toward doing an action, and for desire of a perceived good object. (E.g., *trin*. 9.12.18, 10.12.19). For instance, in *trin.* 12.11.16 someone advances by a series of strivings (*nisus* and *nutus voluntatis*, both synonyms for *appetitus actionis*; cf. *trin.* 11.1.2, 11.3.15) toward a state of vice. The first of these is a desire of trying out one's own power (*cupiditas experiendae potestatis*) which is clearly an impulse to do something. But Augustine immediately also calls it a "perverse appetite for likeness to God" which clearly refers to esteem for the quality of God's power (*perversus appetitus similitudinis Dei*). And he may be working off of the Stoic taxonomy as filtered through Plotinus when, discussing desire for the truth, he says that appetite (*appetitus*) can be called love (*amor*) because it (appetite) is of the same genus (*ex eodem genere*) as love, because it is a rational impulse (*voluntas*) to discover the object (*trin*. 9.12.18). In the Stoic taxonomy, desire (*orexis*; cf. Plotinus *boulēsis* in the generic sense, cf. Augustine: *appetitus* as desire) is a kind of impulse (Augustine: *voluntas*), and Plotinian *boulēsis* for the truth is rendered *amor* by Augustine.

Augustine – unlike Plotinus – is consistent about reserving a term for "impulse" as such: "will" (*voluntas*) is used for impulse to action in the *On the Trinity*, as it is in his other philosophical and theological works and his letters,[210] and is not used for love of objects.

Rufinus comes under fire from Augustine, though not by name, because he has missed the role of love (eros) in motivation, and therefore threatens to render unintelligible the "nesting of dispositions" model that Augustine describes in the *City of God*. "I thought this matter worth mentioning because some people are of the opinion that love or charity (*dilectio sive caritas*) is something different from desirous love (*amor*). They say that love (*dilectio*) is to be taken in a good sense, but desirous love (*amor*) in a bad sense."[211] Rufinus, the ancient Nygren, is here meant.

Augustine here insists that his motivational theory and the account he gives of its role in grounding emotions can stand without worry of their contradicting scripture, *pace* Rufinus. Rufinus, interpolating his own comments as he translated the Prologue of Origen's *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, argued that the Latin bible used the words it did because charity and love (*caritas*, *dilectio*) are more respectable terms among the wise men of the world than desire (*cupido*, *amor*).[212] But Augustine is eager to show that the love of God spoken of in scripture is of a piece with neo-Platonic love and that his synthetic philosophical account is therefore compatible with scripture. Love, the fundamental and natural psychological drive that makes motivation possible, is either directed at God and "through" creatures, or at creatures as ends in themselves;[213] and it makes no difference what word is used. *Erōs, philia* and *agapē* are used for both loves in the Greek scriptures – as Origen himself had said in his prologue, referencing the tradition of the *Symposium*[214] – and the same is

[210] E.g., *trin.* 8.3.4, 8.3.5, 8.7.11, 9.2.2, 9.12.18, 10.10.13, 10.11.17, 10.11.18, 11.6.10; *ep.* 145. 2, 145.2, 145.7; *ep. Io. tr.* 4.7. See further Appendix II.

[211] *civ.* 14.7. Here I have departed from my ususal practice and used the trans. of Levine et al. (1957–1972), adapted.

[212] "It seems to me, however, that the divine scripture is anxious to avoid the danger of the mention of love becoming an occasion of falling for its readers; and to that end and for the sake of the weaker ones, it uses a more respectable word for that which the wise men of the world called desire (*cupido*) or desirous love (*amor*) – namely charity (*caritas*) or love (*dilectio*) … in these places, therefore, and in many others you will find that divine scripture avoided the word 'desirous love' (*amor*) and put 'charity' (*caritas*) or 'love' (*dilectio*) instead" (*prol.*). Trans. Lawson (1957) here and in following quotations. This Latin translation became available in 410; this book of the *City of God* was apparently written in 421–422 (on which see Ch. 4.5a).

[213] E.g., *trin.* 12.13.21; *en. Ps.* 34.1.12, 118.17.10.

[214] Origen's own voice, discernible in the Prologue, says that "it makes no difference whether the scripture speaks of desirous love (Ruf. trans. *amor*) or charity (*caritas*) or love (*dilectio*)," "you must take whatever scripture says about charity as if it had been said with regard to desirous love (*amor*), taking no notice of different terms." Rufinus adds his own sections of text asserting a distinction. The duality of voices in the *Prologue* results in a lack of logical transitions in the text, as when the two opposing views are linked by a "therefore."

actually true of *amor, caritas*, and *dilectio* in the Latin, despite Rufinus.[215] The secular poets are also on Augustine's side, he wants to point out; Rufinus' claim about "the secular wise men" is simply inaccurate: "we can be quite certain that this was not the usage even among writers of secular literature."[216] So are secular philosophers: the books of the (Platonic) philosophers highly regard love as eros (*amor*) when it is involved in good things and directed toward God.[217]

Thus Augustine lays claim to the properly Christian credentials of his account and also aims to correct Rufinus for getting the order of authority wrong: it is not that the Bible has been made to conform to worldly writings, but that the scriptures, "whose authority we set above that of all other writings," contain the same idea of love that we happen to find also in Platonism: the moral status of love is determined by the merit of the objects that are being loved as ends.

When Augustine says that love "is" emotions, therefore, he means neither that love is itself a particular emotion, nor that there are many kinds of love, all of which are emotions. Love is a desire for completeness that is simply part of human nature. Although it is probably true that everyone experiences emotions such as fear and anger at some point in his life, for instance, it is true by definition that everyone always loves something,[218] and our *habitual* loves determine the *kind* of emotions we are likely to have. Love for a class of objects serves as a prior ground for hormetic dispositions to pursue them; this in turn results in desire, fear, grief, and joy when one perceives their prospective or actual loss or gain.

[215] See, e.g., *agapē* meaning lust in 2 Samuel/Kings 13:1–2, 13:14ff., and John 21:15–17, Matthew 19:19, Titus 1:8, John 21:15–17, Ps. 11:5, 1 John 2:15, 2 Tim. 3:2, all mentioned or discussed by Augustine, *civ*. 14.7. (N.B. Titus 1:8 clearly refers to "love" in the Greek (*philagathos*), and so does Augustine's translation (*amator boni*), but the Vulgate (*benignus*) does not carry the sense.)

[216] *civ*. 14.7.

[217] *civ.* 14.7.

[218] Cf. Origen, *Prologue* to the *Commentary on the Song of Songs*: "we ought to understand that it is impossible for human nature not to be feeling love (Rufinus: *amor*) for something." Cf. also Gregory (2008), 247–248, although Gregory treats love as an emotion, unlike Augustine.

4

Preliminary Passions

With regard to the category of affective reactions called "preliminary passions" (*propatheiai*)[1] or "first movements,"[2] Augustine made a significant contribution to the history of philosophical accounts of affectivity. He resolved a problem in the Stoic theory as it was known to him from his sources: the question of the cognitive cause of preliminaries. These reflexlike affective reactions were said to occur without the judgments that would constitute emotions properly so called (*pathē* or *eupatheiai*); yet given the Stoics' rational psychology, any affective reaction would seem to require *some* cognitive cause.

It is important to emphasize this last point. Stoic preliminary passions are not merely physical reactions. If they were, then Augustine could not be described as developing his account from Stoic principles, but would instead be misunderstanding or rejecting the Stoic theory.[3] However, it is clear in the Stoic sources that preliminary passions are changes in the rational soul (*animus*) caused by impressions made on the mind.[4] Hence preliminary passions are not

[1] For discussion about the date at which the concept came into use, see Graver (2007) 88. Latin reference to the thing itself (in Cicero) predates extant texts containing the Greek term *propatheia*. The Greek term is first recorded in Philo of Alexandria (*pace* Kaster and Nussbaum (2010) 110, who assert that the term was first used by Origen), who uses it somewhat incorrectly; see further Ch. 5.3–5.

[2] The name made current in English by Sorabji (from the Latin *primi motus*, used by Seneca); see e.g., Sorabji (2000) 378–379.

[3] Sorabji (2000) 377 claimed that Gellius presented Stoic preliminary passions in a misleading way because he made a mistake when paraphrasing Epictetus' lost text, giving us "to be jittery" (*pavescere*), implying an affective disturbance, when he should have said "to grow pale" (*pallescere*), indicating a physical reaction; and he argued that this mistake resulted in Augustine, who relied upon Gellius, misunderstanding Stoic preliminary passions. But Sorabji himself acknowledges that Seneca (who was familiar with old Stoic material firsthand) also uses *expavescere* for reactions that are not emotions proper (377 on *ira* 1.3.8). Furthermore, even if Sorabji's contrast between Epictetus and Gellius were right, we know that Augustine was familiar with Seneca and Cicero, thus not exclusively dependent upon Gellius. For more thorough responses to Sorbaji, see notes in Section 1 of this chapter, and Ch. 2.5f.

[4] See the citations and detail given in the next section (Ch. 4.1).

something that animals have: they are defined as preludes to and preparatory of passions, in the technical Stoic sense of the word "passion." "Prelude" and "preparatory" are ways of alluding to the fact that they are caused by the sayables (*lekta*) in a rational impression; for assent is essentially constitutive of passions, and the prelude to assent is an impression in which the subject formulates mental sentences to which assent can be given or not given. Seneca indicates this in his descriptions of the genesis of anger and Gellius gives an account coherent with Seneca's when he summarizes Epictetus' account of preliminary fear, as we shall see in greater detail later. There is *mention* of bodily reactions in connection with preliminaries, but that is because the soul changes (preliminary passions) are described as *analogous to* reflexive bodily reactions[5] or as the *cause of* these bodily reactions.[6]

Augustine rightly refers to preliminaries as cases in which "without a person's consent, his *animus* is agitated (*turbatur*),"[7] and as "feelings anticipating the proper function [i.e., consent] of the mind and reason" (*passio*[8] *praeveniens mentis et rationis officium*),[9] and he describes them on thirty-two different occasions in his sermons. He developed the implications of Stoic cognitivism by identifying the cause of preliminary passions as *doubt*, meaning a dubitative sayable subsisting in an impression. We saw in Chapter 1[10] that Augustine seems to have thought that the dubitative is specially constitutive of impressions concerning personal happiness; and so it is appropriate and unsurprising that he should now apply this claim to the case of preliminary passions, given that affects, for him as for the Stoics, depend upon perceptions about events deemed relevant to personal happiness.

Augustine described the cognitive cause of preliminary passions only in his sermons; he did not do so in his other, more obviously philosophical works, although the descriptions in the sermons harmonize with what he does say about preliminary passions in more argumentative, formal works such as the *City of God*. That peculiar fact can presumably be explained as follows. Augustine wrote his theoretical works for specific purposes (usually apologetic); in such works, introducing his theory about the cognitive cause of preliminary passions would not have been useful. However, in the sermons, where his purpose is often to instruct in how to overcome temptation, detailed analysis of preliminary passions was conducive to his goal. There are a large number of these sermons, and most of them are not clearly localizable to a narrow period of Augustine's writing career; thus they can reasonably be taken to represent a consistent and considered view on his part.

[5] *ira* 2.4.2.
[6] *ira* 2.3.1–5.
[7] *civ.* 14.15.
[8] On his use of the term "passio" for a preliminary, see Ch. 3.5f.
[9] *civ*. 9.4.
[10] Sections 5 and 6.

4.1. AUGUSTINE AND HIS SOURCES

In Augustine's sources, these nonconsensual affects are described variously as the results of past passions ("shadows" or "bites")[11] and as "preliminaries" of full-blown passions (*primi motus, proludentia, primae agitationes animi, primi ictus animi*),[12] but scholars have agreed that these descriptions refer to the same phenomenon. The idea is that a preliminary passion is proximately caused by a (false) impression and remotely caused by previous assent to false impressions, which damaged the mind, making it prone to faulty impressions. Seneca and Gellius allude to internal acts that have corresponding physiological manifestations. So Seneca says that preliminaries to anger are caused by the impression (*species, opinio*)[13] that one has been injured, without approval or acceptance (*adprobare*, *capere*) of the impression as true;[14] the person who has such a preliminary reaction "thinks" (*putavit*) that he has been injured and wants to take vengeance (*voluit ulcisci*),[15] yet Seneca contrasts this impression with judging that it follows that one ought to be avenged,[16] with comprehending (*intellegere*) that one has been injured,[17] and with knowingly becoming angry.[18] Gellius, summarizing Epictetus' position, reports that preliminary fear is provoked by impressions (*phantasiai*, *visa*), and describes the internal state of the subject as follows: "we yield to natural weakness (*naturali infirmitati cedere*) rather than judge (*censere*)" that the impressions are true.[19]

Seneca indicates how the transition from preliminary passion to passion proper may occur in the case of anger: by brooding over suspicions and believing things for which one has insufficient evidence. Such credulity contributes to the "growth" of preliminaries into a judgment of the mind from which anger is born.[20]

As I shall illustrate shortly, there are similarities between Seneca's account of preliminaries to anger in the *On Anger* and Augustine's accounts of the same phenomena in his sermons; he makes use of the same metaphors and identifies the same causes of anger as Seneca does.

[11] Cicero, *Tusc.* 3.83; Seneca citing Zeno, *ira* 1.16.7.

[12] Seneca *ira* 2.1.3, 2.4.1, 2.3.4, Gellius *NA* 19.1. For discussion of these and other passages, see e.g., Stevens (2000) passim and Graver (1999) passim.

[13] This odd use of *opinio* for an unassented-to impression (so different from Cicero's use) is noted by Inwood, who argues that Seneca is making a distinction between two types of rationality ([1993] 174–177, 179).

[14] *ira* 2.1.4, 2.3.5.

[15] *ira* 2.3.4.

[16] *ira* 2.1.5, 2.4.1.

[17] *ira* 2.1.1, 2.1.5.

[18] *ira* 2.3.4, 2.1.1.

[19] *NA* 19.1.14–21; translation Rolfe adapted.

[20] *ira* 2.4.1, "praeparatio adfectus … incipiant, crescant" with *ira* 2.24.1–2.

It is also clear that Gellius' summary of Epictetus' account of preliminary passions significantly influenced Augustine. The latter summarizes this text, in the interest of solving a problem or furthering his argument, in two places: *City of God* 9.4 and *Questions on the Heptateuch* 1.30. Despite what Sorabji has claimed,[21] in both cases Augustine shows awareness of the distinction between a preliminary, which is not caused by a judgment of the mind (*mens*), and a passion, which is. In *City of God* 9.4–5, he explains that the preliminary passion (which he calls a *passio praeveniens mentis et rationis officium*) does not oust the virtue from a sage's mind (*mens*).[22] In the *Questions on the Heptateuch* he uses *Attic Nights* 19.1 to defend the virtue of Abraham. Genesis states that "panic came over Abraham, and behold, a great fear seized him."[23] Yet Augustine holds that Abraham was wise.[24] Seeking to reconcile these two facts,[25] he interprets the statement about Abraham as a description of preliminary fear. He summarizes *Attic Nights* 19.1,[26] and says that Epictetus' account is to be "diligently applied" to Abraham's case.[27]

[21] See notes 3 and 25–27 this chapter.

[22] See *civ.* 9.4–5, e.g., 9.5: "… the Stoics allow this version of 'passions' to visit the *animus* of the wise man, who in their system is free from every vice. Thus they do not consider these experiences themselves to be vices when they affect the wise man in such a way that they can do nothing against the virtue and order of his *mens*." Trans. Levine et al. adapted.

[23] "Pavor irruit super Abraham, et ecce timor magnus incidit ei" (Genesis 15.12).

[24] E.g., *en. Ps.* 72.21: "Am I to say something different from that which Abraham said, from that which Isaac said, from that which Jacob said, from that which the Prophets said? … Is there greater wisdom in me than in them? Greater understanding in me than in them?"

[25] He begins his exegesis: "On account of those who hold that those perturbations [like fear] do not befall the soul of the wise man, it must be considered whether it [Abraham's state] be the sort of thing described by A. Gellius in his books of the *Attic Nights*" (*qu. Hept.* 1.30: "Tractanda est ista quaestio – propter eos qui contendunt perturbationes istas non cadere in animum sapientis – utrum tale aliquid sit, quale A. Gellius commemorat in libris Noctium Atticarum"). Sorabji (2000) 379 treats Augustine's "*sit*" as an existential, so that he gets the result: "We must discuss the question whether there is such a thing as A. Gellius mentions…" *Esse* can, of course, have existential force; but there is no apparent reason why that force should be assumed here and in the discussion which follows the existence of such a thing is not the issue. Augustine's question is only whether this is the state that Abraham was in.

[26] "… he [the Stoic philosopher on board the ship] brought out a certain book by the Stoic Epictetus, where it was read that the Stoics had not held that no sort of perturbation befalls the soul of the sage, in the sense that nothing of that sort appears in his feelings (*affectibus*), but that 'perturbation' was defined by them as [that state] when reason yields to such changes [of soul]; but when it does not yield, that is not to be called a perturbation" (*qu. Hept.* 1.30: "protulit librum quendam Epicteti Stoici, ubi legebatur non ita placuisse Stoicis nullam talem perturbationem cadere in animum sapientis, quasi nihil tale in eorum adpareret affectibus, sed perturbationem ab eis definiri, cum ratio talibus motibus cederet; cum autem non cederet, non dicendam perturbationem"). This shows understanding of the conceptual distinction between *pathos*, involving consent of the mind, and *propatheia*, which does not, *pace* Sorabji (2000) 379, 380.

[27] *qu. Hept.* 1.30: "Sed considerandum est quemadmodum hoc dicat A. Gellius, et diligenter inserendum." This sentence is not included by Sorabji, 380, who stops translating before Augustine's exposition has ended.

In both these texts, Augustine says that such preliminaries befall the "*animus*" as opposed to the *mens*. The essential question, as he sees it, is whether the *mens* consents; the "*animus*" which is affected upon the receipt of preapproved impressions designates a distinct set of powers. Because Seneca regularly attributes superficial changes and preliminary passions to the *animus*, but judgment that constitutes a passion to the *mens*,[28] and because Gellius, too, specifies that the *mens* is not involved in preliminary passions that move the *animus*,[29] Augustine is in line with his Stoic sources when he invokes a *mens-animus* distinction.

But what does Augustine mean by saying that the preliminary passion is in the *animus*? It would seem that he ought to mean that there is some rational component in the preliminary affective reaction. For, as has been widely recognized, Augustine consistently uses *animus* to connote rationality.[30] Given this sense of *animus*, and the fact that Seneca and Gellius had alluded to rational impressions as causes of preliminary passions,[31] it would not be surprising if Augustine had actually gone on to posit mental sayables in impressions as the cause of preliminary passions.

4.2. THE DUBITATIVE AS THE CAUSE OF PRELIMINARY PASSIONS

In one sermon, we see Augustine setting up the problem. Reflecting on those accounts of preliminary passions with which he was familiar,[32] he argues that a reflex reaction of panic fear to a surprise event cannot be explained except as a wavering in (though not a loss of) the virtue of the impressed person,[33] which must be due to a momentary weakness in said person's apprehension of the truth ("light"). It cannot be explained solely by reference to a quality intrinsic to the surprising event itself, but must have a cognitive cause:

> Generally something comes on us of a sudden.... The earth quakes, thunder is sent from heaven, a formidable attack is made upon us, or a horrible sound is heard. Perhaps a lion is seen on the road ... perhaps robbers lie in wait for us ... we panic ... Why? Because *my courage has failed me.* For what would be feared, if that courage still remained unmoved? Whatever bad tidings were brought, whatever threatened, whatever sound was heard, whatever happened, whatever was 'horrible,' would

[28] *ira* 1.16.7, 2.2.2, 2.3.5, 2.4.2.

[29] *NA* 19.1.17–18.

[30] Thus he never uses it to refer to animal souls; see e.g., Hill (1991) 260, O'Daly (1987) 7, Clark (2001) 97.

[31] For Seneca, *putare*, and for Gellius, *cedere*; see above. For *cedere/eixis* in the Stoics, see Inwood (1985) 75–77.

[32] Seneca mentions thunder and oncoming assault of the enemy at *ira* 2.2.4 and 2.3.3; the example of thunder is also in Gellius, *NA* 12.5.

[33] On wavering, see Section 2a this chapter.

inspire no terror. Where does that trouble [i.e., the reflexive terror] come from? … Why has my courage failed me? *The light of my eyes is not with me.*[34]

The problem that Augustine identifies is the following. The sage is supposed to know that death and physical suffering do not merit fear.[35] But if the sage knows this at the moment when a life-threatening event befalls her, then why does she react *as if* the thing merited fear? Why does she have an impression to which she cannot assent without forfeiting her wisdom? Events such as noises or the view of a large animal cannot be inherently, necessarily terrifying; they only terrify when they are interpreted (however briefly) as having a certain import by the one who becomes panicked. There are only two variables in the equation, and the external event is not causing the sage to see it as something which it is not. Hence the cause must be a momentary weakness in the sage's apprehension of the real import of the situation (i.e., of the truth, or "light"). The pejorative English phrase "easily impressed"[36] conveys something of the point Augustine is making.

When Augustine says here that the person having an immediate panic reaction is "moved" in his courage, he is employing language that Seneca himself had used of the person who experiences a preliminary passion: "his mind will be moved from its usual calm."[37] But Augustine is not asking the kind of etiological question that Seneca answers when he asserts that preliminary passions arise because of a "past wound" to the soul (i.e., previous assent to falsehood, a passion). Instead, Augustine is rather obviously asking about the *proximate* psychological cause. If it is not a judgment of the mind, then what is it?

In other sermons, Augustine specifies that this cognitive cause is doubt. The texts wherein he specifies this are not in theoretical discourse, for the context determines the language used in the sermons. The language is given in scriptural phrases and stories which he uses to analyze and moralize about affectivity. Thus the key to discovering what Augustine thinks about preliminary passions is to notice which scriptural passages he habitually puts to this

[34] *en. Ps.* 37.15, citing Ps. 37:11; trans. Tweed et al. adapted. The Latin is: "Plerumque irruit nescio quid repentinum … contremescit terra, tonitrus datur de caelo, horribilis fit impetus vel strepitus, leo forte videtur in via … pavetur [cor] … Unde hoc? *Quia deseruit me fortitudo mea*. Si enim maneret illa fortitudo, quid timeretur? Quidquid nuntiatur, quidquid frenderet, quidquid sonaret, quidquid caderet, quidquid horreret, non terreret. Sed unde illa perturbatio? … Unde deseruit fortitudo? *Et lumen oculorum meorum non est mecum.*" Underlined emphasis added. Augustine knows that *perturbatio* is Cicero's technical term for Stoic passion (*pathos*) (see e.g., *civ.* 9.4), but he does not accept that the term need be restricted to such a narrow scope. See Ch. 3.5f.

[35] Because according to the Stoics, only the virtues are good enough to merit emotions; see *civ.* 9.5 and e.g., *Tusc.* 3.74, 3.76–77, *fin.* 3.35; see also Ch. 3 passim.

[36] Meaning that someone's perceptions of things betray a lack of sound judgment about what is important or valuable.

[37] *ira* 1.16.7.

didactic purpose. Conversely, failure to take this phenomenon into account will result in failure to recognize important features of his account.

In fact, several scriptural phrases have a virtually technical function in Augustine's sermons. He uses them consistently to refer metaphorically to preliminary passions. (He thereby puts into practice Cicero's advice that metaphors should be used frequently in oratory.[38]) There are three such "technical" metaphors; Augustine employs these to describe preliminary jealousy, fear, craving, and anger: a slipping foot, an irritated eye, and a speck (in the eye) versus a beam.[39]

As odd as it may seem at first to treat metaphors as constituting a theory about the cognitive cause of preliminary passions, the practice is warranted given that these are precise analogies whose elements consistently represent cognitive acts, powers of the soul, and specific affective states. Moreover, what Augustine says in these sermons in metaphorical language harmonizes with what he says in more theoretical terms about the preliminary fear of Gellius' sage at *City of God* 9.4 and *Questions on the Heptateuch* 1.30.

It will be observed in what follows that while much of the *material* for Augustine's account of preliminary passions comes from scripture, it is Augustine who designates this material as having the meaning it does; it is by no means explicitly designated as such by scripture itself.[40] It is Augustine's search for the causes of human affective responses that discovers relations between disparate phrases in the scriptural text and unifies them into a single psychological account.

4.2a. Preliminary Jealousy, Fear, and Cupidity: The Slipping Foot

The image of a slipping foot recurs in Augustine's sermons as a metaphor signifying doubt. He develops the metaphor from the scriptural phrases "I almost lost my footing, my steps were nearly overthrown,"[41] "'If ever,' I said, 'My foot has slipped …,'"[42] and "[they] disturb the paths of your feet."[43] The distinction between doubting whether some proposition is true and assenting to it is quite clear in a sermon on Psalm 72, part of which we saw in Chapter 1, where we saw that Augustine says the dubitative is part of an impression (*visum*):[44]

[38] *de orat.* 3.52.201; *orat.* 39.134.

[39] There are twelve instances of the slipping foot metaphor; there are thirteen featuring the irritated eye; there are seven usages of the speck vs. the beam metaphor.

[40] Although Augustine's interpretations are in his opinion compatible with what is in scripture.

[41] Psalm 72:2.

[42] Psalm 93:18. See e.g., *en. Ps.* 76.4.

[43] Isaiah 3:12. See e.g., *s.* 75.10.

[44] Section 6.

Almost my feet were moved, almost my steps were overthrown.… My feet were moved toward going astray (*ad errandum*), my steps were overthrown toward falling (*ad lapsum*): not entirely, but almost (*non omnino, sed paene*) … I was already going astray, I had not gone (*ibam non ieram*); I was already falling, I had not fallen (*cadebam non cecideram*).… *How has God known, and is there knowledge in the Most High?* … these are dangerous words, brethren, offensive, and almost blasphemous (*paene blasphema*) … This is why I say, 'and almost [blasphemous]': he has not said, 'God has not known'; he has not said, 'There is no knowledge in the Most High'; but he is asking, hesitating, doubting (*quaerens, haesitans, dubitans*). This is the same as he said a little while back, *My steps were almost overthrown. How has God known, and is there knowledge in the Most High?* He does not affirm it (*non confirmat*), but the very doubt is dangerous.[45]

Variations on this metaphor of a slipping foot as the mind's experience of a dubitative occur in other sermons. Stumbling, staggering, and sinking represent doubt, while standing firmly (in keeping with an accepted sense of *stare* in Augustine's day),[46] or having already fallen or sunk, signify commitment to some proposition, i.e., assent.[47]

The important thing to notice, for our purposes, is that Augustine *applies* the slipping foot metaphor for uncertainty to the cognitive state of someone having a preliminary passion. In fact Psalm 72 turns out to be one example of this: Augustine goes on to say that the psalmist is struggling with preliminary jealousy. Such a person is experiencing a dubitative about whether it is possible for him to be happy, given his lack of temporal goods. He describes his state thus:

[He's saying], 'I saw that they who did not serve God had that which I desired … and my feet were almost moved.'[48]

So then, what does he mean [by saying], *I almost lost my footing, and my steps were nearly overthrown*? 'I almost slipped,' he's saying, 'I almost fell.'… Because *I was jealous*, he says, *of sinners, observing the peace of sinners*, that is, 'on seeing bad people do well I staggered and reeled' … Notice how in staggering he is on the verge of falling, how close he is to ruin.[49]

Augustine had said that the slipping foot signified doubt about the "knowledge" of God; we see clearly here that the knowledge in question is 'know-how' – God's *competence* in distributing temporal goods. And Augustine associates this doubt with the question of the *value* (*praemium*) of temporal goods:

That's why his feet were almost moved; that's why his steps were nearly overthrown; that's why he was close to ruin. Look at what a dangerous position he has gotten into;

[45] *en. Ps.* 72.8 and 72.20, citing Ps. 72:12.

[46] Augustine spells out the figurative sense on which the use of *stare* for holding fast to an opinion is based in *en. Ps.* 106.12: "Quid est 'stetit'? Permansit, perduravit … non transit."

[47] E.g., *en. Ps.* 31.2.3, *en. Ps.* 30.3.2.2, *s.* 80.6, *s.* 232.4.

[48] *en. Ps.* 72.9.

[49] *s.* 48.3–4, citing Ps. 72:1–3; cf. *s.* 19.4.

he says there, *And I said, 'How has God known? And is there knowledge in the Most High?'* Notice what a dangerous position he has got into by looking for earthly good fortune from God as though it were of great value.[50]

That Augustine here depicts the issue as one of whether temporal goods have "great value" reminds us of his position on what makes a morally bad emotion, a passion, be bad. It is caused by a false judgment that a temporal good has the value of eternal goods, an overvaluation that is incompatible with properly valuing eternal goods, given that the virtues alone are necessary and sufficient for happiness. Hence, the person who has a passion is willing to sacrifice virtue[51] and therefore a passion is a "sin," an abandonment of virtue. So in this passage, the "dangerous position" of the doubter is that he is considering making the false judgment that something that is necessary for his happiness has been withheld from him, but granted to others who are undeserving. That judgment, if he makes it, will cause the passion of jealousy.

Furthermore, Augustine's belief – shared with the Stoics – that God's governance is ultimately responsible for the distribution of temporal benefits explains why the dubitative about the value of temporal goods is reducible to a dubitative about God's providence being inept or unjust. Given God's responsibility,[52] Augustine held that passions provoked by the absence of an overvalued temporal good are in fact about God's providence. So, in the case of a *preliminary* passion, someone lacks a temporal good that he thinks may be necessary for happiness; and therefore he holds (at least by implication)[53] that God may have misallocated that good.

Doubt is identified as the source of other preliminary passions when Augustine uses the gospel story of Peter beginning to sink while walking on the sea. Although the gospel account says Peter was fearful, it does not indicate that his state was propathetic.[54] But Augustine explicitly links other scriptural phrases about slipping feet to this description of Peter, and to Jesus' question, "Why did you doubt?" Thus Peter's sinking, but not having sunk, is a distinction between cognitive aspects of affective states: that of doubt versus assent and preliminary passion versus passion.

[50] *s.* 19.4: "…videte ad quod periculum venerit quarendo a Deo pro magno praemio terrenam felicitatem"; trans. Hill adapted.

[51] Cf. Ch. 3.5a.

[52] See e.g., *en. Ps.* 31.2.26: "Refer the scourge that falls on you to God, because the devil does nothing to you unless by permission from our powerful God, who may allow it either as a punishment or a discipline."

[53] E.g., "whether you blame God directly or in a roundabout way through fate … in one way or another you are willing to find fault with God" (*s.* 29B.7).

[54] Matthew 14:29–31: "And Peter going down out of the boat, walked upon the water to come to Jesus. But seeing the wind strong, he was afraid, and when he had begun to sink, he cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me.' And immediately Jesus stretching forth his hand took hold of him, and said to him, 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?'"

So Peter functions as a symbol of someone who has a preliminary to fear:[55] "Look at Peter, who was the symbolic representative of us all: now he's trusting, now he's tottering … in his being filled with alarm, and his staggering … he represents the weak."[56] Peter's slip represents the fact that when someone is faced with a misfortune, he "experiences inner dread."[57] This dread is associated with doubt, which Augustine contrasts with enlightened thoughts or constancy in belief. For instance:

> Listen to what the psalm says now: *Beside myself with fear*…. In another psalm he declared, *'If' I said 'my foot has slipped, your mercy, Lord, came to my help.'* …Think what a good illustration … we have in Peter…. Peter climbed out of the boat and began to walk. He went bravely …but when he felt the force of the wind he was frightened…. Beginning to go under, he cried, 'I'm sinking, Lord!' And Jesus stretched out a hand to him and pulled him up, saying, *'Why did you doubt?' … I cried to you*, says the psalmist…. It is as though he is telling us, 'Believe me, I know what I am talking about. I was in trouble, I called upon the Lord, and he never let me down … he enlightened my thoughts and strengthened [me in] my agitation.'[58]
>
> Peter too …staggered …he began to tremble….And yet when he grew afraid he cried out….Then the Lord took him by the hand and said … *'Why did you doubt?'* …This fulfilled what was said in the psalm: *'If,' I said, 'my foot has slipped, your mercy, Lord, came to my help.'*[59]

Augustine explains that the "enlightened" thought which cuts doubt short is the proposition that to be rich is to have riches that cannot be lost in a shipwreck (i.e., to have eternal goods).[60] This is the same point that he makes when he summarizes Gellius' report of Epictetus in the *City of God*. There he says that the sage avoided the passion of fear insofar as "he was both able to suffer that agitation, and to hold the opinion firmly in his *mens* that life and bodily welfare, the loss of which was threatened by the raging storm, were not goods which make their possessor good, as does justice [an eternal good]."[61] Note that this formulation "goods which make their possessor good" is almost exactly the Stoic formulation of *virtue* recorded in Diogenes Laertius: that good which makes its possessors praiseworthy.[62]

Peter's beginning to sink recurs as a motif in Augustine's descriptions of preliminary passions; he uses it to refer to preliminary craving as well.[63] Peter is a

[55] In addition to the following passages, see *en. Ps.* 54.5, *en. Ps.* 93.22, *s.* 75.1.
[56] *s.* 76.4.
[57] *en. Ps.* 30.2.3.10.
[58] *en. Ps.* 30.2.3.10–11, citing Psalm 30:23 and Psalm 93:18; here I depart from my usual practice of using the trans. of Tweed et al. and use Boulding (2000) adapted.
[59] *s.* 80.6, citing Lk. 17:5 and Psalm 93:18.
[60] *en. Ps.* 30.2.3.12.
[61] *civ.* 9.4.
[62] DL, 7.100.
[63] In addition to the following passages, see also *en. Ps.* 93.25 with *en. Ps.* 93.22.

symbol of someone who wavers through desire (*fluctuat cupiditate*),[64] beginning to deviate slightly from virtue, and coming dangerously close to desiring temporal goods as ends in themselves. Such a person does not yet, however, crave temporal goods in such a way as to sin. He has not yet perished (sinned);[65] he is staggering, and only beginning to sink. Augustine emphasizes the cognitive cause of this beginning of desire while unfolding the meaning of the story:

> Human beings ... are often thrown off balance by human praise and fame, and are on the verge of going under. That's the meaning of Peter shaking ... in the sea ... the soul (*animus*) struggles against the desire for human praise.... *Those who call you well-off lead you astray, and disturb the paths of your feet*.... Cry out, Peter, as you stagger, and say, 'Lord, save me.' ... He does indeed rebuke you and say ... '*Why did you doubt?*'... [resuming the interpretive summary of the gospel story:] all doubts and hesitations were laid to rest; the stormy sea was stilled, and thus they came to the safety of *terra firma*.[66]

> This gospel that has just been read ... about the apostle Peter ... is advising us to take the sea as meaning the present age and this world ... *my foot has slipped*. It's a psalm speaking, the words of a sacred song ... they can be our words too ... [The Lord] rebuked the doubter ... '*Why did you doubt?*' .... Think of the world and this age as the sea.... You love God; you're walking on the sea, the swell of the world is under your feet. You love the world; it will swallow you.... Consult ... your own desire.... See if some inner wind is not blowing you off course.... If your foot has slipped, if you stagger, if there is something you are not subduing, if you begin to sink, say, 'Lord, I perish, deliver me.' Say, 'I perish,' in order not to perish.[67]

In this latter quote especially, we see that the ontology which Augustine brings in to back up Cicero's allusions to "great goods"[68] entails that since eternal goods are "in" God (i.e., of God's nature), failure to ascribe the proper value to them constitutes a turning away from God, a sin.[69] Preliminary passions are about God at least by implication.[70]

[64] *s.* 76.9.

[65] See e.g., *s.* 153.10: "'But I died.' What's the meaning of 'I died'? I became a transgressor"; cf. *en. Ps.* 54.7, *s.* 67.2.

[66] *s.* 75.10, citing Is. 3:12. Trans. Hill adapted. I have omitted the words "with alarm" in the sentence, "That's the meaning of Peter shaking with alarm in the sea"; the mention of fear is distracting given that our focus is on what is being represented (preliminary cupidity), rather than the story itself.

Somewhat confusingly, elsewhere in this sermon (*s.* 75.4–5) Augustine switches back and forth between using "being tossed about by storms of desires" to signify temptations (being "on the verge of going under"), as he does here, and using it to signify desires which are actually passions.

[67] *s.* 76.1 and 76.8–9, citing Psalm 93:18. Trans. Hill adapted.

[68] See Ch. 3.5a.

[69] See *lib. arb.* 1.16.35, 2.19.54 on the definition of sin. For the identification of the virtues with God (because of the metaphysics), see e.g., *s.* 107A.3: "You will possess God. You will be full of God.... However much God has given you, however much piety he has granted you, however much charity, however much justice he has granted, however much chastity, whatever he has granted you of himself, cannot be superfluous. Your inner riches are enormous. What are they called? God."

[70] Certainly the extent to which one is *aware* of the implication depends upon one's awareness of metaphysics. But that does not prevent it from being a fact, according to Augustine.

4.2b. Preliminary Anger: The Irritated Eye

The words of Psalm 4:5, "Be angry and sin not," had already been interpreted as a reference to an involuntary *propatheia* of anger by Origen.[71] Jerome, too, had glossed the verse this way.[72] Augustine offered a similar interpretation: "*Be angry and sin not*.... Even if you are angry, sin not. That is, even though a movement of the soul (*motus animi*) rises up which, as a penalty for sin,[73] is not under our control, at least refuse to consent with your reason and mind (*mens*)."[74] And he often speaks of a sort of "anger," which is not yet a passion but only "close to" (*prope*)[75] it. To do so, he frequently uses metaphors developed from the scriptural phrase, "My eye is troubled through anger (*turbatus est prae ira oculus meus*)."[76] Augustine could have been inspired by Cicero to use the phrase thus; the latter compared the rational soul when disordered by a passion (*animus conturbatus*) to a disordered eye (*oculus conturbatus*).[77]

Augustine makes the distinction between preliminary anger and real anger by differentiating an irritated eye in an imperfect condition from a blind eye: "Before one passes into darkness, then, the eye is irritated by anger; but one must prevent ... the eye from becoming blinded."[78] The *mens* is the eye of the

His reasoning is that God is not a projection of the human mind, but part of reality whether people recognize him or not. For example: "It was because sin was forbidden [by the Law] that it was recognized for what it *is*" (*s.* 283.2, emphasis added).

[71] In his commentary on Psalm 4:5: the Greek word *propatheia*, translated by Rufinus *prima commotio*, and defined as: "involuntarium ... Docet ergo hoc loco Scriptura esse iram aliquam quae non sit peccatum ... nondum a libera voluntate orta nos urgeat". For other texts of Origen (and of Jerome) containing *propatheia*, see Layton (2000) 266, and (2002) passim.

[72] *Comm. In Epist. Ad Ephesios* 2.4 (glossing verse 26): "'Be angry and sin not.' This is taken from the fourth psalm ... a double name of 'anger' is accepted not only among us, but also among philosophers. [It is called anger] either when, having been harmed by an injury, we are stirred by natural stimuli: or when, with impetus at rest, and fury having died down, the mind can possess judgment, and nevertheless desires revenge against him who is thought to have done the harm. Therefore I think that the present statement is about the first [kind of] 'anger,' and that it is conceded to us as men ... nevertheless in no way may we be carried away by an impetus of fury into violent raging whirlpools [of anger]." My trans. Compare Jerome's distinction to Seneca, *ira* 2.1–3: one thing is that which results from the general condition of mankind, in which there is a mental shock which affects us when we are moved by an impression of injury; another is that which is caused by a considered judgment that revenge is justified.

[73] Augustine holds that preliminary passions result from damage to the soul caused by either personal sin or the original sin; see e.g., *civ.* 14.12 and 14.15, and discussion in Section 3 of this chapter.

[74] *en. Ps.* 4.6: "*irascimini, et nolite peccare*.... Etiam si irascimini, nolite peccare; id est, etiamsi surgit motus animi, qui iam propter poenam peccati non est in nostra potestate, saltem ei non consentiat ratio et mens."

[75] *en. Ps.* 36,1.9.

[76] Psalm 6:8.

[77] *Tusc.* 3.15.

[78] *en. Ps.* 30.2, 2.4.

soul,[79] and "the loss of the understanding of the truth ... is the blindness of the mind."[80] Someone with preliminary anger is "troubled"[81] but is only on the verge of assent to the false proposition that would constitute the passion of anger:

> *Cease from anger, and leave indignation.* Don't you know where that anger is leading you? You are on the verge of telling God he is unjust, it's tending toward that.... Look at what it gives birth to; smother the wicked conception. *Cease from anger, and leave indignation,* so that now, returning to your senses, you may say, *My eye is troubled through anger.*[82]

As if to make clear that this preliminary, troubled mental state is doubt, Augustine explains: "*My eye is troubled through anger* ... As if in a storm and waves he were beginning to sink, like Peter."[83]

The troubled but not blinded eye (mind) also forms the basis for Augustine's use of the phrase, "Do not let not the sun go down on your anger"[84] as an exhortation to prevent preliminary passions from becoming passions. He explains that the sun (light, truth) has gone down on one's anger once one assents to falsehood and therefore is guilty of a passion: "the true light is righteousness and wisdom, which the mind (*mens*) ceases to see once it has been overcome (*superata*) by the *perturbatio* of anger, as if by cloudiness (*nubilo*); and then it is as though the sun has gone down on a person's anger";[85] "*do not let the sun go down on your anger*, lest perhaps you become angry and the sun goes down on you, that is, the sun of righteousness deserts you, and you remain in darkness."[86]

Up to the point of being "overcome by cloudiness," awareness of the truth ("light") is apparently reduced (the mind is apparently "clouded"), though not utterly lacking. We saw that Augustine attributed preliminary fear to a weakness in the apprehension of the truth by means of the phrase, "the light of my eyes is not with me." And he explicitly identifies a preliminary cloudy state

[79] E.g., *s.* 88.14: "the eye is healed when it understands ..."; *s.* 88.5–6: "The light which concerns the eye of the mind ... is eternal wisdom"; Augustine's references to the *mens* "seeing" are constant.

[80] *en. Ps.* 6.8.

[81] The terms used for unsteadiness are *turbatus*, *conturbatus*, *perturbatio.* For this use of *perturbatio*, see Ch. 3.5f.

[82] *en. Ps.* 36,1.9: "*desine ab ira, et derelinque indignationem* [Ps. 36:8]. Nescis quo te provocet ira ista? Dicturus es Deo quia iniquus est, illuc pergit.... Vide quid pariat; suffoca malam conceptionem. *Desine ab ira, et derelinque indignationem*, ut iam respicens dicas: *Turbatus est prae ira oculus meus.*"

[83] *en. Ps.* 54.5. Cf. *s.* 63.2–3 for unsteadiness of mind (with reference to Peter "in the waves") as temptation.

[84] Ephesians 4:26.

[85] *s.* 75.5.

[86] *s.* 58.7.

with dubitation when he mentions preliminary sadness: "He did not doubt, he did not hesitate, he did not becloud his devotion with sadness";[87] "no sadness beclouded his most devout *mens*."[88] Thus by the exhortation "do not let the sun go down on your anger," Augustine means "do not let uncertainty about a false proposition become assertion of a false proposition."

4.2c. Preliminary Anger: The Speck versus the Beam

Finally, again taking "eye" to represent mind, Augustine saw in the scriptural contrast between a speck of wood and a beam in the eye yet another opportunity for the exhortation to prevent preliminary passions (caused by a dubitative) from turning into passions (caused by assent to falsehood). Thus he interlaced the phrase "do not let the sun go down on your anger" with his exegesis of this gospel image.

On such occasions, he showed his indebtedness to Seneca by transposing the images of birth and growth by which Seneca had described the transition from *primus motus* to the passion of anger[89] onto the speck-beam distinction. The result is a hybrid image, in which the speck of wood is alive; it is a shoot which, having been born, can grow into a beam. This organic rendering of the splinter is an unexpected bit of exegesis, given that there is no hint of it in the scriptural passage itself (nor is there any connection with anger therein).[90] Augustine's manner of speaking only makes sense as a mixing of the gospel passage with metaphors like those of the *On Anger*. And Augustine, like Seneca, says that the transition to passion is fostered by suspicion.

In these cases, to distinguish "anger" that is not yet a passion (recall Psalm 4:5) from the passion of anger, Augustine often calls the former "anger" and

[87] *s.* 299E.5, regarding Abraham's preparation to sacrifice Isaac ("non dubitavit, non haesitavit, non devotionem tristitia nubilavit").

[88] *s.* 305.4: "nulla tristitia mentem devotissimam nubilaret." In this passage, Augustine is arguing that prior to his passion Christ did not himself have the sort of sadness which would be exemplified by Peter's slipping (cf. *en. Ps.* 31.2.26, and *en. Ps.* 30.2.1.3 with *en. Ps.* 30.4.3.10); he felt sadness (by a sort of transfer) "in us" who are subject to preliminaries of sorrow. In this Augustine differed from Origen and Jerome, who had tried to reconcile Christ's perfect wisdom with Matthew 26:37 by emphasizing that Christ only "began to be" sorrowful, i.e., by describing his "sorrow" as a *propatheia* (see Jerome *Commentariorum in Mattheum* 26:37; Origen *Commentariorum Series* 90). Apparently Augustine did not think this interpretation sufficient for maintaining the perfection of Christ. Sorabji (2000) 349, 353 drew my attention to Jerome and Origen.

[89] *ira* 2.1.1: *incipiat*; 2.2.1: *nascitur*; 2.4.1: *incipiant*, *crescant*; 2.22.4, 2.24.1: suspicions impel us toward anger.

[90] Matthew 7:3–5: "And why do you see the speck in your brother's eye, and do not see the beam that is in your own eye? Or how do you say to your brother, 'Let me pull the speck out of your eye', when there is a beam in your own eye? You hypocrite, first pull out the beam from your own eye, and then you will see, so as to pull out the speck from your brother's eye."

the latter "hatred."[91] He defines hatred as the desire for revenge,[92] which he equates with enjoying or benefiting from someone else's misfortune;[93] and he indicates that hatred is a sin, but "anger" is merely a precursor to a sin.[94] This is compatible with the fact that in the *City of God* he follows the convention of the "*veteres*" in calling the desire for revenge "anger";[95] it is clear that although he is not particular about the *terminology* he uses, he thinks that what is a sin is desire (with assent) for revenge.

For someone familiar with the metaphors, the distinction between preliminary anger and the passion of anger, and between the cognitive states of each of these, is evident in the following (as is the Senecan description of the transition):

> Anger is a speck, hatred is a beam. But nourish a speck, and it becomes a beam … so to prevent the speck from becoming a beam, *do not let the sun go down on your anger*.[96]
>
> So anger is not yet hatred; we do not hate those with whom we are angry; but if that anger remains and is not quickly uprooted, it grows into hatred. This is why scripture bids us, *Do not let the sun go down on your anger*; it is urging us to pluck out newly-aroused anger before it turns into hatred … that speck is a little shoot that may grow into a beam if it is not plucked out at once. This is why the psalmist does not say, 'My eye has been blinded by anger'; he says it is *irritated*. If it were being blinded, that would mean there was hatred there already, not anger … therefore John says, *Whoever hates his brother is still in darkness*. Before one passes into darkness, then, the eye is irritated by anger; but one must prevent anger from turning into hatred, and the eye from becoming blinded. That's why the psalmist says, *My eye is troubled through anger.*[97]

[91] Verheijen (1971) 17–31 drew attention to some of the passages I shall cite and interpreted them as references to a distinction between the *perturbatio* of anger, and the *morbus* of hatred (cf. *Tusc.* 4.21 and 4.25). While it is true that when contrasting anger and hatred, by "anger" Augustine *sometimes* designates a sin less grave than the sin of hatred (e.g., *s.* 82.2, which is not cited by Verheijen), Verheijen missed the characteristic marks of the preliminary vs. passion distinction which appear in some of Augustine's exegeses on the straw and the beam.

[92] *s.* 49.9.

[93] Literally, "feeding off of" another's misfortune, *s.* 211.6.

[94] *s.* 211.1, *en. Ps.* 30.2.2.2–4, *en. Ps.* 4.6, *en. Ps.* 54.4 and 7; in *s.* 63.2–3, too, anger is the "temptation" although there is no contrast with hatred.

[95] See *civ.* 14.15.

[96] *s.* 49.7.

[97] *en. Ps.* 30.2.2.4 citing Ps. 6:7 and 1 John 2:11; here I depart from my usual practice of using the trans. of Tweed et al. and use Boulding (2000) adapted: "Ergo ira nondum est odium; nondum odimus eos quibus irascimur; sed ista ira si manserit, et non cito evulsa fuerit, crescit et fit odium. Ideo ut recens ira evellatur, et in odium non convertatur, hoc nos docet scriptura, dicens: *Non occidat sol super iracundiam vestram*.… Festuca ista et surculus, nisi cito evellatur, trabes futurus est. Non ergo ait: 'extinctus est oculus meus prae ira,' sed *turbatus.* Nam si exstinguitur, iam odium est, non ira.… Hinc ait Ioannes, *Qui odit fratrem suum, in tenebris est usque adhuc.* Antequam ergo eatur in tenebras, conturbatur oculus in ira; sed cavendum est, ne ira vertatur in odium, et oculus exstinguatur. Iste ergo dicit, *Turbatus est prae ira oculus meus*."

It is human to get angry. But anger, born as a short-lived shoot, should not be irrigated by suspicions and become the beam of hatred. Anger is one thing, hatred is another … in comparison to hatred, anger is a shoot. But a shoot, if you nurture it, will be a beam. If you pluck it out, it will be nothing.[98]

There is a beam in your eye. Why is there a beam in your eye? Because you neglected [to pull out] the speck born there … you cultivated it in yourself, you watered it with false suspicions; by believing the words of flatterers about yourself, and the bad words of detractors about a friend, you nurtured it.[99]

4.3. Objection and Reply: Development or Corruption of Stoicism?

An objection might be raised against Augustine's foregoing account, which touches on its plausibility, its status as a development from Stoicism, and its own internal coherence. As we saw at the outset of this chapter, Augustine associates preliminary emotions with imperfect virtue (a "movement" in the courage of a person, for example), and says that the doubt that causes them is an imperfection. But what justification does Augustine have for this negative evaluation? Why is the dubitative experienced in preliminary emotions not merely a morally neutral uncertainty? Moreover, the Stoics, as well as Augustine, say that someone who experiences a preliminary passion is not doing anything wrong. So is Augustine contradicting himself here, as well as doing violence to the Stoic view?

Augustine comes very close to asking the first question in a context where affectivity is not at issue. He asks why Moses should be represented in scripture as being censured for a sudden, unpremeditated doubt (*subita ac repentina dubitatio*),[100] thus showing that he sees the force of this kind of objection. The answer he gives in this other context does not help us to answer our question;[101] nevertheless, an Augustinian answer can be constructed.

It seems that Augustine is probably thinking along the following lines. Apparently he believes that to have a single impression the sentential content of which is dubitative, is implicitly to assent to a statement of possibility. Someone who has the impression that it *may* be a great good or evil that is at

[98] *s.* 211.1; trans. Hill adapted.

[99] *s.* 49.7. Cf. *s.* 114A.6: "… that fresh (*recens*) anger is a tiny speck, scarcely noticeable. Fresh anger troubles the eye, like a speck in the eye: *my eye is troubled in anger*. But that speck is nurtured by suspicions, is strengthened with the passing of time. That speck is going to become a beam." Trans. Hill adapted. Verheijen (*op. cit.*) drew my attention to this passage.

[100] *s.* 352.4, in reference to Moses striking the rock twice (Num. 20:8–11).

[101] He gives an allegorical reading of the doubt; but this is an explanation which, since Augustine himself holds that the anecdote is historical as well as symbolic, leaves the fact of Moses' censured doubt unexplained. It fails to explain why doubt in the face of a surprising event is a defect.

stake, but does not actually believe that the temporal good in question has the value of an eternal good (has not assented), must be judging (implicitly) that the proposition in question is *possibly true*. "Implicitly" judging means that if she were interrupted and asked whether she believed the statement were possibly true, she would say yes.

Assent to the proposition that something is possibly true is logically the same as assent to a disjunction of the form "Either x is true, or x is not true."[102] In the case of preliminary passions, the contents would be: "Either this temporal good is at least equal in value to virtue, or it is not at least equal in value to virtue." One judges that two contradictory theses about the intentional object are both possibly true, and that one is in fact the case, but is unsure which of the two is true.

Now we should recall that Augustine thinks virtue entails wisdom, and then consider the actual truth value of the disjunction that the person having a preliminary passion implicitly assents to. In any particular case, one of the statements in the disjunction is in fact true and the other is in fact false. This means that even though this disjunction is analytically "true" (because one of the disjuncts is true), the person who is thinking it is in fact confused about the reality confronting him. By assenting to the disjunction, the doubting person thinks that something that is in fact false may be true. This weakness in comprehension, then, is why Augustine would think that a preliminary passion indicates an underlying, slight imperfection in virtue or wisdom.

The other reason why Augustine negatively evaluates the dubitative, despite the fact that he thinks the person has not actually committed a moral offense, is that he, like his Stoic sources, holds that preliminaries occur because the soul is in a "wounded" or "scarred" condition as the result of faulty judgments in the past. Augustine uses the "past wound" idea found in Cicero and Seneca to the same effect, and he expands it to include not only previous passions committed in one's own particular life, but also the soul wounds inherited from the original sin.[103]

4.4. Augustine's Ownership of This Account: Previous Patristic Sources

It is clear from Augustine's sermons that he had considered the problem of a cognitive cause for Stoic "preliminary passions," and had adopted a theory that this cause is doubt, that is, a dubitative sayable accompanying an

[102] I noticed after writing this that Newman (1870) makes essentially the same point in analyzing the act of doubting (though not in the context of Augustine): "doubt, wavering distrust, disbelief … There is only one sense in which we are allowed to call such acts or states of mind assents … assents to the plausibility, probability, doubtfulness, or unworthiness of a proposition…." (6.1.2).

[103] *civ.* 14.12 and 14.15.

impression. This contribution to the history of philosophical psychology appears to be uniquely his own. None of the pagans make this move, even though Augustine's account can be seen as a development from Seneca, who says that preliminary anger is caused by *putare* or *opinio*. We have already seen that certain passages of exegetical works by Jerome and Origen make explicit use of the term *propatheia*; but these give no description of the mental state accompanying preliminary passion. The idea of the dubitative preliminary passion is not in the Bible, although Augustine makes use of biblical texts when describing it.

But what about other earlier scriptural commentaries, which do not contain the actual term *propatheia*, but gloss the speck and the beam and slipping foot, and which Augustine may have referred to for his preaching?

The idea that preliminary passions are caused by doubt is hinted at in scriptural commentaries by Origen and Jerome. Their commentaries admit of being understood as references to preliminary passions, although they do not explicitly make this connection nor use the epistemological concepts we find in Augustine.

In Jerome we find only a very swift interpretation of Peter's being frightened as his being "a little bit frightened," a sign that he was doubting: "he [Peter] was a little bit tempted (*paululum relinquitur temptationi*) ... [and] because he was [thus] a little bit fearful (*paululum timuit*), it was said to him, *O you of little faith, why did you doubt?*"[104] This constitutes an interpretation of the scriptural text, given that in scripture there is nothing about Peter being only *slightly* fearful. As such, it could have contributed to Augustine's understanding of Peter's state as preliminary fear.

A precursor to Augustine's account may also be seen in Origen if we recall that Augustine, when describing Peter, sometimes says that the sea represents "this age," and that Peter's slipping represents a temptation in which one begins to love or desire the world (crave temporal goods) in preference to God (containing the criteria of eternal goods). In two passages from successive chapters of Origen's *Homilies on Exodus*, we find an identification of uncertainty (*ambiguitas* in Rufinus' translation) with temptation, and the claim that Peter's walking on the water is an analogy in which to sink is to sin or to love present things: "*They sank in the depth like a stone* [Ex. 15:5]. Why did they 'sink in the depth like a stone'? Because they were not the kind of stones from which sons of Abraham could be raised up [Matt. 3:9] but the kind which love the depth and desire the liquid element, that is, who seize the bitter and fluid desire of present things."[105] But Origen does not state that uncertainty causes

[104] *Comm. in Matt.* 14:30–31. My translation.

[105] *In Exodum Homiliae* 6.4. Cf. 5.4: "But who is so blessed, and who is so freed from the weight of temptations that no uncertainty creeps up on his mind (*ut nulla menti eius cogitatio ambiguitatis obrepat*)? Look at that great foundation of the Church, its most solid rock upon which Christ founded the Church. What does the Lord say? *Why did you doubt, O you of*

preliminary desire, nor does he speak of doubt as part of a perceptual impression, as Augustine does, for example, when he uses a slipping foot as a trope for the preliminary passion of jealousy.

Consideration of Origen and Jerome therefore points to the conclusion that there was no preexistent theory that the cognitive cause of preliminary passions is doubt; it would have been necessary for Augustine to reflect upon, synthesize, and give an epistemological backing to these scriptural commentaries, if he used them.

Our conclusion looks secure, therefore, that it was Augustine's own reflection on the problem of preliminary passions which resulted in this contribution to the history of philosophical psychology. Though not called upon to think about the problem by the more formal, theoretical writing tasks he often had at hand, he nevertheless reflected upon the incomplete Stoic account and developed it in a fittingly "cognitivist" manner.

However, indebtedness to Philo will be discernible on the related topic of the preliminary *good* emotions, which will occupy us in Chapter 5.

4.5. A REMAINING PUZZLE: SOUL "PARTS." LATIN PLATONISM, OR STOICIZED PLOTINUS?

Preliminary passions caused by dubitative sayables accompanying impressions can safely be attributed to Augustine, given the sermons; but does this cohere with his talk of preliminary passions in "soul parts"? Turning back to the *City of God*, and looking also to the anti-Pelagian work *Against Julian*, this is the question that confronts us. We saw in Chapter 2 one of the more eminently late antique features of Augustine's thought, namely, the way that he coherently combines elements from different philosophical schools to develop his own distinctive position. Our inquiry now is whether his use of the terms "inferior parts of the soul" and "vicious parts of the soul" to describe the seat of preliminary passions (e.g., *City of God* 9.4, 9.6, 14.19, 14.23, 15.7, 19.21, *Against Julian* 4) is another instance of this, or whether on this topic Augustine's corpus is merely a disorganized heap, with Stoic cognitivism in one set of texts, and a view that nonvoluntary affects arise from the body and pass into nonrational soul powers, in another set.

4.5a. "Inferior" and "Vicious" "Parts" of the Soul

In order to answer this larger question about coherence, we need first to know what Augustine means by these terms, and this in itself is daunting. Both "inferior parts" and "vicious parts" are traceable to Plato's *Republic*; but it is not entirely clear there whether the parts are inferior merely in the metaphysical

little faith?" Trans. Heine (1982) adapted. Cf. *In Exodum Homiliae* 6.4 where he says that Peter was a "little bit fearful" (*paululum trepidaverit*).

sense (less excellent faculties because nonrational), or in the moral sense (morally bad dispositions), or somehow both.[106] (The Greek term used by Plato for "inferior thing," *to cheiron*, could in principle have either sense.) Furthermore, Chrysippus is quoted in Galen as using the terminology of "soul parts" homonymically, to refer both to powers of the soul such as reason or sensory powers, *and* to acquired moral dispositions such as justice.[107] This duality of meaning was carried over via Latin texts drawing on both Platonism and Stoicism (Cicero and Seneca), to Augustine himself.[108] It is a thorny matter,

[106] *Rep*. 4 (444b), 9 (589d). In book nine the inferior thing in the soul is very clearly morally inferior (e.g., defiled, *miaros*, cf. *Phaedrus* 247b, *kakos* for the bad horse), though the other sense of "lower" is suggested by the fact that the three parts are the same in name as the parts of the *Timaeus*. For differentiation of "moral parts" from "powers," in the *Republic* and *Timaeus*, see the lexical work and discussion in Rist (1992) passim.

[107] Galen, *PHP* 5.2.49. The Galen passage contains three words for "part," with two different senses. First we are told that the powers of the soul which constitute an animal as a rational animal are called "parts" (*merē*), and it is explained that these powers are dispositions (*diatheseis*), which is to say innate/natural qualities of the corporeal substance that is the mind. Once this equivalence between "part" and "disposition" has been established, another word meaning "part" (*morion*) is used to indicate an *acquired* disposition of virtue or vice. Next a third word for "part" (*merismos*) is used to again refer to the powers of the mind, when he asserts that virtue or vice is in the various powers. Presumably Chrysippus' last point is that virtues and vices are states of mind which have been acquired through the habitual use of a mental power (mainly assent) in a particular way, and that once acquired virtues and vices may influence the way the assent is exercised.

[108] Cicero is in direct contact with texts of Plato and of orthodox Stoics; for "parts" as powers of the soul in Cicero, see *fin.* 5.12.34, 5.13.36; for "parts" as both dispositions (love of justice (*iustitiae custodia*) and faculties (e.g., memory), see *fin.* 2.34.113. When he is working directly off of Plato's *Republic* (compare e.g., Plato *rep*. 430e–431a to Cicero *Tusc.* 2.20.47–21.47), he sometimes explicitly glosses the "part lacking reason" as "lacking right reason (*recta ratio*)," e.g., *Tusc.* 4.36.78 (cf. Plato *rep*. 444b on "straying" of parts); at other times, it is implied (Cicero *rep*. 2.67, where he is working off of Plato *rep*. book nine). Augustine's talk of "reining in and taming" and "commanding" the affects of the inferior or vicious parts (*civ.* 14.19, 15.7) comes from Cicero's *rep*. 2.67, 3.25.37 and *Tusc.* 2.21.47, 2.22.51.

For "parts" as dispositions in Seneca, see *ep*. 113.15 ("iustitia pars est animi") and *const*. 6.2 on the moral character of the person as the "pars melior"; for "parts" which look like *Timaeus*-style faculties, see *ep*. 92.1 and 92.8. Inwood (1993) argues (against Holler, Pohlenz, Voelke, and Zeller) that the presentation in *ep*. 92 is for the sake of the argument, "a merely dialectical move."

When we look at Augustine's corpus as a whole, we meet five different phrases, of which some refer to powers of the soul, others to moral dispositions. He speaks of parts of mind (*partes mentis*), parts of reason (*partes rationis*), parts of will (*partes voluntatis*) which are said to 'divide' the rational soul (*discerpunt animum*), parts of the rational soul (*partes animi*), and parts of the soul (*partes animae*). "Parts of the mind" or "of reason," and "part of the soul" (*mentis, rationis, animae*) make appearances in *On the Trinity*, where Augustine uses them for the speculative and practical cognitive powers in the first two cases, and for the power of imagination possessed by nonrational animals in the latter case. (At *trin.* 12.7.10 the speculative and practical powers of the mind are *partes mentis*; at 12.12.17, *pars rationis* is the practical power. At *trin.* 10.8.11 *pars animae* refers to the imagination, which both humans and animals have; cf. 10.5.7, 10.7.10, 10.8.11, 12.3.3,

therefore; even O'Daly does not enter into an analysis of this question of "inferior" and "vicious" parts in his *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind*.

Then, too, we should notice that there are clearly identifiable chronological stages in Augustine's way of speaking. He shifts from speaking of "inferior parts" to speaking of "vicious parts," at around the year 421–422.[109]

The question thus becomes even more complicated. Does Augustine intend these to be synonymous, given that they are used in identical contexts (feelings of anger, lust, and envy)? Or does the terminological shift signal a conceptual shift, a changing of his mind about this topic – say, from a belief in inferior faculties, to a belief in morally vicious dispositions, as the locus of preliminary passions or emotions generally? It seems quite unlikely that Augustine ever (even before 420) thought that preliminaries are caused by inferior parts in the sense of nonrational powers, given the large number of sermons we have seen which rely on a model of preliminaries resulting from cognitive activity, all of which are dated by scholars to 418 or earlier. But since the dating of sermons is conjectural, we cannot put too much weight on that and should investigate using other texts.

4.5b. Vicious Parts

Luckily for us, Augustine defines "vicious parts" in the *Against Julian*, thereby providing us with a foothold from which to begin.

> Certain philosophers said that it [lust, *libido*] was a vicious part of the rational soul (*animus*).... But I say that lust is the vice itself which makes the soul or any part of it vicious, so that, once the vice has been healed, the whole substance is healthy. Wherefore even those philosophers seem to me to have called lust a vicious part of

12.8.13.) The comparatives "superior, inferior" are used to refer to the distinctive *objects* of the speculative and practical powers (the speculative power has metaphysically superior objects, eternal truths, which are accessed via an "interior" retreat from the distractions of sensation; the power of planning action has inferior objects, things and facts known in the "exterior," temporal world of flux. See *trin.* 12.7.10, 12.10.15, 14.3.5). Less frequently, they refer to the function of each power (*trin.* 13.1.1, *officium excellentius*), or as a description of the powers (*potentiae mentis*) themselves (*trin.* 14.7.10). Occasionally "parts of the rational soul (*partes animi*)" is used synonymously with "parts of reason" or for "capacities of the soul which we share with beasts" (nonrational faculties such as imagination or sensation) (*trin.* 4.18.24 and 12.7.12 (cf. *c. Acad.* 3.12, *c. Adim.* 28.2) respectively). "Parts of will which divide the rational soul" refers to moral dispositions (see Ch. 2.5, and cf. *trin.* 11.5.8).

[109] His use of "vicious parts" in the *c. Iul.* written in 421–422 is correlative with his usage in *civ.* book fourteen, where he begins to use "vicious parts" rather than "inferior parts" (which he had used in book nine), and consistently sticks to this new term until the end of the book. *City of God* 14 seems to have been written around the time of *Against Julian*: *civ.* was written over twelve years (413–425/426), the date of *Against Julian* is three-quarters of the way through those twelve years (422), and book fourteen is nearly three-quarters of the way through the *City of God* as a whole (22 books total).

the soul in a figure of speech, because the vice called "lust" is found in that part, just as we use "house" for those who live in it.[110]

By "that part" Augustine clearly means the power of generation,[111] rather than a moral disposition; but he says that this power may have a moral disposition (*vitia, affectionalis qualitas, consuetudo*)[112] "in" it. His point is that the generative power itself is not intrinsically (naturally, ontologically) evil or lustful, but is "vicious" when its possessor has an evil moral disposition that uses this power inappropriately. Now Augustine is here offering us his interpretation of Plato as presented by Cicero; as he tells us, this term "vicious parts" is being borrowed from Cicero's *On the Republic*.[113] By the plurals "certain philosophers," and "those philosophers," he might not have in mind anyone more specific than the "Old Academy" of Cicero and Varro; but he could be thinking of Latin Platonists such as Apuleius and Chalcidius, who also used "vicious parts" to render Plato's "inferior thing" (*to cheiron*).[114] (We do not find this terminology of "vicious parts" in Platonic Christian sources, such as Ambrose or Origen translated by Rufinus.) Augustine takes himself to be correcting these philosophers' sloppy manner of speaking, but what are we to make of his interpretation?

Despite Augustine's "but I say …," this is not his original interpretative move, but seems to point to the influence of Plotinus, who says virtually the same thing: virtue or vice come to be present in the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul, making the parts themselves morally evil or good.[115] Moreover,

[110] *c. Iul.* 6.18.53. Trans. Teske (1999) adapted. Subsequent quotations of *c. Iul.* are also from this translation.

[111] Cf. *c. Iul.* 6.18.55 passim, e.g.: "lust of the reproductive organs (*genitalium concupiscentia*), with which we are born as a result of original sin."

[112] 6.18.54, 6.18.56 (being a sort of person, *talis*), 6.19.58, 6.19.62. The term "dispositional quality"(*affectionalis qualitas*) is coming from Aristotle's *Categories* 8; it is introduced by Julian in reference to Augustine's position, to refer to an enduring quality (lustfulness) as opposed to a passing feeling.

[113] *c. Iul.* 4.12.61, 5.8.33, 6.18.53, *civ.* 14.23 quoting now-lost passages of Cicero *rep*.

[114] Apuleius, *DP* 2.9, on the respective virtues of the rational soul (wisdom and prudence) and of the "vicious parts" (fortitude, temperance), cf. Plato *rep*. book 4 (442a–d); Chalcidius, *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus* 2.184 ("the weakness of the intemperate man votes in favor of the vicious parts of the soul against reason"), 186–187 (the top part of the soul is made by the Demiurge, the vicious parts are made by demons; the vicious parts which are subjoined are anger and desire (*ira et cupiditas*)), 2.261 ("obviously the sufferable part of the rational soul also signifies the vicious [part]"). Augustine uses Apuleius' *DDS* in *civ.* 8, of course; but compare also Apuleius' *DP* 2.9 with Augustine, *Gn. adv. Man.* 2.13.18. Courcelle (1969) 170 argues that Augustine did not use Chalcidius' translation of the *Timaeus*, but compare Chalcidius' *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus* 2.261 (on *impetus*) to Augustine's early *Gn. adv. Man.* 2.17.26 (on *impetus*).

[115] 3.6.2, arguing that Plato's (Pythagorean) definition of virtue as a harmony of parts and vice as disharmony (cf. Rep. 4) requires that there be, prior to this, virtue (*aretē*) or vice (*kakia*) in each part. Cf. 1.1.2: the inferior thing in the soul can have better or worse dispositions (*diatheseis*).

Plotinus says this in a similar context (Plotinus mentions the appetitive part, Augustine the generative power). Notice, however, that Plotinus is here quite close to Chrysippus.[116]

Precisely what it means, philosophically, for a moral disposition to be "in" a power is an interesting question. Lust is, Augustine tells us, a tendency to think (*putare*) that enough is not enough. Unlike raw hunger or thirst, which is the sensate soul's awareness of a physical need, lust is a love (*amor*) of sensual pleasure caused by the erroneous idea that it is to be sought as an end in itself, rather than viewing it as a by-product of right actions done as components in a life aimed at wisdom.[117] A person with "vicious parts," therefore, has attitudes in which goods are incorrectly prioritized; particular soul-powers and their associated organ systems are habitually used by this attitude, and hence the attitude is "in" them.[118] Once the vicious part (attitude, evaluative schema) is provoked by circumstances into an occurrent preliminary lust, we have the option of either consenting, or rejecting the incipient lust.[119]

4.5c. Inferior Parts

Now that we are relatively clear about that, our question is about "inferior parts." Is this synonymous with "vicious parts?" Is it a reference to morally bad dispositions? Or does it refer instead to functionally inferior powers? Augustine does not define the phrase, and it is not used by extant Latin authors prior to him, except, rarely, by Cicero in the *Tusculans*, who is again working from Plato's *Republic*.[120] We cannot assume that Augustine's use of the phrase "inferior parts" signals the influence of the *Timaeus* in a now-lost Latin translation, although that may be the case. Cicero's extant translation of the *Timaeus* cuts off just as he is about to describe the soul, and we should not presume that he spoke of "inferior parts," because as we have already seen, other Latin writers used "vicious parts" for the inferior soul-powers of the *Timaeus*.[121] Moreover, Augustine's confident use of this terminology in *City of God* book nine suggests that he is accustomed to seeing "inferior part(s)" habitually in an author or authors; but it is not found in Augustine's Latin paraphrases of Porphyry,[122] nor in other authors such as Apuleius or Chalcidius. And so we are again thrown back upon Plotinus.

[116] Cf. note 107.

[117] *c. Iul.* 4.14.65–67, 4.14.69–70.

[118] Compare and contrast Nightingale (2011) 215–217.

[119] *c. Iul.* 4.13.64–14.65.

[120] Plato in 431a speaks of the superior (*to beltion*) and inferior (*to cheiron*); Cicero first (*Tusc.* 2.21.47) renders this latter as the effeminate part (*mollis*), probably owing to Plato's comparison with women and children at *rep*. 431c, then in 2.22.51 renders it the *inferior* part.

[121] See note 114.

[122] Though Porphyry's (in translation) "spiritual soul" (*anima spiritalis*), which refers to Plotinus' *dianoia* (cf. the account in *civ.* 10.9), gets glossed by Augustine as "part of the soul inferior to the mind" (*animae pars mente inferior*) in *civ.* 10.27.

In fact, the term "inferior thing" (*to cheiron*) does frequently appear in Plotinus. It refers to the set of soul-powers engaged with the world of change – powers used in discursive, sensory, and vegetative activities, as well as social-civic-moral life – as distinct from the active intellect; but it also refers to acquired moral character that is base. These two senses of "inferior," the epistemological-metaphysical and the moral, are linked in Plotinus' account. Though "inferior thing" primarily refers to a morally neutral set of powers, which can have either vicious or virtuous dispositions in it,[123] it in fact has morally bad dispositions as a kind of proper accident, because matter itself entices the soul to become sensual, morally bad.[124] Hence, people typically tend to pursue mutable things as if these will make them happy. Thus, most of us do not merely engage in lower-level activities and life functions via the "inferior thing," but live a savage or bestial life by virtue of it – the epistemologically inferior life is the morally "defiled" life of *Republic* book nine. It stands to reason that this "inferior thing," with both its senses, was rendered *pars inferior* by a Latin translator of the *Enneads*, and is reflected in Augustine's use of the term "inferior parts."

"Inferior parts" in *City of God* 9.4's discussion of preliminary passions therefore refers, I submit, to something along the lines of Plotinus' powers of imagination and impression (*phantastikon*) and of discursive reason (*dianoētikon*; Augustine: *animus,* having *visa* and *cogitationes*). These are cognitive powers inferior to the higher mind (*nous*/*mens*) which is capable of understanding intelligibles as such. But "inferior parts" also implies an *immoral orientation toward "outward" things*. This, after all, is the model of the *On the Trinity* – which was written concurrently with the *City of God* – where the outward orientation which typically accompanies the habitual exercise of the epistemologically "inferior" power is morally bad: the soul's love is directed to temporal things as ends rather than means to eternal truths and virtues.[125] Augustine does not think that these parts are themselves intrinsically morally inferior or superior, but that the excessive use of the inferior power is related to vice in two ways. First, the excessive use results from an overestimation of the importance of the temporal objects with which they are concerned. Second, it compounds

[123] 1.1.2.

[124] So 3.3.4, 3.4.2, 3.4.3, 3.4.5, 4.3.32. Thus, Plotinus distinguishes between the animal life of man (meaning animal functions) (*zōē*), and morally inferior (*kakos*) character (*ēthos*), the life of a beast (*thērion*) in 3.4.2–3; but the two are mingled in his account: when someone pursues the images of sense, she becomes sensual, and reincarnation ensures that one who voluntarily acquires a bestial character will literally be a wild beast in the next life. Note that Augustine's use of the terms *animalis pars, aliud animale* (*Gn. adv. Man.* 2.11.16ff.) may be from Plotinus' *zōē*/*zōion.*

[125] The discursive power of impression can be turned, via its attention, either to the "rules" of thought existing in the higher mind, or toward the world of change. This power goes by the name "part of rationality" (*pars rationis*), but sometimes also by the name "part of the rational soul" (*pars animi*); and it is occasionally called "inferior" to the mind as speculative (*trin.* 14.7.10; cf. 4.18.24). Cf. Plotinus, 4.8.7, 5.3.3.

this overestimation into an habitual sensuality.[126] In the *Commentaries on the Psalms* and the sermons, this same account of epistemological-moral inferiority appears, explicitly using the term "inferior part of the soul."[127] So, even if it were to turn out that Augustine's occasional language of "inferior parts" in the *City of God* book nine came from a now-lost translation of the section on human creation in the *Timaeus*, he understands this concept along Plotinian lines, where it connotes moral dispositions as well as powers of soul.

We can conclude, then, that Augustine's "inferior parts" and "vicious parts" are synonymous in meaning, though not in emphasis. Apologetical motives drive his transition from the term "inferior" to "vicious" parts in the years 421–422 (the *City of God* book fourteen): Julian denies that the tendency to lust is a morally bad thing; Augustine thinks lust is by definition vicious and our tendency to be lustful is morally bad; in order to emphasize that, he uses the Latin Platonists' term "vicious part." Once this polemic against Julian's Pelagianism has begun, the additional sense of "epistemologically inferior power" or "lower part of reason" is no longer referred to by use of the name "inferior," but it is nonetheless indicated by his statements that lust is essentially "thinking" that sexual pleasure is more important than it is, in the *Against Julian*.

4.5d. Preliminary Passions "in" Inferior/Vicious Parts

Now for the larger question of the coherence and advisability of this mingling of Plotinian and Stoic ideas. It seems clear that Augustine conceives of himself as holding a synthesis of the two schools on this topic of how the preliminary passions fit into human psychology, and uses the Stoicism as a kind of regulating influence over Plotinus, who also alludes to preliminary passions. His use of Plotinus is selective. He alters Plotinus' epistemological framework a bit, in order to emphasize the distinction between impression and assent. Whereas in Plotinus' accounts of involuntary or preliminary passions, the impression and

[126] *trin.* 12.7.10; cf. 12.12.17.

[127] *en. Ps.* 145.5–6: "in medio quodam loco rationalis anima constituta," echoing Plotinus on the "middle" of the soul, inferior to the higher mind (*nous*/*mens*) which is capable of understanding intelligibles as such, but superior to vegetative and bare sensory functions shared with animals. Cf. Plotinus 2.9.2, 4.4.18, 4.8.7, 5.3.3. Here Augustine explains habituation as the origin of the morally bad dispersion into exterior things, the love of business or *cura negotiorum* which is "in" the inferior part, and he attributes discursive thought (*cogitatio*) to this part. (It is clear that his use of *anima*, rather than *animus*, to describe a human soul and its thoughts, is owing to the scriptural text he is assigned to preach from ("Lauda, anima mea, Dominum") and thus is not a philosophical choice meant to indicate nonrational soul powers). Cf. *s.* 154.8, 9, 12, and 14 on lust and the exterior/interior orientation; there is mental language in the inferior part, so the inferior part is apparently a discursive power having a vicious disposition.

judgment are both in the discursive power (*dianoētikon*),[128] with the emphasis being on the distinction between changeable acts such as these, and the intellect's contact with the Forms, Augustine bifurcates Plotinus' discursive power and groups its higher ability (judgment, consent) with the intellect itself, attributing both the power of consent, which evaluates impressions, and the higher intellect (*memoria*), to the *mens*.[129] He also rejects the cosmic trappings of Plotinus' "inferior thing," stripping away the physics and account of reincarnation from the epistemology and moral psychology. (For Plotinus, the inferior powers are liable to entice us to become morally inferior simply because they have contact with matter,[130] and this Augustine denies.)[131] In the late work *Against Julian*, Augustine is still insisting that the Stoics are "first rate ethicists," and when he argues that lust is intrinsically bad because a false thought causes it, rather than a neutral physiological fact that merely needs to be moderated, this places him on the Stoic side of the debate about affectivity.[132]

If Plotinus is thus subordinated to Stoic themes and if Augustine distances himself from Plotinus' view that matter itself tempts one to evil, then why, we might ask, does Augustine use Plotinus' language of "the vicious or inferior thing" at all in the *City of God*? He likes Plotinus' idea that both preliminary passions and passions proper manifest an attachment to temporal things[133] (though he is careful to maintain that the attachment is not equally strong in each case, given that the former are nonconsensual). And Plotinus' account of the discursive power as a hinge that can turn back and forth between unchangeable things and temporal things, helps Augustine to emphasize what is at stake in a preliminary passion: the discursive reason is hanging in the balance between lives organized around two types of objects having distinct hierarchical status. One is thinking that temporal goods may have the value of moral, eternal goods. If one assents to this, one will be overvaluing temporal goods, thus decisively "turning" toward them and away from eternal goods. Augustine finds this useful as a way of filling out what was left unsaid in his

[128] Cf. 1.1.9 "an impression (*phantasia*) which has not waited for the judgment (*krisis*) of the reasoning power (*dianoētikon*)," 1.2.5, desire (*epithumia*) only as far as the impression (*phantasia*), 1.2.6, 1.4.15 on the child within him, 3.2.4 on the "first beginning," 3.6.4 (in an involuntary passion (*pathos aproaireton*), an unevaluated impression (*anepikritos phantasia*) causes bodily disturbances of pallor, etc.).

[129] So e.g., in *civ.* 10.27, he renders Porphyry's (translated) *anima intellectualis* as *mens*; but in *civ.* 9 and elsewhere, consent is given by the *mens*.

[130] E.g., 1.8.14, 4.7.9, 6.3.9, 6.4.15, 6.7.3, 6.7.19. Notice that Augustine does not think this view was held by Plato; cf. *civ.* 14.5 on the *Timaeus*.

[131] Hence in *civ.* 14, beginning to use the Latin Platonists' term "vicious" parts, he shows that Plotinus is still in the background when he feels the need to specify that "these parts were not vicious in paradise before the sin [i.e., not vicious merely by their contact with created bodily organs]" ("hae … partes in paradiso ante peccatum vitiosae non erant").

[132] *c. Iul.* 4.13.64, 4.15.76. On this "debate," see Ch. 3.2.

[133] See Plotinus 1.4.14–15 and 1.8.15.

Stoic accounts, which had indicated that preliminary passions are caused by impressions, but had not emphasized that in a preliminary, someone is considering false, morally dangerous, propositional content.

So, coming back to a concrete example, the preliminary fear at issue in *City of God* 9.4 would be, Augustine thinks, caused by an impression that the temporal good of life may have the value of virtue (eternal goods). (That is, in such an impression, we "estimate" (*aestimare*) the intentional object as such.)[134] This is a proposition we would not be considering (in doubt about) at all, unless we were somewhat more attached to temporal goods than they merited. In other words, the way that the epistemologically inferior power of impression is being used shows that its possessor has an imperfect disposition. But the power of impression is not capable of giving consent (*non consentiendo*), and the disposition is not so strong that it has compelled us to give consent, so we are not having a passion proper. In this way, the accounts of preliminary passions in the sermons as cognitively caused by impressions are compatible with Augustine's talk of "inferior parts" or "vicious parts" in the *City of God*.

[134] *civ.* 9.4: to attach value to (*pendere*), to hold in esteem (*aestimare*).

5

Progress in Joy: Preliminaries to Good Emotions

When we consider the varieties of affect in the Stoic theory, there appears to be a gap. The taxonomy is unsymmetrical, insofar as we have a preliminary passion (*propatheia*), but no preliminary good emotion (no "*proeupatheia*"). This is odd, given that the preliminary passion is caused by one's impression, and according to Stoic epistemology all judgments – including those that constitute good emotions – must be preceded by impressions carrying propositional content. Where, then, is the affective response which accompanies an *accurate* impression that a good or evil has been or will be lost or gained?

The nature of such an affect would not be difficult to construct, given what we know of preliminary passions. Like the preliminary passion, it would be used as an explanation for why someone who was not actually virtuous had a reaction that appeared to be a *eupatheia*, just as the Stoic philosopher in Gellius' story used the preliminary passion to explain why, although he was virtuous, he had a reaction that appeared to be a *pathos*. This affect would also be associated with events that catch a person off guard; that again is the kind of scenario that Gellius and Seneca describe as the provocation of preliminaries. It would be associated with reflexive bodily reactions, just as Gellius and Seneca had described the preliminary passion as an affective reaction that manifested itself in pallor, trembling, and blushing. On the other hand, the preliminary affection would be related as preliminary to affections, the contraries of passions. (Recall the terminology stipulated in Ch. 3.1.) And whereas in the case of the *propatheia*, one ought to withhold the mind's assent, in the case of a preliminary good emotion, one ought to assent; for this would convert a preliminary good emotion into a full-blown good emotion. Whereas it would be better to have a preliminary passion than to have a passion, a preliminary good emotion would be inferior to a good emotion.

We could even predict what sort of person would have a preliminary good emotion. Seneca describes the different stages among those making moral progress (*proficientes*). Among these, it seems that a preliminary affection would be appropriate to the class whom he sometimes describes as closest to wisdom,

who are sufficiently advanced that they no longer have any passions or vices, but are still becoming accustomed to being well.[1] It stands to reason that such a person would have accurate impressions, but stop short of actually assenting to some of them; the result would be preliminary good emotions. One reflects on the fact that she has just done the right thing, for instance, and starts to feel delighted (a preliminary to joy); but then her old cynicism reasserts itself, and the preliminary fails to lead to joy proper as she fails to assent to "That was the kind of thing that is sufficient for my happiness."

If there is in principle no reason why such a category could not have been posited by Stoics like Seneca, why was it not spoken of? The reason apparently lies in Stoic realism about the nigh impossibility of attaining virtue. If the perfect sage is as rare as the phoenix, then cases of transition from the nearly perfect proficient to the perfect sage would be equally rare. But while descriptions of the ideal sage remain useful for ethical theory, because they serve to set the bar, that is not so for descriptions of second best, since second best neither sets the standard nor is readily observable. Thus, it would make sense for Stoic therapeutic texts to concentrate on the earlier stages of passion extirpation rather than the final stage.

Augustine fills in the lacuna in the Stoic taxonomy, with a little help from his friends. It is notable that the actual case studies he provides are all instances of preliminary joy – a fact that has a certain importance for the larger question of Christianity and the emotions,[2] because it counterbalances the gloomy picture of Christian emotional life which has sometimes emerged in the secondary literature. While it is true that guilt and the imperative to avoid lust are found in Augustine and other Christian authors, attention to this privileged place of joy is necessary lest we be deceived by truths in isolation. Augustine focuses on joy as a characteristic emotion of the virtuous life, and on preliminary joy as an affective reaction of those close to virtue but not quite arrived.

5.1. PRELIMINARY JOY AND ITS COGNITIVE CAUSE

5.1a. Sarah versus Abraham

City of God 16.31 contains a brief account of preliminary joy, which depends upon a contrast with the complete joy said, in 16.24 and 16.26, to be experienced by a virtuous person. In this case, Sarah and Abraham are used as tropes for each kind of affective state. Because our ability to distinguish Augustine's own position from the scriptural story itself will depend upon our knowledge of certain details of that narrative, we should first note the salient events of the story as it appears in the Septuagint.

[1] *ep.* 75.9; cf. 71.34, *tranq.* 2.1–4.
[2] A question of interest since Sorabji (2000); Layton (2000).

Genesis chapter seventeen describes Abraham's receipt of a promise: he will have a son, whose name is to be Isaac, from Sarah.[3] When Abraham hears the promise, he falls on his face and laughs, and asks himself in his mind (Augustine: *animus*), "Shall a son be born to me at one hundred, and shall Sarah conceive at the age of ninety?"[4] God then reasserts that Sarah will bear a son.[5] Later, in chapter eighteen, this promise is repeated to Abraham by messengers while Sarah is in the tent, listening in on the conversation;[6] then she also laughs, and asks herself secretly, "Shall I really give birth? But I am old."[7] In response, one of the messengers demands of Abraham why Sarah asked this question, and points out that nothing is difficult for God.[8] Amusingly, Sarah then denies having laughed, but the messenger knows better: "That's not true; you did laugh."[9] Finally in chapter twenty-one, Sarah gives birth to Isaac, at which time she says that God has given her laughter, and that henceforth anyone who hears of it will rejoice with her (*congaudebit mihi*).[10]

Note that the story contains an element which could be compared to Stoic accounts of preliminary passions. The immediate laughter of both Abraham and Sarah, in response to the shocking announcement that she will have a son, is reminiscent of the reflexlike psychophysical reactions to surprising events described by Seneca and Gellius. Notice, too, that both are said to react by "speaking in the mind" or "speaking inside themselves," which could suggest to Augustine a Stoic epistemological model.

Augustine does indeed go on to situate this story in an affective-cognitive context. He goes beyond the literal scriptural text by treating their physical laughter as evidence of interior joy (*exultatio*,[11] *gaudium*[12]), but contrasts their affective states, asserting that Abraham's reaction is superior on cognitive grounds. "[H]er laughter, though joyous, was not founded on complete

[3] Genesis 17:16. The spelling of Sara's second name (see Genesis 17:15) that is used by Augustine is actually Sarra (from the LXX), but I use Sarah because it is the common English usage (from the Hebrew Sarah).

[4] Genesis 17:17: "Et procidit Abraham super faciem suam, et risit, et dixit in animo suo, dicens: Si mihi centum annos habenti nascetur? Et si Sarah annorum nonaginta pariet?" This is the Latin text (Augustine is using a translation of the LXX) as quoted in *civ*. 16.26; cf. *loc. Hept*. 1.57.

[5] Genesis 17:19.

[6] Genesis 18:10. My use of the term "messengers" is deliberately ambiguous, in order to accommodate the facts that while the text of Genesis says "three men," Augustine interprets the "men" as angels, on which see Section 1b of this chapter.

[7] This is the formulation of her questions that Augustine uses in *qu. Hept.*; it is the messenger's recapitulation of her question in Genesis 18:13.

[8] Genesis 18:13–14.

[9] Genesis 18:15.

[10] Genesis 21:6. This is the text as quoted in *civ.* 16.31: "Risum mihi fecit Dominus; quicumque enim audierit, congaudebit mihi." LXX *gelōs* followed by *sunchareitai moi*.

[11] *civ.* 16.26.

[12] *civ.* 16.31.

belief" (*risus ille, etiamsi gaudii fuit, tamen plenae fidei non fuit*).[13] Abraham, on the other hand, did not fail in his belief (*non in fide defecisset*) at any point.[14] Although he asked questions in his mind, these, we are assured, were the words of someone who was marveling (*verba sunt admirantis*);[15] he was wondering in his joy (*admirans in gaudio*);[16] his laughter was the exultation of a thankful man (*exultatio gratulantis*).[17]

This distinction between "incomplete" belief, which causes an approximation of joy (something "of joy"), and belief proper, which causes unqualified joy, is interesting. As Sorabji notes, first movements are called bad thoughts "of" emotions; "the 'of' distinguish[es] them from the emotions."[18]

Prima facie it is also a bit mysterious. What is the precise nature of Sarah's "incomplete" belief? An obvious candidate for "incomplete belief" would seem to be assent directed at some member(s) of a set of propositions, but denied to others; yet that cannot be the meaning here, as the promise to which Sarah reacts contains only one proposition ("Sarah will bear a son").

The difference, Augustine says, lies in the cognitive acts that caused each affective experience. Sarah's "incomplete belief" was an act of doubting the proposition. Sarah laughed because she was "doubting in joy" (*dubitans in gaudio*).[19] And Abraham's joyous belief is contrasted with doubt: he was not uncertain or hesitating (*non ambigeret*), his words were not those of a doubter (*verba … non sunt dubitantis*).[20] This account is repeated in Augustine's *Questions on the Heptateuch* and his *Against the Adversary of the Law and the Prophets*: Abraham's question expressed the joy of one who was marveling, not the diffidence of a doubter,[21] but Sarah's was a doubtful laugh.[22] Although the syntactic form of the interior speech was interrogative in both cases, its meaning in Abraham's case was exclamatory, and in Sarah's, dubitative.

Now although this interpretation by Augustine does not actually contradict anything in the biblical narrative, it is a rather remarkable interpretation. There is, of course, no need to see these laughs as indicative of interior joy having cognitive causes, given that, as Augustine himself mentions, "Isaac" means "laughter" in Hebrew.[23] Ambrose, for instance, thought that Sarah's laughter was

[13] ibid.
[14] Cf. *civ.* 16.24. Augustine says this in reference to the first promise Abraham received (Genesis 15:4–6; see note 27); but he treats Abraham's mental state as continuously believing throughout all the promises (cf. *civ.* 16.26, 16.31).
[15] *civ.* 16.26.
[16] *civ.* 16.31.
[17] *civ.* 16.26.
[18] (2000) 359.
[19] *civ.* 16.31.
[20] *civ.* 16.26.
[21] *c. adv. leg.* 2.4.13. Cf. *qu. Hept.* 4.19.
[22] *qu. Hept.* 1.36.
[23] *civ.* 16.31: "eumque nominavit Isaac, quod interpretatur risus."

an involuntary prophecy, an automatic, unthinking (but apparently divinely inspired) reflexive physical response to the promise of Isaac.[24] Yet Augustine chooses a causality that is the exact reverse of Ambrose's: whereas Ambrose thinks that they laughed because of who Isaac was, Augustine asserts that Isaac's name was *taken from* what he claims was their cognitively caused "joyous" laughter.[25]

Even if we disagree with Ambrose's somewhat mechanistic explanation, and suppose that the more natural reading of Genesis assumes interior joy, the fact remains that Augustine's analysis goes notably beyond the text. The raw text of Genesis suggests nothing more than simple ridicule on the part of Sarah. It is Augustine who makes her have "incomplete belief," thereby placing her in the middle category between the two extremes of derision or disbelief, and "full belief." As he explains elsewhere, "midway between the deriders and the believers, are the doubters (*inter inridentes et credentes, medii sunt dubitantes*)."[26] As for Augustine's claim that Abraham had complete belief in Genesis 17, we might think that it, too, is questionable. Genesis omits any mention of Abraham believing this promise, at which he laughs.[27] He asks what looks like the same question as Sarah's, and in response to it God reasserts the prophecy, as if insisting because Abraham was disbelieving. And while Abraham's falling on his face is significant in the context of the bible (signifying adoration),[28] Augustine does not actually mention it as being important. It could in theory betoken other kinds of reactions such as external deference while doubting, fear, etc. Genesis itself does not settle these matters, and neither, for that matter, do the texts of Romans and Hebrews.[29]

[24] *Abr.* 1.5.43: "Sarah laughed, which I judge to have been a sign of the future.... For she laughed, although still not knowing why she laughed, [viz.] that she would bring forth public joy [in the person of] Isaac. Therefore she denied that she had laughed, because she did not know [the meaning of her laughter]: therefore she laughed because she prophesied." My trans.

[25] *civ.* 16.31. "Ex hoc ergo, puer nomen accepit."

[26] *s.* 150.2; my trans. Cf. *civ.* 16.31 re. Sarah: "risus ille non ad inridendum opprobrium ... pertinebat."

[27] It might be suggested that Genesis 15:4–6 is decisive here, where in response to a precursor announcement to the promise of Isaac, the text says that Abram believed God ("credidit Abram Deo"). But equal emphasis could be placed on the omission of such a statement in Genesis 17, as could be placed on his earlier belief; there is no need to assume that Abraham's reaction to the two promises would be identical, as Augustine does.

[28] E.g., 1 Macc. 4:55.

[29] Romans 4:19–21 offers an interpretation of Abraham's response to the promise of Isaac: "he did not hesitate through diffidence (*non haesitavit diffidentia*) but was comforted by his faith, giving glory to God, fully knowing (*plenissime sciens*) that whatever he had promised, he was able to do." Obviously Augustine agrees with this interpretation of Abraham, views it as authoritative, and would have seen it as in some way validating his own presentation of Abraham and Sarah in *civ.* and other texts. Nonetheless, Augustine's treatment of Sarah and Abraham is not determined by this text. Paul says nothing of the laughter or joy of the two biblical figures. He is not addressing their affective states. Nor does he actually ascribe hesitation to Sarah. Augustine, therefore, could have remained faithful to the Pauline text had he

Indeed, it looks like in the case of Sarah Augustine is making use of a concept derived from Hellenistic philosophical psychology – namely, the fictitious pro*eupatheia* that is missing from the Stoic taxonomy of affects. As we saw in the last chapter, Augustine consistently holds that the cognitive cause of a *propatheia* is a dubitative. Moreover, the description he gives here of Sarah's doubting affective reaction is similar to those descriptions in other ways. Augustine described preliminary passions as "close to" passion, "almost but not yet" affirmation of a false proposition; they were affects in which the mind was "moving toward" making an error but had not yet consented. The way that he here describes Sarah's incomplete belief – it is not complete belief, but sufficiently related to belief to be "partial" belief, and "of joy" (*gaudii*) – is similar.

Compounding this evidence is the fact that Augustine apparently has in mind a first reaction that can be converted into a virtuous emotion by an act of believing the proposition in question. For he implies that this doubting joy of Sarah's is incomplete in comparison not only with Abraham's true joy, but also with the true joy that she *herself* has when the angel reminds her that nothing is difficult for God.

He implies this first of all, when he cites Hebrews 11.11, which says that Sarah "received strength to conceive seed, even past the time of age, because she believed that he was faithful who had promised." Augustine cites this passage just before his allusions to Sarah.[30] If he wants to say that her laughter at the announcement that she would conceive was caused by a dubitative and not by belief, but also wants to hold that she became able to conceive because she believed, he must think that her doubt transitioned into belief and that the duration of her doubt was short. Again, he says that when she conceived, it was a "confirmation" of her belief, which implies that she had already transitioned into the belief that she would conceive, and that the actual pregnancy was a corroboration of this.[31] This is consistent with preliminaries, which are supposed to be short-lived, either quickly becoming emotions proper by assent, or fading away through lack thereof.

There is also a similarity to the way that Seneca describes the transition from preliminary passion to passion. The fact that she says her name for the

opted for the same kind of prophetic explanation that Ambrose had offered of Sarah, or had he attributed Sarah's laughter and question to outright disbelief or derision. Hebrews 11:11 asserts that Sarah believed. Yet Augustine opts to say that Sarah initially doubted, rather than that she simply had faith or that she at first had disbelief but swiftly changed her mind. In *civ.* Augustine is concerned with the relation of different cognitive acts to different kinds of affects, and this is not the subject matter of the Pauline texts.

[30] *civ.* 16.28.

[31] *civ*. 16.31: "Yet when the angel reproved her because that laughter, though pertaining to joy, was not caused by complete belief [cf. Gen. 18:10], afterward she was also confirmed (*confirmata*) in her faith by the same angel [cf. Gen. 21:1]." Trans. Levine et al. adapted.

child refers to laughter understood as the affection of joy (*gaudere*) shows that her initial reaction was a preparation for joy, something that "was related to joy (*ad gaudium pertinebat*)," although it was not wholehearted celebration until she believed it.[32] Compare this to the way that Augustine describes preliminary passions as "shoots which become beams," via the Senecan mechanism of brooding on suspicions. He thinks that the terminus of the affective response indicates the nature of the preliminary, because there is an organic relationship between the two, just as Seneca had described the first reaction (*primus motus*) as a preparation (*proludens*). Thus, Sarah's case looks analogous to the cognitive process that occurs in the transition from preliminary passion to passion. A first reaction provoked by an impression carrying true propositional content becomes a good emotion when one assents to the content.

Augustine implies that the transition from doubt to belief was effected by the rhetorical question of the angel that came immediately after her laughter ("Is anything difficult for God?").[33] She believed that she would conceive upon being reminded of God's omnipotence.

5.1b. Objection and Reply: "Faith" and Human History

It might seem at first that this reference to omnipotence, and the appearance of the term *fides* in Augustine's description of Sarah ("her laughter was not of complete faith"), should prevent us from seeing this as a development in cognitive moral psychology, the principles of which he derived from Stoicism. But that is not so. Augustine uses the term "faith" in reference to a number of kinds of belief, and in no case is it a noncognitive feeling or raw act of will. We are not here dealing with the kind of blind leap into contradictions which Kierkegaard, for instance, famously ascribes to Abraham when commenting on Genesis' subsequent description of the sacrifice of Isaac. And although Augustine thinks there is a special kind of faith, which he calls "higher faith," for which grace is required, he does not think that the proposition proposed for Sarah's assent is of this kind.

As he presents it, the issue is whether Sarah believes that God can make the pregnancy happen. Augustine understands "omnipotence" to mean God's ability to instantaneously bring about some state from its contrary, so Sarah was doubting the omnipotence of God (his ability to bring fertility out of sterility). But God's omnipotence is knowable by human reason, he thinks. According to him, it was recognized by Plato in the *Timaeus*.[34] And of

[32] *civ*. 16.31. "Sarah showed that that laughter was not pertaining to derisive insult, but rather to celebratory joy, when Isaac was born and so named; indeed she said: 'The Lord has created laughter for me, for whoever hears of it will rejoice with me.'" Trans. Levine et al. adapted.

[33] Genesis 18:13.

[34] *s.* 242.7: "Don't even you, pagan though you are, say that God is omnipotent? Don't we read, in that book of Plato's which I mentioned yesterday [*s.* 241.8], that the God who was not made

course Augustine knew from his education that Greek and Roman literature ascribed miraculous powers to the gods.[35] So it is not contradictory or even very surprising for God to work a miracle, according to Augustine's way of thinking. For God to do something like that would be what we can somewhat facetiously call an "ordinary miracle": the healing or manipulation of natural processes, or the granting of natural properties to beings which previously lacked them.

Neither does the fact that Augustine thinks the messenger to Sarah was an angel[36] and that Sarah and Abraham presumably believed in the existence of angels put us in the realm of Augustinian special, that is, "higher" faith. Augustine knows that the pagan middle Platonist Apuleius considers *daemones* an essential part of the *scala naturae*.[37]

In contrast, Augustine's "higher faith," which is impossible without interior grace assisting one to believe, is belief in the incarnation and in doctrines that depend upon it.[38] A case like Sarah's miraculous pregnancy or the *Timaeus* example of making something mortal be immortal (but still mutable) differs from that of the incarnation, he thinks, because whereas the former are the healing of a natural defect or the mere extension of a mutable creature's natural life in time, in the latter case an entirely exceptional kind of entity was brought into existence, which cannot exist in nature (in other words, Christ is God as well as a human being).[39]

What is the significance of Augustine's use of the term "faith" in the case of Sarah, then, if it does not indicate a noncognitive act or the action of grace? He uses this term because what is proposed for Sarah's assent is information being given secondhand, through a messenger. Such faith he defines in the *On the Usefulness of Belief:* belief or faith (the terms are synonymous)[40] is an act of assent (*adprobari*) in which one affirms some statement received secondhand, as opposed to firsthand experience of the intentional object,

said to the gods made by him… 'You cannot be immortal, but I will ensure that you never die' [*Timaeus* 41b] … God, who can even do what is impossible, brought everything back to his will. I mean, what else does, 'You cannot be immortal, but I will insure that you never die' mean, except 'I can even do what is impossible'?" Trans. Hill adapted. Cf. *s.* 240.2.

35 Cf. *conf.* 1.16.26 on Zeus.

36 See notes 6 and 31.

37 On Augustine's acceptance and use of an argument for the existence of *daemones* attributed to Xenocrates (transmitted to him by Apuleius), see Byers (2012a).

38 See *s.* 21.5: the special sense of faith (*fides superior*) is belief in the Incarnation, and things that depend upon that mystery for their reality (e.g., the Eucharist): "That higher faith because of which the Faithful are called the Faithful as they approach the table of the Lord." That this kind of faith requires grace is something he says passim his corpus, but see e.g., *s.* 215.4 on Mary's belief in the incarnation.

39 I.e. Christ's natures as human and divine, where divine means immutable, unlike the *Timaeus* example of created and immortal.

40 *Credere* is a synonym for *fides* in *util. cred.* 9.21–22, 10.24–11.25, 14.30–32, 17.35; cf. e.g., *en. Ps.* 31.2.5, *en. Ps.* 44.1, *en. Ps.* 58.1.10, *en. Ps.* 87.10, *en. Ps.* 109.7–8.

which is characteristic of knowledge.[41] So "belief" here signifies the source of the information, rather than a *sui generis* kind of interior act, or matter for assent that is beyond human reason's power to grasp. Because in the case of Sarah, the source of the information is a report given through an intermediary, about a future event from which she is removed in time, it is an instance of secondhand information.

What *is* true and important, however, is that a worldview like Augustine's, in which God's providence is particular and not merely general, and a view of history such as Judaism's, which claims that particular divine interventions have occurred, provide occasions for exercising and testing commitment to the proposition that God is omnipotent. And Augustine knows that his commitment to this view of providence and of history sets him apart from his Stoic precursors. Unexpected good news is announced because, in contrast to Seneca's deistic account of providence, for example,[42] God does not merely follow the laws of nature but breaks into the flow of time with glad tidings. Hence, there are numerous occasions for preliminary joy and joy proper that are provoked by God's omnipotent actions.

Later we will have more to say about how this is consistent with Augustine's general theory of affective reactions (which are supposed to concern the relative values of temporal goods vs. virtues). For the moment, because we have seen that Augustine's analysis of Sarah does not depend upon elements incompatible with Stoic *psychology*, but rather that his scriptural exegesis cannot easily be explained without some reference to it, let us look at two other sets of evidence that Augustine had a concept of a "preliminary good emotion."

5.1c. Zachary versus Mary

Parallel to the case of Sarah and Abraham, according to Augustine, is that of Zachary and Mary. At the beginning of the gospel of Luke, both receive unexpected announcements that they will have a child, and are told that they should rejoice, or will have joy (*gaudium, exultatio*).[43] As in the case of Sarah and Abraham, both ask questions in response to the announcement.

The *City of God* asserts that even though, like Abraham, Mary asked a question in response to the announcement, her cognitive reaction was not

[41] For the definition of belief (*credere*) vs. knowledge, see *util. cred.* 11.25–12.26.

[42] Seneca explicitly denies that God, "the maker of the universe," can do something that is naturally impossible, asserting that God is subject to the laws of fate even though he wrote them (*prov.* 5.8–9).

[43] See Luke 1:14 regarding Zachary ("et erit gaudium tibi et exultatio et multi in nativitate eius gaudebunt") and the Greek text of Luke 1:28 addressed to Mary (*chaire*). Even if Augustine did not know the Greek for Luke 1:28 (the Vulgate has *ave*), he knew that the context was one of joy from the surrounding passages in which the Latin clearly refers to joy: Luke 1:44 ("exultavit in gaudio infans in utero meo"), 1:47 ("exultavit spiritus meus"), and 2:10 ("evangelizo vobis gaudium magnum").

one of diffidence (*diffidentia*), but rather that she was "sure" that it was true (*certa erat*):

> it does not indicate diffidence on the part of the Virgin Mary that she says, 'How shall this be, seeing that I know not man?,'[44] for Mary was sure that it would be so, but she asked in what way it was to be accomplished.[45]

"Diffidence" in Augustine names a genus for different kinds of lack of belief, ranging from a complete lack (and attendant dismissiveness, *inrisio*), to partial belief, to inoperative belief.[46] Which of these is Augustine denying that Mary had? The middle category, that is, incomplete belief or doubt.[47] For Mary's reaction at the annunciation is contrasted with diffidence as doubt in Sermon 291.5, where Augustine also stipulates that her reaction was one of "complete belief" (*integra fides*).[48] Mary's complete belief obviously serves as a foil to Sarah's cognitive state of incomplete belief, which was equivalent to doubt. Moreover, Augustine explicitly compares Mary to Abraham,[49] who he says did not have the diffidence of a doubter (*diffidentia dubitantis*).[50] Given the context of joy in the Luke passage, his portrayal of Mary can reasonably be understood as an indication that he thinks she had the joy of the virtuous person (a *eupatheia*).

Zachary is given as a contrast to Mary. Just as Augustine had contrasted the cognitive states of Abraham and Sarah despite the fact that their external laughter was the same, he grants of Mary and Zachary that "if we look at the words [they spoke], either both believed or both doubted," but he asserts repeatedly that cognitively they differed: unlike Mary's complete belief, Zachary had the diffidence of doubt (*non fides sed dubitatio*, *diffidens, haesitatio*).[51] Here again, Augustine is going beyond the scriptural text, which does not mention doubt, and could be interpreted to mean that Zachary simply rejected the implausible promise, with the caveat that he might reconsider his position should proof be offered later.[52] Augustine, however, chooses to present Zachary as one who is doubting rather than simply disbelieving, and, we may infer, thereby having

[44] Luke 1:34.

[45] *civ.* 16.24: "non est diffidentia … certa erat." Similarly Ambrose *Exp. Evang. Sec. Lucam* 2.14: "Non de effectu dubitavit, sed qualitatem ipsius quaesivit effectus."

[46] See *Io ev. tr.* 16.3, where the *diffidens, nondum credens* person is characterized as *homo in fide tepidus, aut frigidus, aut omnino nullius fidei.*

[47] For *non plena fides* as an intermediate state between disbelief and belief, and associated with doubt, see *cons. ev.* 2.28.66 re. Mark 9:23 ("Lord I believe; help my unbelief") with *s.* 43.9, also re. Mark 9:23, which speaks of *stare sed titubare, nutare.* Cf. *s.* 115.1 on *non plena fides* contrasted with *plena fides* and with complete absence of *fides*.

[48] Cf. *s.* 293C.1.

[49] *civ.* 16.24. Cf. *civ.* 16.26.

[50] *c. adv. leg.* 2.4.13.

[51] *s.* 290.5–6, *s.* 291.2, 291.5.

[52] He asks how he can know that the announcement is true, given that "I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." (Luke 1:18).

the same affective response as Sarah. If we recall that Peter as a trope for propathetic fear was described synonymously as *diffidens* and *dubitans*,[53] we have another indication that Zachary should be read as representative of a preliminary affect.

As was the case with Sarah, the issue again is God's omnipotence. In the case of Zachary, the question is whether God can bring about a pregnancy, given that he and his wife are old.[54] In the case of Mary, the question of omnipotence is present[55] because according to Augustine, Mary had already vowed celibacy; so the announcement is declaring that a natural impossibility will occur.[56] Because he wants to say that she did not doubt or disbelieve, he explains her question as a request for information about the manner in which the conception will occur. Interestingly, therefore, the cause of her joy still does not seem to be treated as an instance of what Augustine calls "higher faith." (He does think that she *also* believed in the Incarnation, which required higher faith, when she was *subsequently* told that the Holy Spirit would be the father of the child; but this was after the belief that God would perform an 'ordinary' miracle, which caused her immediate joy at the first message.)[57]

Cases of unusual pregnancy are not the only ones which Augustine seizes upon to speak of "doubting joy," however, and so we can turn to one more set of evidence that he is committed to this preliminary good emotion.

5.1d. The Apostles

A passage from one of the gospels which describes the apostles as "not believing and marveling for joy" when Jesus stood among them on the third day after he had been killed (*non credentibus et mirantibus prae gaudio*),[58] poses

[53] *s.* 76.4.

[54] See note 52.

[55] *s.* 291.5.

[56] Cf. *s.* 291.1, *s.* 343.4, and *s.* 290.6. Augustine understands her situation this way because of the future tense of her question, "How will this be?" He assumes that her question was not prompted by ignorance of the natural reproductive process (so *s.* 291.5, *s.* 215.4), and concludes that she would not have asked this if she had planned to commence a physical relationship with Joseph. The marriage to Joseph is explained as practical: to shield her from the advances of men, or to prevent scandal (*virg.* 4.4).

[57] See *s.* 215.4. In sum: He thinks that her first reaction to the announcement that she will bear the Messiah is belief that God can make her fertile while she remains celibate, an "ordinary" kind of miracle comparable to Elizabeth's conception in old age (the kind of manipulation of natural laws that Augustine thinks even pagans knew is possible for God/gods), and this causes joy. Subsequently she asks the angel how this will come about, and is told that God is going to be the father of the child; this she reacts to by believing in the incarnation as such. At this point Augustine ceases contrasting her with Zachary because the matter is now different.

[58] Luke 24:41. This is the Vulgate rendering; Augustine often uses the Vulgate when commenting on the passage; but he does sometimes use another translation ("non crederent, et mirabantur a gaudio").

an interpretative problem for Augustine. Someone not committed to a cognitivist psychology might try explaining the passage thus: the apostles were so shocked that they were not thinking anything in particular, but nevertheless experienced delight at the physical sight of their beloved friend. Yet that avenue is not open to Augustine, given his general psychological theory. On the other hand, neither is it open to him to say that their joy was caused by assent to the proposition that their friend had risen; for the text says they did not believe. He escapes through the horns of the dilemma by explaining their reaction to the shocking event as doubting, or preliminary joy: "a certain doubt, as of one believing slowly, suppresses the joy";[59] "they were both rejoicing and doubting,"[60] they were "hesitating and doubting for joy."[61] He repeats this account.[62] In other passages, we find the same analysis of the apostles' preliminary or "non-believing joy," but using metaphorical terminology similar to his description of preliminary passions ("wavering").[63] Note that, as with the earlier cases, this account is not strictly implied by scripture, but is Augustine's own interpretation.[64]

Moreover, Augustine is describing a first reaction that can be converted into a virtuous emotion by an act of believing the right proposition, as is appropriate for a preliminary emotion. When they make the transition from doubt to belief, the apostles' condition will be akin to Abraham's "giving thanks and marveling" (*gratulans, admirans*) in joy. "Let doubt perish, let it give way to appropriate praise (*Pereat dubitatio, sequatur digna laudatio*),"[65] he says – but praise is a sign of "wondering at an awesome event."[66] So the doubting joy is susceptible of a transition to Abraham-style eupathic joy.

[59] *en. Ps.* 147.17: *dubitatio quaedam veluti tardius credentis, condit voluptatem*. The translator (Tweed et al.) chooses "hides" rather than "makes" for *condit*; I have followed his lead in taking the sense "suppresses."

[60] *s.* 229J.3: *et gaudebant et dubitabant.*

[61] *s.* 162A.10: *haesitantibus prae gaudio et dubitantibus*. He repeats himself in the same paragraph: "prae gaudio haesitabant."

[62] *s.* 116.4 ("Pereat dubitatio…"), *s.* 129.6 ("haesitantes, dubitantes, prae gaudio non credentes"), *s.* 160.3 ("dubitarent"), *s.* 242.12 ("haesitantibus prae gaudio"). He also says the apostles were "scarcely believing" (*vix credebant*)" – cf. Augustine's explanation of the dubitative as the sentiment that something is "scarcely believable" (*vix credibile*) (see Ch. 1.4).

[63] *s.* 116.3, *s.* 237.1, *s.* 238.2, *s.* 242.1.

[64] The notion of doubt is not in the passage about joy that he is glossing here. There is another passage which if taken together with this one, can make Augustine's account look plausible: it says that when Jesus' disciples saw him, "they adored him, but some of them doubted" (Matthew 28:17). Yet this passage refers to a distinct event in the narrative, occurring at a different time and place; it is not clear that the same people are even present at both events. Moreover, it says nothing of joy. Note also that the parallel story of Thomas, whom western culture has dubbed "doubting Thomas," does not actually speak of doubt; he is described more generically as unbelieving (*incredulus*) (John 20:27; cf. Mark 14:14).

[65] *s.* 116.4.

[66] E.g., *ep.* 162.7: "Si miramur … excellentia laudando miramur."

Augustine says that the transition occurred when the apostles assented to the proposition that it was Christ in the flesh, and not merely a ghost,[67] which was the same as their believing that God can do the impossible because he is omnipotent (*omnipotens*),[68] just as he implied that Sarah's doubting joy was converted into true joy when she reflected on the messenger's reminder that anything is possible for God. Thus Augustine explains the manner in which such a preliminary state can be converted into joy proper: "Why don't we believe? It's God who did it. Think about (*considera*) the one who brought it about, and destroy the doubt (*tolle dubitationem*)."[69]

Similarly to the earlier cases of Sarah and Zachary, Augustine here presents God's raising someone from the dead as an "ordinary" miracle, included in the omnipotence of God knowable by pagans.[70] He thinks that when the apostles converted their preliminary joy into joy proper by believing that Christ was alive in the flesh, they were believing that Christ had been raised by God. (Similarly to the case with Mary, Augustine distinguishes this from the apostles' *subsequent* belief that Jesus *was* God and therefore raised *himself* from the dead (as opposed to was raised by God). That was a thesis requiring "higher faith" given by grace, and was an additional belief acquired by them after they had already transitioned into joy proper.[71] But that additional belief does not concern us here, because he does not connect it with joy.)

Most intriguingly, some of these texts also describe the apostles' mental and affective condition in terms which Cicero and Seneca had earlier used to describe the aetiology of preliminary passions. Augustine echoes the theory, found in the *Tusculan Disputations* and the *On Anger*, that preliminaries occur because of a "past wound" (*vulnus*) to the mind, i.e. a passion in which assent was given, which has been healed, but has nevertheless left an imperfection of

[67] What was in question in the apostles' minds was the reality of Jesus' body (the *soliditas corporis*, *s.* 242.1); cf. *s.* 160.3, *s.* 162A.10, *s.* 242.12, *s.* 229J.1–2, *s.* 237.2, *s.* 375C.3, *en. Ps.* 147.17.

[68] Because this is the proposition which needs to be affirmed for their preliminary joy to change into virtuous joy, the proximate provocation has a merely secondary importance. Thus Augustine sometimes says that it was the viewing and handling of Christ's body (commenced, but presumably not completed, to Augustine's way of thinking, in Luke 24:40) that provoked their belief in the reality of Christ's body (*s.* 116.3, *s.* 375C.3, *s.* 243.3); other times he says that it was not until Christ ate something (Luke 24:41) that they believed (*s.* 268.4).

[69] *s.* 242.1.

[70] The accounts elsewhere in the Bible of God raising dead people to life through the agency of Elijah, Elisha, or Peter (though without the qualities of resurrected flesh) would be examples of "ordinary" miracles, according to Augustine's way of thinking. See *s.* 242.1, asserting that the fact that so many people are born every day who didn't previously exist is a greater miracle than that a few people who have died have been raised again.

[71] Augustine indicates that they received this when Jesus subsequently "opened their minds" while explaining the prophecies about the Messiah. See *s.* 215.6 on Jesus raising his own manhood from the dead as the specific credal difference between Christians, and Jews or pagans (cf. *s.* 240.2), and see the shift in the topic of exegesis from paragraph 3 to 4 in *s.* 229J.

disposition.[72] He traces the apostles' doubting joy back to an earlier "wound," which he thinks occurred at the very first moment that Jesus appeared to them (several lines before their nonbelieving/doubting joy). The scriptural narrative says that the apostles "were upset (*turbati*), and frightened (*in timorem missi*); they thought (*putaverunt*) they were seeing a ghost."[73] This, Augustine asserts, was a passion (*perturbatio*) in which they believed (*credere*) that it was a ghost; and it caused a wound in each of their minds (*vulnera*).[74] They were thinking he was a ghost (*spiritum eum putabant*),[75] they judged (*arbitrari*) that what had appeared before their eyes was not real;[76] this mental act was "not an insignificant wound of the mind (*non leve vulnus hoc cordis est*)."[77] Augustine thinks that they had been told, prior to this, that he would be raised,[78] and that therefore there was no excuse for their false judgment. So they wounded themselves, that is, worsened their disposition, by making it. It is because they had this bad disposition that when they were next given more evidence that it was indeed a resurrection (when Jesus began to talk to them), they were only capable of preliminary, doubting joy, rather than joy proper. It then took further evidence (the handling of his feet and hands, etc.) for them to transition to belief that it was really he, and thereby experience the affection of joy.

Of course, Augustine's aetiology differs significantly from that mentioned by Seneca and Cicero, insofar as he supposes very little time lag between the passion wound and the subsequent "trace" of that, the preliminary emotion. The Stoic theory had posited an intervening process of rehabituation. Augustine actually indicates that he is aware of the discrepancy, and of the fact that it might seem to call into question his exegesis: "But is it incorrect for us to think that the apostles were wounded, given that they were quickly healed?"[79] His answer seems to be that his shortening of the timeframe was required by the assigned scriptural text itself. He simply points out that they did improve, because they were immediately given enough evidence. Since the timeframe described by the assigned scriptural text is indeed short, Augustine's adaptation seems an almost comically heroic effort to adapt the Stoic aetiology, according to which assent to falsehood alters the mind's subsequent ability to recognize the truth, and thereby its affective reactions.

[72] *ira* 1.16.7, citing the authority of Zeno of Citium; cf. *Tusc.* 3.13, 3.82–3.

[73] Luke 24:37: That is the translation which Augustine uses more often when quoting this line. The Vulgate, which he uses occasionally, reads: "Conturbati vero et conterriti, existimabant se spiritum videre."

[74] *s.* 237.3. Cf. *s.* 95.2, *s.* 238.2, *s.* 273.3, *s.* 242.3 and 13.

[75] *s.* 116.2, *s.* 229J.2.

[76] *s.* 116.4.

[77] *s.* 116.1.

[78] *s.* 244.1: "Didn't the Lord Jesus himself tell them several times before the passion that he was to be handed over, to be put to death, and to rise again?"

[79] *s.* 116.1.

5.2. WHAT HAS OMNIPOTENCE TO DO WITH VIRTUE?

In all of the above examples, the proposition assent to which would cause joy is "This is indeed going to happen/is happening because God can do it, because he is omnipotent." So the account is consistent with itself, but is it consistent with the rest of Augustine's affective theory? In his account of the cousins to these affects, the preliminary passions, he says that they are caused by dubitatives about the relative value of temporal versus moral goods (virtues), a position that he arrived at by mapping the Stoic distinction between virtue and everything else onto a Platonic metaphysics of hierarchical ontological goodness. Because Augustine says that the omnipotence of God is something that is discernible by pagans such as Plato, this apparent aberration is not a matter of "Athens vs. Jerusalem"; and yet this shift in propositional content seems disanalogous. How can the preliminary joy which he describes be related to the preliminary passions we saw in Chapter 4 as another species belonging to the same genus (preliminaries)?

The solution is that Augustine thinks the belief that God is omnipotent is an essential part of the virtue of piety, which is a species of the virtue of justice.[80] (Of course, the general notion that piety is a virtue constituted by having correct beliefs about God/the gods is an ancient commonplace also found in the Roman Stoics.)[81] So, for Augustine, someone who fails to assent to the statement that God is omnipotent when confronted with a concrete instance of that omnipotence, does so because he would rather give up that virtue than give up reliance on his ordinary experience of temporal things. Failure to believe it is true is due to an excessive trust in or attachment to the "laws" that regularly govern mundane affairs and goods. In this sense, such a person is making temporal things more important than virtue. Moreover, we learn from *On the Trinity* that the tendency to take temporal things too seriously is for Augustine a moral disorder caused by habitual sensuality, love of sensible things.[82] So it is ultimately an excessive love of temporal goods that would cause someone to be reluctant to believe that a display of omnipotence was possible. The issue therefore remains fundamentally the same as it was with passions and preliminary passions.

Because preliminary joy thus fits into Augustine's larger theoretical account and can therefore be considered a generic category of affect rather than a *sui generis* item, the omnipotence of God need not be the issue in every preliminary good emotion. The case need not be about piety or justice; any of the other virtues could be at stake. For instance, there seems to be no reason why

[80] E.g., *lib. arb.* 1.2.5.

[81] E.g., Epictetus, *ench.* 31.

[82] See citations in Ch. 4.5c–d. Cf. *s.* 242.1: "With worldly, materialistic people, what they are in the habit of observing entirely governs their manner of understanding. What they are accustomed to see, they can believe; what they aren't, they can't."

the kind of example given at the outset of this chapter could not in principle have a place in Augustine's account. Furthermore, there could be other preliminary good emotions besides joy.

5.3. PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA USED BY AUGUSTINE

This extensive use of the concept of a preliminary good emotion marks a breakthrough in the history of philosophical accounts of affectivity. But how much of the credit for it should go to Augustine? As it turns out, Augustine's handling of Sarah has close affinities to books three and four of Philo of Alexandria's *Questions and Answers on Genesis* and his *On the Change of Names*.[83] Augustine's use of Philo is particularly interesting because it appears to be a case in which he chooses to follow a Jewish exegete over Christian ones.

It is not possible to speak of "an interpretation" of Sarah's and Abraham's laughter in Philo's texts, for he offers a number of interpretative options without clearly rejecting any one of them, even when they are incompatible.[84] Unlike Augustine, he sometimes gives his approval to the interpretations that Sarah immediately believed the promise,[85] and that Abraham wavered in his virtue, momentarily disbelieving the promise.[86]

What is important for our purposes is that among the options Philo presents are the suggestions that either Abraham or Sarah, or both, experienced a "beginning of joy." Moreover, in both the *Questions and Answers on Genesis* and the *On the Change of Names*,[87] Philo associates this state with uncertainty or doubt. In *Questions on Genesis* 4.16, Philo asks, "What is the meaning of the words, *And Sara laughed within herself*…?" He responds to his own question as follows:

> The mind, which was about to be filled with joy and divine laughter, had not yet been freed from sorrow, fear, sense-pleasure and desire *by which it is shaken and compelled to stagger*.… It does not know laughter, except perhaps for its visible appearance,

[83] Graver (1999) has compared Philo's gloss on Sarah in the *Questions and Answers on Genesis* with Philo's use of the term *propatheia* in his commentary on the biblical character of Enos, though without making any connections with Augustine.

[84] This may indicate that Philo is working off of a plurality of earlier exegetical sources. On midrash compilations as frequently containing contradictory interpretations, see e.g., Neusner (1994) 13, Segal (2007) 21–35, Instone Brewer (1992) 205. And on the question in Philo, see Winston regarding Philo's statements about Moses (2008) 210.

[85] See *LA* 3.218.

[86] E.g., *mut.* 33.177–178, 33.180, 34.185–835.187; cf. *On Abraham* 22.

[87] The fact that Philo repeats the same interpretations in both texts is philologically helpful. It means that even if Augustine possessed only the *QG*, which today is extant in its entirety only in an Armenian text dating from the fifth or sixth century, with Greek fragments that do not always match the Armenian, we nevertheless have available in the *mut.* a Greek text whose terminology is likely close to the original Greek text of the *QG*, from which Augustine's Latin translation or summary would have been made.

until a firm foundation is laid for a very strong and stable position; for … virtue does not appear only on the surface and lose its flowers, but it always lasts a long time in a flourishing state … she *has begun to rejoice*, and … she is not yet perfect in attaining the end of perfect joy … But Abraham was delivered and, as it were, escaped rebuke and reprobation [from the messenger], being secured by an unswerving and inflexible conviction of faith, for to him who has faith in God all uncertainty is alien.[88]

So Philo associates Sarah's "beginning of joy" with uncertainty when he contrasts her beginning joy with Abraham's conviction. And his allusion to the "mere appearance" of laughter in Sarah suggests that the concept he is using is that of a preliminary emotion; it rings of Seneca's and Gellius' talk of reflexive responses that appear to be indicative of passion proper, but are really preliminary passions. Also interesting is the reference to "the staggering of the mind," given that Augustine habitually uses biblical allusions to slipping feet as tropes for a doubting mind undergoing a preliminary passion. (Philo gives a similar gloss – but this time in reference to Abraham – in the *On the Change of Names*.)[89]

The previous book of the *Questions and Answers on Genesis* contains a verdict on Abraham's laughter and the question he asks in response to the promise of Isaac. Philo first considers the option that this question was an involuntary thought constituting an impression:

Not ineptly or casually are added the words, 'He said in his mind.' For unworthy words spoken by tongue and mouth fall under transgressions and punishment. But those which are in the mind are not at all guilty. For involuntarily does the mind show arrogance[90] when various desires come upon it from various directions, and there are times when it resists these and disputes with them resentfully, and seeks to avoid their appearances.[91]

[88] *QG* 4.16–17. Emphases added. This text is translated from Armenian by Marcus (1953). He gives the fragments of Greek available.

[89] In the above translation of *QG* from the Armenian, Marcus has supplied the Greek *karēbarein* for "to stagger." In Philo's gloss in the *mut.,* wherein he argues at length for the possibility that Abraham himself – rather than Sarah – was undergoing a "trace or shadow" (*ichnos ē skia*) of disbelief (*mut.* 34.181), a brief change (*tropē*) (*mut.* 33.178–35.186), Philo uses the metaphors, "not sound-footed" (*ouk artipous*) and "a little bit lame-footed" (*hupochōlainein*) (*mut.* 35.187). The phrase "trace[s] and shadow[s]" occurs in Seneca (*suspiciones et umbra affectuum*), which scholars have consistently taken as a reference to preliminary anger. The comparable passage in Cicero says that preliminaries are traces or *reliquiae* ("something remains," the "roots of foolishness" [*aliquid relinquitur, stirpes stultitiae*] *Tusc*. 3.6.13 with 3.34.83).

[90] Marcus (1953) gives *alazoneia* as the Greek here; perhaps it should be translated "false pretense" (i.e., impressions which present reality as something other than what it is) rather than "arrogance." I cannot make sense of arrogance in this context.

[91] *QG* 3.56. The Latin translation made from the Armenian by Aucher as translated by Yonge (1854–1890) seems to carry the philosophical sense better: "This expression, 'he said in his mind,' is not added without an object or gratuitously, for words which are articulated in the tongue and the mouth incur guilt, and become liable to punishment, but those which are

This seems to be a reference to the Stoic doctrine that impressions (appearances) come to us involuntarily, and that in them subsists sentential content, but that we can resist (giving consent to) them. Then he shows that this description of impressions is meant to be a description of doubt, when he offers an alternate interpretation of Abraham:[92] "Perhaps too he is *not* in a state of doubt, but being struck with amazement at the excessiveness of the gift, says, 'Behold, our body has passed (its prime) and has gone beyond the age for begetting. But to God all things are possible.'"[93] In this second option that Philo presents, we have almost a word-for-word correspondence to Augustine's description of Abraham (*admirans*, *gratulans*). This, then, looks like a precedent for the dubitative joy, caused by an impression, versus believing joy, caused by belief in God's omnipotence, which Augustine was to later ascribe to Sarah in contrast to Abraham.

Did Augustine know this exegesis directly from Philo? The question of his knowledge of Philo has been debated in other contexts.[94] Even subsequent to Paramelle's findings, from which he concluded that Augustine knew parts of the *Questions and Answers on Genesis*, a scholar with the stature of Rist could still think that as a rule Augustine's knowledge of Philo was not direct but mediated through Origen and Ambrose.[95] On the other hand, Runia has drawn attention to the fact that Augustine's gloss on Exodus 3:14–15 is uncommonly like the *On the Change of Names*.[96] What can we say about the present case?

Let us consider the option that Augustine knew this Philonian exegesis indirectly, through Ambrose or Origen. Ambrose explains Sarah's laughter as a prophetic, unthinking reflex, as we already know. But Ambrose also indicates that he is aware of the Philonian exegesis, and *disagrees* with it. He explicitly

restrained within the mind are not liable to punishment, because the mind without any intention on its part is led away by irregularities, all kinds of passions being introduced from different quarters, which it for a while resists, being indignant at them, and wishing to keep aloof from their representations."

92 The comparable *On the Change of Names* passage also has "doubt" (*endoiazein*): *mut.* 33.178.

93 *QG* 3.56, emphasis added.

94 Paramelle discovered a Greek manuscript of *QG* 2:1–7, dating from the fifth century, on Mt. Athos and published an edition in 1984; he contended that Augustine had a translation, summary, adaptation, or fairly complete excerpts of books two, four, five and six of the *QG* by the year 400 (Paramelle [1984] 126). Prior to that, Petit had held it was very probable that Augustine (and Ambrose) used a Latin version of the complete *QG* made in Italy in the latter quarter of the fourth century (Petit [1973] 7, 12). Earlier, Courcelle and Altaner had taken the respective positions that Augustine knew the text only through Ambrose, and that he knew it directly.

95 Rist (1994) 263.

96 Runia (1995) 159; cf. (1993) 329 n. 89. Runia noted that the parallel of Augustine to Philo here is unmatched by other extant texts except that of Basil, and that Augustine is more similar to Philo than to Basil. Runia also endorsed Solignac's view that Augustine had read Book One of the *QG* in a Latin translation ([1993] 325–326).

denies that Sarah doubted, presenting her as a model of virtuous laughter in the *Exhortation to Virginity*: "Sarah rightly denied that she had laughed, *lest it would seem that by laughing she had doubted* about the execution of the heavenly promises; and nevertheless that laugh was full of gravity and decorum."[97] Again, in the *On Abraham* he asserts, "Sarah laughed, which I judge to have been a sign of the future, rather than of incredulity (*incredulitas*)."[98] His reason for rejecting Philo's account in the *Questions and Answers on Genesis* is, apparently, a conviction that Sarah was not weaker in virtue than Abraham was.

It seems highly unlikely that Augustine knew the Philo gloss exclusively through Ambrose's rejection of it. It is doubtful that he would have chosen to endorse a biblical interpretation which his mentor had explicitly rejected, *unless* he knew that another weighty authority had espoused it. This leaves us with the possibilities that he knew it through Origen, or from Philo himself, who is being accepted as an authority.

Origen's extant homily on these chapters of Genesis includes nothing about Sarah's and Abraham's laughter or epistemic-affective states; nor do these issues rouse his attention in other extant works. His commentary concentrates instead on very different points.[99] When he does bring up Sarah in his commentary on Romans 4:20–22, he says that she had the same level of virtue as Abraham.[100]

Moreover, as already mentioned, Philo's brief, offhand association of preliminary emotion with "the staggering of the mind" or with "slight lameness" is remarkably close to Augustine's sermon metaphor of a slipping foot for propathetic doubt. Yet that metaphor is not used for *propatheiai* by Ambrose or Origen.[101] More important than the lack of similarity in metaphor, however, is

[97] *exhortatio virginitatis* 11.76: "Merito negabat Sara quod riserat, ne videretur ridendo de effectu promissorum dubitasse caelestium; et tamen ille risus plenus gravitatis fuerat et pudoris," emphasis added; my trans. Ambrose's *exp. evang. sec. Lucam* 2.17 and *ep.* 27.14 similarly show that he was aware of the interpretation which would impute doubt to Sarah, though he does not endorse it; he implies, respectively, that she *seems* to have doubted (*videtur dubitasse*) and that she has been convicted (*coarguta*) of disbelief but was prophesying.

[98] *Abr.* 1.5.43.

[99] See *in Genesim homiliae* 3.3–4, 4.4, 7.1: Origen argues that Sarah's position behind Abraham in the tent symbolizes that wives should be subordinate to their husbands; Sarah's giving suck to Isaac after his birth leads into a discussion of the Pauline distinction between doctrines that are "milk" vs. those that are "meat," etc.

[100] *in ep. Pauli ad Romanos* 4.7. This interpretation is apparently based on Philo's interpretation at LA 3.77.217–29, as it is very close to what we find there. Cf. much more briefly, *in Genesim homiliae* 7.2. For Isaac as meaning "joy," see *in Genesim homiliae* 7.1: "Isaac risus vel gaudium interpretatur."

[101] Note that Origen and Ambrose say that slipping or stumbling (referencing Psalm 72:2) refers to those who are making progress (*proficientes*) "looking back" and "falling down," though this is explained by them as committing an external sin: Origen-Rufinus, *Nine Homilies on Psalms 36–38*, Psalm 36 Homily 4.2; Ambrose, *Explanation of Twelve Psalms*, Psalm 36.48.1, *On the Prayer of Job and David* 3.3.5.

the fact that neither Origen nor Ambrose speak of preliminary *good* emotions, whereas Augustine and Philo do. Therefore, the evidence we have suggests that in this case Augustine was influenced by Philo himself.

Apparently Augustine viewed Philo as a trustworthy authority whom he was willing to use directly, without reinforcement from Christian writers. And he possessed a translation or summary of books three and four of the *Questions and Answers on Genesis*.

5.4. PHILO'S DUBITATIVE JOY: HELLENISTIC PSYCHOLOGY OR JEWISH EXEGESIS?

But now we are left with one final question: is Philo's "doubting" joy actually a use of Hellenistic psychology, or is it Jewish exegesis? Philo's handling of Abraham's and Sarah's joy gives the distinct impression that he is working within a preexisting framework. In texts where he discusses the patriarch, he presents two alternatives for Abraham: doubt or belief/virtue. His statement that Sarah had the beginning of joy is set within the framework of the same two options: uncertainty and conviction.

Was the belief-doubt dichotomy already part of the Jewish exegesis of Abraham and Sarah, and did Philo take this and pair it with the Stoic distinction between an emotion and a preliminary? Or, is it possible that there was a preexisting philosophical association of preliminaries with uncertainty or doubt?

The former suggestion immediately looks like a plausible hypothesis. It would seem odd if rabbinic discussions of Sarah's and Abraham's belief or disbelief were not already long underway. The inadequacy of Sarah's response to the promise of Isaac seems to be indicated by the biblical text itself; the potential conflict between this and her revered status as matriarch would call for some explanation. Paul's commentary on Abraham in Romans 4:20 contains the same dichotomy between belief and hesitation; this might seem to indicate that both he and his contemporary, Philo, were acquainted with midrashes which posed the options in these terms.[102] On the other hand, Philo makes almost continual use of Greco-Roman philosophical ideas in his exegeses; and attention has been drawn to the presence of such ideas (including Stoic ideas) in Paul.[103]

Attempts to reach back behind Philo to his rabbinic predecessors often can do no more than end in speculation.[104] When we look at the available sources,

[102] For speculation about the use of earlier rabbinic material in the drafting of the New Testament, see e.g., Borgen (1996) 105–120.

[103] See e.g., Sampley (2003), Fitzgerald (2003), Deming (2003), Stowers (2003), and Engberg-Pederson (2003).

[104] The lack of extant material has forced scholars to resort to comparisons with midrashes whose redactions postdate Philo (but presumably contain material from earlier oral traditions),

however, we find that "doubt" is not in the Jewish commentaries. It is not in those that predate or are contemporaneous with Philo.[105] Nor is it part of the midrashic traditions recorded after Philo's time (*Genesis Rabbah*[106] or the Targums).[107]

An investigation of the pagan philosophical sources yields better results. Here doubt is associated with moral progress, including progress in moving away from passions. Preliminary passions are also said to result from a past wound to the mind (passion or vice). Philo's innovation seems to have been the mating of these two claims. If we compare him to two other figures active in the first century CE who were not influenced by Philo himself,[108] we get a historical context that helps to show what Philo has done.

Seneca, contemporary with but fifteen years younger than Philo, discusses doubt and preliminary passions separately, although they are indirectly related in his account. He associates hesitation or doubt with progress toward virtue, and even uses the "stumbling and falling" metaphor for uncertainty which is found in Philo's gloss on Sarah.[109] Preliminary passions occur because there

and derive from Palestinian rather than Alexandrian intellectual milieux. This method has obvious defects. Nevertheless, because Philo's own glosses were not taken up into the rabbinic exegetical tradition (he was unimportant in Judaism until the Renaissance), whenever there are similarities between his texts and sources that were redacted later, it can indicate a shared earlier tradition. For a review of the debate about whether Philo knew Hebrew, and about the nature of Philo's sources, see Instone Brewer (1992) 198–208 and Hilgert (1995) 7–10.

[105] We do not find allusions to the doubt-belief dichotomy in Josephus, who is contemporaneous with Philo, knowledgeable of Hebrew, and apparently acquainted with haggadic traditions and Targums (see *Judean Antiquities 1–4*; Feldman, [2004], xxxvii). VanderKam says that the *Book of Jubilees*, dated to the second century B.C.E. (written in Hebrew and translated into Greek at an unknown date by the fourth century C.E., but the extant text is in Ethiopic), stipulates in 15.17 that Abraham's laughter at the promise of Isaac was "an expression of joy, not of doubt" ([2001] 50). However, the actual text (as he himself, and others, translate it) merely says that he was very glad, and in none of the relevant passages does it bring up the possibility that he, or that Sarah, might have doubted. See *The Book of Jubilees* 14.21, 15.17, 16.2, 16.19.

[106] *Genesis Rabbah* 44:13, 48:17–20, 53:8. This work is believed to have been redacted ca. 400–450 C.E. (Neusner [1994], 19).

[107] See the relevant verses of Genesis in *The Targum Onqelos to Genesis* (the redaction of this targum is believed to date from the third century C.E.), *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis* (believed to date from the fourth century C.E.), and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis* (redacted in the seventh or eighth century at the earliest).

[108] Philo, c. 20 B.C.E.–50 C.E.; Seneca, c. 4 B.C.E.–65 C.E.; Plutarch, c. 45 C.E.–125.

[109] *vit. beat.* 8.5–6: "Dependable reason which is not divided against itself, nor hesitant (*haesitans*) either in its opinions, or its perceptions, or in its convictions… For no crookedness, no slipperiness is left to it, nothing that will cause it to stumble or fall (*arietet aut labet*).… For reluctance and hesitation (*pigritia et haesitatio*) are an indication of conflict and instability." Trans. Basore (1932). Cf. *tranq.* 1.4. Seneca's *ep.* 114.22–23 also contrasts the healthy, strong mind with a mind that ever so slightly deviates from perfect health; this latter kind of mind is characterized by doubt (*dubitare*) and general weakness of the functions of the mind. And in general, it is clear from his *Letters* that Seneca thinks the one making progress in virtue

has been moral progress away from the passions that characterize a vicious mind; but they are evidence of a "scarred" mind.[110]

Plutarch, born approximately five years before the death of Philo, when Seneca was forty-nine years old, does not use the term *propatheia*, but he does describe progress as leaving off of false beliefs and embarking on a new path heading toward a firm foundation of virtue, on which one is nevertheless still plagued by doubts about what is true; concurrent with this is sadness fading from a passion to less serious, merely momentary swervings. Beginners are characterized by uncertainty and vacillation (*aporia, metameleia*),[111] which means they experience sadness because they have given up the pleasures they indulged in before. But the more one progresses, the more quickly these fits of sadness are dissipated by right reason, so that the sadness is a merely momentary swerving or turn.

So Philo apparently has reasoned as follows:

- Moral progress is characterized by doubt.
- Preliminary emotions arise in one who has made moral progress, but still retains effects of the damage (a "scar") from the previous condition.
- Anyone who has damage is not completely perfected.
- Anyone not completely perfected is still making (further) moral progress.
- Therefore, preliminary emotions are indicative of ongoing moral progress.
- Therefore, preliminary emotions are indicative of (caused by) doubt.

It will be observed that this is valid insofar as the conclusion says "indicative of doubt," if the sense is that preliminaries are symptoms of a condition which also has doubt as a symptom. But when Philo interprets this "indicative of doubt" to mean "caused by doubt," as he apparently does, this is a stronger claim than the argument itself yields. It is his own elaboration, or else he got it from some other Hellenistic source which is now lost.

5.5. AUGUSTINE'S OWN DECISIONS ABOUT PHILO

So Augustine is indebted to Philo for the concept of a preliminary good emotion, something that he could not have found in the Bible or in his pagan sources, quite simply because it did not exist there. He is also indebted to Philo for the notion that preliminary emotions generally, including preliminary passions, are caused by doubt.

But Augustine also shows a certain independence from Philo. First, he shows no trace of the confusion which Philo exhibits when he calls proeupathic joy,

(in this case, Lucilius), is going through a process of trying to overcome doubts about the truth that virtue alone is good and everything else is indifferent (so *ep.* 38.1, 67.9, 77.5, 77.13, 102.19).

[110] *ira* 1.16.7.

[111] *prof. virt.* 77B–78A.

associated with doubt, "hope." As Graver has pointed out, in a Greek fragment that seems to correspond to *Questions on Genesis* 1.79 Philo seems to say,[112] when speaking of Enos, that "hope is a certain preliminary passion (*propatheia tis*), a joy before joy, being an expectation of good." And the *On the Change of Names* also asserts that hope is joy before joy (*elpis chara pro charas*) when it attributes to Abraham a short-lived doubt (*endoiasmos ou poluchronios*). But Philo's use of the term *propatheia* for hope is either a confusion or a deliberate extension of the meaning of the word. For he makes it clear that his "pro" here has a temporal reference to a relatively distant future which holds the good that one is anticipating. But a Stoic preliminary emotion is not a preliminary because it is about a future object, but because it is the immediate precursor to some emotion (that may itself be about a past event, as in the case of preliminary grief). Augustine, however, never calls doubting joy "hope." He shows no signs of being influenced by this treatment of Enos,[113] and regarding the *On the Change of Names*, we can say that if Augustine had read it, he obviously viewed it with a fair bit of caution. Second, a *propatheia* would of course be a preliminary *passion*, not a preliminary good emotion, according to Stoic terminology. We do not see Augustine calling the reaction of Sarah, of Zachary, or of the apostles a "*propassio*," nor even a "*passio*" or "*perturbatio*" "of the *animus*," as he does in the case of preliminary passions. In this respect, the distance between a passion (a morally bad emotion) and an affection (a morally good emotion), is more clearly maintained in Augustine's treatment of preliminaries than it is by Philo. (Perhaps it is because Philo is self-aware about one or both of the two anomalies just mentioned, that he himself qualifies by *tis* when he calls preliminary joy a *propatheia*.)

In a number of other respects, Augustine goes beyond Philo. Unlike Philo, he decisively commits himself to one interpretation of Abraham and Sarah, and applies the same notion of doubting preliminary affection widely and consistently to Sarah, Zachary, and the apostles. And it is clear that he has assimilated and transformed the "slipping foot" trope to the point that it is authentically his own. Philo's mention of doubt or uncertainty is vaguely associated with inrushing thoughts and representations, but it is Augustine who renders this doubt as a dubitative sentence having specific form, and gives concrete examples of the inner workings of the impression.[114] Finally, Augustine's intimation that Sarah's and the apostles' preliminary changed into an emotion proper when they recognized the truth of the proposition they had been

[112] Graver (1999) 305 notes that there is a question of whether this Greek fragment should be corrected to match the Armenian, or vice versa; the Armenian differs slightly, reading, "hope is a certain anticipation of joy; before joy there is an expectation of good" [trans. Marcus (1953)]. The Armenian translation is a translation made in the fifth or sixth century from a Greek manuscript of that time (Graver [1999] 304).

[113] For Augustine on Enos, see *civ.* 15.17–18.

[114] Ch. 1.4–5; Ch. 4.2a.

doubting, is a move not made by Philo. It shows understanding of the transition from preliminary to emotion as described, for example, by Seneca in the *On Anger*. Augustine does the same thing in his sermons, as we have already seen, describing the transition from preliminary passion to passion.

Thus, although there is enough evidence to conclude that Augustine knew and accepted some of the suggestions made by Philo, it is nonetheless clear that he was selective and that he had worked out his own theory in some detail. He developed from Philo a consistent account of the preliminary affection, a concept that he presumably saw as complementing and completing the Stoic taxonomy.

6

Cognitive Therapies

We are indebted to Sorabji for bringing to light the almost comical fastidiousness that characterizes Evagrius of Pontus' concern for moral progress in the emotions.[1] Though Evagrius was not an important influence on Augustine, there is this similarity between the two: the one progressing is continually watching herself, so as to avoid every minute slip in thought or desire.[2] It is a fastidiousness that Sorabji suggested was characteristic of Jewish and Christian accounts in particular, because they focused on "first thoughts."[3]

In fact, this interior watchfulness was not peculiar to Judaism and Christianity. The Stoics' epistemological account of impressions as propositional lends itself to the practice of monitoring one's automatic thoughts, so as not to give assent to false presentations. We should critically examine the sayables subsisting in our impressions, and practice decatastrophizing in order to prevent passions.[4] Furthermore, as others have pointed out, Pythagorean practices of self-examination and purification predate and may lie behind the

[1] Sorabji (2000) 362, citing Evagrius' *On the Eight Spirits of Wickedness* Ch. 14.

[2] *civ.* 22.23: "We are always alert at our post lest the appearance of truth deceive, lest ingenious arguments ensnare us, lest some cloud of error befog us, lest we believe that good is evil, or evil good, lest fear make us refrain from what should be done, or desire plunge us headlong into what should not be done, lest the sun go down on our anger, lest enmities provoke us to return evil for evil, lest unworthy or immoderate sorrow overwhelm us … lest the desire for revenge overcome us, lest sight or thought linger on that which gives sinful delight, lest a vile or unbecoming word be heard with pleasure…." Trans. Levine adapted.

[3] He sees a decisive change from first movements to bad thoughts in Origen, who influenced Evagrius: (2002) 346–347, 359.

[4] "Decatastrophizing" is a present-day cognitive-therapeutic technique for correcting overreactions to events, reminiscent of the Stoic practice of training oneself to think that the loss of preferred indifferents is not actually destructive of human happiness: "Decatastrophizing involves aiding them [people who exaggerate the harmfulness of anticipated events] in balancing out their focus on the worst anticipated state by reestimating the situation and asking, 'So what's the worst thing that might occur? And if so, would this be so horrible?'" (Dattilio and Freeman [1992] 7).

concern for moral progress and self-evaluation that are evident in Stoicism.[5] Augustine's statements about the stages in and diagnosis of moral progress reflect common pagan models of *prokopē* recently discussed by Wright and others.[6] The analysis of dreams in book ten of the *Confessions*, for example, has a counterpart in Plutarch: a person was making progress "if he observed that during his period of sleep he felt no pleasure in anything disgraceful, and did not tolerate or commit any dreadful or untoward action."[7] Similarly, the practice of "frank speech" or criticism of friends, found in Hellenistic models of moral improvement, is similar to Augustine's advocacy of "correction" of one person by another.[8]

Nonetheless, Augustine's specific recommendations for the rehabilitation of the emotions in particular do show a more complex intellectual patrimony. He weaves elements from ancient Jewish culture as reflected in the scriptures, from Christianity, and from Platonism onto the loom of Stoic and other Hellenistic methods of therapy, giving these methods new content. Therefore it is an interesting and worthwhile project to take Sorabji's cue and to try to disentangle the strands of thought operating in Augustine's distinctive account.

6.1. PATIENT PROFILE AND THE LIMITATIONS OF AUGUSTINIAN COGNITIVE THERAPY

For his part, Augustine prescribes four different types of discursive exercises (*cogitare*) for achieving emotional health. These are: prerehearsal of future possible events (*cogitare de futuris*), recalling certain salient facts (*recordare*, *recolere*), meditation on the contents of the Law (*meditari*), and an activity he calls "referring" all things to their proper place in the hierarchy of being and to the proper goal of human life (*referre*). By habitually practicing these methods, one becomes able to stop preliminary passions from becoming faulty passions, and to consistently make the true judgments which yield morally good emotions. Though Augustine's therapies are developed from diverse philosophical schools, they are neither disconnected nor in tension with one another; they are united by the fact that each of them focuses one's attention on the superiority of virtue over temporal goods.

What is the profile of someone who will benefit from Augustine's therapies? Augustine does not suppose that his therapies will be effective for purely physiological mental illnesses – of the existence of which he is aware.[9] Instead, his cognitive therapies are intended to address the moral quality and the relation to the truth of the emotional upheavals that people typically experience in daily life.

[5] See e.g., Winston (2001) 185–186, (1995) 39; Rist (1989). Cf. Hadot (1995) 89 n. 79.
[6] See Armstrong (2008) 82, 89, 97–100 and Wright (2008) 144–146.
[7] *prof. virt.* 82–83, cited in Wright (2008) 145.
[8] This is the subject of Augustine's *corrept.*, for example; and see Kolbet (2010) 42–43.
[9] *civ.* 19.4, referring to "those pitiable impulses and acts of the insane which shock us, when sensation is distraught and reason is asleep." Trans. Levine et al. adapted.

For this kind of patient, Augustine's high estimation of cognitive therapy in comparison to other therapeutic options is quite clear. For instance, he apparently considers therapies associated with a (caricatured) "Platonic-Peripatetic" model of emotions, wherein emotions are the product of nonrational soul parts linked to bodily organs, to be ineffective. He never advises hard exercise to work off anger, a good glass of wine for alleviating sadness, or a cold bath as a cure for dangerous romantic passion. Little wonder: he had tried going to the baths to make himself feel better when his mother died, given that he had heard the baths remove anxiety, but found that it did nothing to alleviate his distress.[10] So like Seneca, Augustine thinks that passions such as anger must be routed by thoughts. And though his therapies are for the most part aimed at "ordinary people," such people can find themselves in excruciating circumstances. Augustine thinks that his therapies will be of help even in cases such as these, in a way that nothing else will. A contemporary example of such a case and of the *kind* of mental training Augustine advocates was recently described in an autobiographical account by a reporter for the *New York Times*. As the journalist was preparing to escape from house arrest in Pakistan, he was able to avoid panic and "soothe" himself by repeating a thought that he had repeated for months past:

> Each day, I would stare at the ceiling and say 'Forgive me, God' 1,000 times while the guards took naps. Counting on my fingers, it took me roughly 60 minutes to reach 1,000. That night, waiting to make sure the guards were sound asleep, I asked God to forgive me 2,000 times.[11]

Prayer itself is not one of Augustine's recommended affective therapies.[12] Apparently this is because he thinks emotions are voluntary.[13] But this example captures the spirit of the thing, insofar as it is a mental exercise carried out within a theistic worldview, and it presupposes that moral rectification (here, being forgiven) is always the most important thing in any situation, even if a very great temporal good is at stake.

6.2. PREREHEARSAL

6.2a. Prerehearsal and Theodicy in Seneca

The "prerehearsal" (*praemeditatio*) of future possible events was a recommended way of avoiding passions among the Cyrenaics, according to

[10] *conf.* 9.12.32.

[11] Rohde (2009, Thursday Oct. 22). As he explains, the prayer was taught him by one of his Muslim guards; and "the prayers soothed me."

[12] Despite James 5:13 ("Is any one among you sad? Let him pray").

[13] They are not things that can just be "taken away" by God, but have to be fought through, via one's thoughts, even if God, by grace, might help someone to do this (on grace as interior help, see Ch. 7). Of course, any of Augustine's cognitive practices could be combined with prayer.

Cicero;[14] but it was taken up by authors in the Stoic tradition such as Epictetus[15] and Seneca. The latter, who made extensive use of the concept and is an author we know was familiar to Augustine, interests us particularly. It is clear that Augustine has a theory of prerehearsal as a form of affective therapy, and that in some respects it is developed from Stoic ideas which appear in Seneca. But Augustine's prerehearsal is a more optimistic exercise than it was for Seneca. The important questions for the history of cognitive therapy are, why and to what extent is this so?

As Seneca sometimes describes it, this therapy is in principle the prerehearsal of all possible future events, whether favorable or unfavorable (*quod incertum est semper expectare*; *praeparatur animus contra omnia*) – a formulation which does not in itself rule out the prerehearsal of fortuitous eventualities.[16] Indeed, in the *On Constancy*, which is implicitly about how to avoid anger, Seneca at one point – having a Cynic moment[17] – says that if people try to injure us, rather than getting angry we can take comfort in the fact that they will likely be punished by others.[18] Here he seems to allow for prerehearsal of the restoration of justice, which would cause a rational desire for that future good (Stoic *boulēsis*).

For the most part, however, it is only disappointing, difficult, or ruinous circumstances that Seneca exhorts us to prerehearse (*prospicere*) when he gives more specific recommendations. The wise person's first thought should be that something might happen to obstruct his plans,[19] that they may be ruined. It would be naïve to expect the best, when empirically it is obvious that life often disappoints us. "What need is there to weep over parts of life? The whole of it calls for tears. New ills will press on before you have done with the old."[20]

We should think constantly that we are all mortal, and that the law of mortality may come down on us unpredictably; the practice thus serves to ward off the fear of death.[21] But we should also prerehearse poverty, sickness, slander, and all other losses of fortune, since these losses are what cause humans grief or fear.[22]

What makes this exercise Stoic, as opposed to Cyrenaic, is the cause of passion that it is intended to address. The Cyrenaics thought that passions

[14] *Tusc.* 3.28–31, 34. For discussion of the lineage of this practice (Posidonius, Panaetius, Chrysippus, Pythagoreanism), see Graver (2002) 97.
[15] *ench.* 4. 21–22.
[16] *tranq.* 13.2–3.
[17] According to Diogenes Laertius, Crates advocated prerehearsal of others' future sufferings expected to result from their bad behavior: DL, 6.91–92.
[18] *const.* 18.5.
[19] *tranq.* 13.3.
[20] *cons. Marc.* 11.1. Trans. Basore (1932).
[21] E.g., *Polyb.* 11.1–3; *cons. Marc.* 9.2, 10.6; 11.2, *ep.* 63.15.
[22] *ep.* 107.3, 107.5, *cons. Marc.* 9.2, 11.1–2.

were caused merely by shock alone; therefore, if that factor were removed by prerehearsal, the passion of grief or fear itself would be prevented. For the Stoics' cognitive theory, passions are caused by false beliefs about the value of indifferent events, rather than their mere unexpectedness. Stoic prerehearsal is therefore aimed at correcting a delusional worldview.

For Seneca (as for Epictetus),[23] the correction of this worldview depends upon the thesis that God governs the world with a just providence, something which can be known by natural reason as an inference from the orderliness of the natural world.[24] Central to prerehearsal's effectiveness is the belief that God, who controls the universe by providence, would not allow genuinely bad things to happen to morally good people.[25] The only conclusion that one could reasonably draw about the apparent counterevidence – the apparently unjust distribution of advantages and sufferings – is that advantages and sufferings do not actually matter for human happiness.[26] There is, then, no reason to be angry at God, nor to fear or grieve the loss of things like husbands, health, good reputation, or wealth. The activity of prerehearsal is therefore syllogistic in the Stoic model, as opposed to the simple reiteration of single propositions in the Cyrenaic model. One thinks that these things may be lost. One recalls that God is just and provident. One concludes that these things have no value for happiness, and then draws the further conclusion that there is no reason to be upset or gladdened by their loss or acquisition.

6.2b. Augustine on Prerehearsal and Hope: A Complex Relation to Seneca

Augustine never questions the legitimacy of Seneca's assessment of what may happen to us. His graphic list of the continual threats and disappointments that characterize human life in *City of God* 19.4–8 evokes Seneca's catalogue of potential disasters and disappointments: the death of oneself and one's friends; physical pain; betrayal by professional associates; disappointment in one's spouse; being trapped by the fiscal responsibilities that follow from parenthood; the corruption of friendship through malice or lies; hunger; poverty; and disease.[27]

We expect from this catalogue that Augustine agrees with Seneca that some prerehearsal of these possible future ills is necessary if we are to avoid overreactions to such things, and indeed he does. In the sermons, he advocates prerehearsal of death, as well as other disappointments. "Think about how you are

[23] *ench.* 31.

[24] Especially the movements of the heavenly bodies and what follows as a result of these (tides of the ocean, etc.), see *prov.* 1.2–4.

[25] Seneca, *prov.* 2.5, 3.14.

[26] *prov.* 3.1, 5.3.

[27] Repeatedly citing lines from Terence and from Cicero's speeches.

going to leave here: you were born, you will die … It will come, even if you don't want it to; it will come, you know not when. So why be afraid of what's going to happen even if you don't want it to? … Think about these things (*haec meditare*)."[28] "You love a wife, not yet married but going to be married, and perhaps you love her who is going to be married, but will hate her once married. How so? Because when you have married her, you find she is not really like what your imagination had pictured her to be before."[29]

On the other hand, given his particular view of human history as discussed in the last chapter,[30] we also expect him to say that realism about the human condition is not adequately summed up by this catalogue of ills. Life does not always stay the same or get worse; sometimes it gets better.

Indeed, when like Seneca Augustine advocates the practice of prerehearsal (*cogitare de futuris*) by reflecting on the providence and justice of God, he expands the future into proximate and remote phases, allowing for the prerehearsal of remote future goods in addition to proximate future ills. Allying Christian claims about the future with the Senecan position that God is just,[31] he becomes free to say that an omnipotent God infallibly distributes rewards and punishments in the afterlife (and here his Christianity shares a thesis with Platonism as he understands it).[32] He can abandon the mental gymnastics by which the Stoic theory tried to root out the ubiquitous human perception that things according to nature – that is, preferred indifferents – can impact our happiness. So in addition to prerehearsal of future ills, Augustine advocates a version of prerehearsal that is similar to that used in contemporary therapy, where "cognitive rehearsal" is visualizing in the mind the positive, *desired* outcome of one's actions. Furthermore, he thinks that prerehearsal of these remote future goods is more important for emotional health than the prerehearsal of ills: "Don't think much about the future; or rather, think much about the future, but about the distant future."[33]

This prerehearsal of remote future goods is therapeutic because it addresses the cause of passions. It centers on the relationship between present efforts to acquire virtues, and the restitution of temporal goods in justice in the afterlife.[34]

[28] *s.* 279.9. Trans. Hill adapted.

[29] *s.* 21.1: "Amas uxorem, non ductam sed adhuc ducendam, et forte ducenda amatur, ducta odio habebitur. Quare hoc? Quia non talis apparuit ducta, qualis ab animo pingebatur ducenda." Trans. Hill adapted.

[30] Ch. 5.1b.

[31] On the justice of God shown in the afterlife, see *s.* 53.16 in addition to the texts below.

[32] On Plato's god as omnipotent according to Augustine, see Ch. 5.1b; a theory of rewards and punishments after death (via a theory of reincarnation) is in the myth in *Republic* book ten, and is carried over by Plotinus.

[33] *s.* 177.11: "Noli multum cogitare de futuris: immo multum cogita de futuris, sed de longe futuris."

[34] So e.g., *s.* 25.5.

Someone who thinks about an afterlife of retributive justice thinks also about how to get to heaven, and sees that the difficulties here are a means of growing in virtue, which gets one there.

On some of the occasions where he advocates prerehearsal of future goods, Augustine calls the exercise "hoping."[35] This corresponds to the definition of hope given in his *Enchiridion* and in the sermons, where to hope is to hold a conditional belief about the attainment of some future apparent good: the person believes that he will get the good anticipated,[36] if, and only if, he continues to live the same kind of life he is living at present.[37] Thus, hope is not an emotion for Augustine (here unlike Philo of Alexandria),[38] but a cognitive act, a synonym for the conditional prerehearsal of future goods. As such, it is an act which can be performed by morally bad as well as morally good people; the difference between the acts of each will be in the object hoped for (morally good people will hope for a true good, and the most appropriate good), or in the means by which the person plans to attain the perceived good.[39]

It is not difficult to see how Augustine's theory of prerehearsal will play out with regard to particular emotions. If someone does you an injustice, you can avoid anger by thinking, "He's going to get it, either here or in the afterlife, and I will be rewarded."[40] If someone has more temporal goods than you do, even though he does not seem to deserve them, you can avoid envy by thinking,

[35] E.g., *s.* 265C.2, in the context of prerehearsal: "sperare debemus resurrecturos nos"; *civ.* 19.4 on hope; *en. Ps.* 121.3 on the relation between patience and endurance.

[36] *ench.* 2.8.

[37] So e.g., *s.* 72.9: "Doing good is equivalent to sacrificing a sacrifice of justice, and seeking peace is the same as hoping in the Lord.… You have already … offered the sacrifice of justice in doing good works.… Don't worry, you won't be disappointed; hope in him. Right now it is still, so to say, night; you cannot see God yet, or hold in your hand what he promised you, but during this night, do what the psalm says: *In the day of my tribulation I sought the Lord with my hands at night* …This is what *I sought with my hands* means: 'I sought diligently and with good works'" (citing Psalm 4:6, Psalm 76:2).

[38] See Ch. 5.5.

[39] E.g., *en. Ps.* 31.2.6: "… you either hope for what is worth hoping for, but not from God, from whom you should hope for it; or else you hope for something unworthy, even though you hope for it from God, from whom you should be hoping for eternal life.… Either you are hoping for temporal life from the eternal God, or you are hoping for eternal life from demons. Either way, you are impious [i.e., vicious]." Cf. *ench.* 31.117.

[40] E.g., in *en. Ps.* 93.29, he grants the gravity of the fact that "the wicked … have received power to hurt and to tyrannize"; and that "our earthly possessions are sometimes given into the power of the wicked." The means of dealing with the temptation to anger which arises in such situations is not (as in Seneca's *const.*) to deny that we are being injured. Instead: "Let the temporal suffering of the righteous bear with the temporal impunity of the wicked … let him believe both that he will himself inherit rest after his present toil, and that they will suffer eternal torments after their present exultation." Cf. *en. Ps.* 37.3.17.

"I will have more later."[41] Excessive fear[42] and craving for temporal things[43] can be avoided the same way.[44]

It may be objected that such prerehearsal would not actually do away with passions like anger or jealousy, but actually ratify them and merely postpone revenge or sensual satisfaction to the remote future. (The same type of objection could be raised against Seneca's Cynic consolation that the one who wrongs us will likely be punished by others if not by us.) Augustine himself sees the possibility of a kind of "avarice for the afterlife":[45] some people fast here in order to get to heaven, where there will be endless feasting; their motivation comes from their belly. This kind of attitude, however, would be an abuse of prerehearsal rather than its proper exercise (and would not in fact be effective for getting to heaven). What Augustine advocates is meditating on what he calls "discipline," "order," or "peace," rather than a desire to see another person suffer, or a desire to have more than enough. We can see that this is what he intends when we consider that he distinguishes between two different senses of "anger": anger as enforcing discipline, and sinful anger. The former merely seeks to right a wrong, to reestablish order, whereas the latter seeks to harm the other party for its own sake.[46] Thus, prerehearsing someone's getting punished always includes the caveat that you prefer that the other person convert to virtue, and come to deserve happiness in the afterlife; prerehearsing your having as much temporal delight as you deserved could not include the intent to have more than your due, or that others have less than their due.

Interestingly, the question of the paternity or maternity of God arises in this context, and Augustine advocates a more "feminine" depiction of God than Seneca. The latter's descriptions of God in the *On Providence* are all of a stereotypically masculine father, a disciplinarian who is hard with his

[41] *s.* 250.2: "'I notice,' you say, 'that somebody else leads a bad life, and is happy.' You're mistaken. He's unhappy.... What's been promised you hasn't come yet. That person who strikes you as being happier is being fed on visible and temporal things, they are what he is enjoying. He didn't bring them with him, he won't take them away with him.... What's been promised you, though, hasn't come yet."

[42] *s.* 306.10: "Let us not be afraid of a hard journey [in life]. The one who made us the promise [of heaven] is truthful, the one who made us the promise is faithful, the one who made us the promise cannot deceive us."

[43] *en. Ps.* 136.22: "We shall be equal to the angels of God [when we get to heaven] ... think about this day and night. However happily the world may shine on you ... do not willingly entertain your lusts."

[44] For additional examples, see *s.* 393.4, where prerehearsal of the goods of heaven and pains of hell prevents the hatred of one's present duties, *s.* 265C.2 for avoiding sadness, and *s.* 25.5, *s.* 121.3, *s.* 279.4, *s.* 303.2.

[45] *en. Ps.* 86.9.

[46] *s.* 112A.5 on anger as the cause of punishment, described as a good thing; cf. the discussion of *pax* and *ordo* in *civ.* 19.13ff. But *s.* 114A.5: "by all means enforce discipline, but rid yourself of anger" (da disciplinam, sed ex corde dimitte iram).

children, and hardest of all with his favorites, thereby allowing them additional opportunities to grow in virtue through suffering.[47] According to the picture Seneca gives us, life is not fair in the distribution of preferred indifferents, and there is no guarantee that it will become fair; the only things left to us are not to care that it is unfair, and never to show any disappointment. That is what God wants. But that this is not really satisfying to our natural desire for justice, and therefore is an inadequate understanding of what piety requires, seems to be indicated by Seneca himself, Augustine thinks: you may need to and can "flee" from the difficult situations God puts you in, by suicide.[48]

Unlike Seneca, who explicitly rejects the image of God as a mother who fondles children in her lap,[49] Augustine endorses it: "After the labors belonging to the anxieties and cares of this life, we will be comforted like little children carried upon her shoulders and in the lap."[50] Again, apparently borrowing Seneca's metaphor of a stage performance watched by God[51] to depict the moment of a mental struggle against anger, Augustine adds the reassurance that God may actually assist in this fight by providing grace to supplement the mental struggle, making it easier:[52] "Recognize whom you are fighting with on the stage of your heart [i.e., yourself]. It's a very narrow stage, but God is watching … conquer anger … May God assist you in your struggles … so may all of you win the battle in your hearts."[53] This God, who intervenes to make sure that the children do not fail, instead of watching out of mere curiosity or amusement as in Seneca, again smacks of the hovering mother figure that Seneca denounces.[54]

Of course, the Augustinian picture still appears rather austere overall. Note that underlying the maternal descriptors is the idea that God's interest is directed toward our *moral* improvement *here*, and our *temporal* well-being only in the *hereafter*. Hence, God remains a father, who metes out the discipline that this term connotes in the fourth century C.E.[55] Apparently Augustine thinks that God *is* a father (origin and disciplinarian of the cosmos) who *has* some maternal characteristics. Even the temporally helpful functions associated with the role of father in the ancient world – protecting children from physical dangers, providing for their material sustenance – apply to God on the long view of human life (heaven), but not necessarily here and now. It is striking that scriptural passages that speak of God giving temporal benefits in this

[47] *prov.* 2.5–6, 4.7, 3.2, 5.4, 6.3.
[48] *prov.* 6.7, commented on by Augustine, *civ.* 19.4.
[49] *prov.* 2.5.
[50] *civ.* 20.21, after citing Isaiah 66:13.
[51] Seneca *prov.* 2.7, 2.9, 2.11; cf. Epictetus *ench.* 17.
[52] For a discussion of grace, see Ch. 7.
[53] *s.* 315.10. Cf. *s.* 163A.2.
[54] *prov.* 2.5, 4.8.
[55] Cf. *conf.* 1.14.23, 2.2.4, 3.3.5, applying Hebrews 12:6 to his own life ("For whom the Lord loves he chastises: and he scourges every son whom he receives"), and *en. Ps.* 57.17.

life go unremarked by Augustine,[56] and that he does not typically recommend that we hope God will intervene to help us get a job, or protect us from attacks by roving Donatist terrorists, or ensure that it does not rain on our picnic, etc. You could pray for these things, and God might do them; but in general it is nearly impossible to predict what God will do, because the goal of God's providence is that humans grow in virtue, and only God knows the real moral state of individual souls. The only thing that can be known for sure is that God will provide the temporal goods that are the necessary means for our getting to heaven, and these might be very few indeed. Disappointments are typically the way that God "scours out" the inside of the soul, scraping away attachments to temporal things so that the soul is empty and ready to be "filled with honey" in the afterlife.[57]

Thus the affinities with Stoic austerity remain strong, although Augustine also seems to have had his own "empirical" reasons for conceiving of things in this way. Reading the *Confessions* and Possidius' *Life of Augustine*, we get the sense that he experienced providence as an almost violent force in his own life. He "is moved by God" from one city to another and another, then off of his professional path, then is made a priest contrary to his plans.

This fact – that Augustine's Father God functions in this life as a disciplinarian interested only in a person's moral development – means that Augustinian prerehearsal is truncated in its effectiveness. It will be insufficient for allaying or preventing passions like grief and fear about temporal goods. Augustine wants to justify God's lack of concern about temporal goods here and now by saying that one's present suffering is somehow deserved by the sufferer – whether for his own deeds, or as a member of the human family that has corporate responsibility for original sin.[58] But in cases where the second type of "deserving" needs to be invoked because the person suffering is already virtuous and has done nothing to cause his misfortune (such as that of Job), this model is highly problematic. In such a case there would need to be some clear *purpose* that the suffering serves and that the sufferer can attend to, if "excessive" grief and frustration are to be avoided in the present moment. All that Augustine provides for someone like Job is the knowledge of why the suffering arose and that it will someday end. But it is not enough to make the sufferer aware that he is an anonymous member of an enormous crowd,

[56] Luke 12:24–31: "… seek not what you shall eat or what you shall drink: … your Father knows that you have need of these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice: and all these things shall be added to you"; Mark 10:29–30: "there is no man who has left house or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who shall not receive an hundred times as much, now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions: and in the world to come life everlasting."

[57] *ep Io. tr.* 4.6.2.

[58] E.g., *en. Ps.* 144.11, *s.* 215.4, *s.* 254.1. Cf. Ch. 7.2.

suffering a punishment for something which other members of the group did long ago,[59] but that in heaven everything will be perfect. Given his own views about heaven, Augustine has the option of saying in response to this objection that there *is* a purpose, and this is the attainment of a higher place in heaven owing to a greater union with Christ,[60] who suffered undeservedly. But he does not actually recommend thinking about that purpose when he is giving therapeutic advice.

Thus, although Augustine's prerehearsal is ultimately a hopeful exercise, it is nevertheless quite difficult and, it seems, not entirely effective. The sufferer does not have to convince herself that having been abused as a child is not really bad. However, she has to convince herself that the remote future is more relevant to her *present* happiness than the pains, failures, and looming disasters in the midst of which she lives day to day. And she must come to believe that God's present indifference to her well-being in relation to all nonmoral goods, does not detract from his present beneficence toward her.

The most fundamental difference between Senecan and Augustinian prerehearsal, however, arguably makes Augustine's picture more attractive overall. This is the fact that even though Augustine's is incomplete in its effectiveness, it at least does not present us with a "disengaged stance"[61] as an ideal, whereas Seneca does. Augustine's detachment from temporal things aims at a reattachment to God, who is unmistakably conceived of as personal, rather than as a curious, sadistic observer[62] and orchestrator of general laws, as in Seneca's model. Therapy is pointing out that there is *someone* – not just something – to pin one's hopes on. This is a significant step away from the Senecan system, wherein the detached person has nothing left to console him but the knowledge that he has, by toughness, avoided humiliation on the stage of world history.[63] Thus, although Augustine's descriptions of the martyrs are like Seneca's descriptions of the sage, the martyrs are depicted as knowing that they belong to a home in which they are wanted and awaited.[64]

[59] Augustine claims that we were all one in Adam, and so he might say here that in a sense the sufferer *did* commit the original sin (see Ch. 7.2); but because he grants that nevertheless the sin was not committed in *propria vita*, I think the above objection stands.

[60] On heaven as hierarchical, owing to the degree of similarity to Christ, see *virg.* 26.26.

[61] The phrase is from Taylor, in relation to the neo-Stoicism of modernity: Taylor (2007) 115–139.

[62] *prov*. 2.12.

[63] See *const.* 19.3; *prov.* 3.3–4: It is a disgrace to retreat in the face of bad fortune; there should be something unconquerable in us, and some sage against whom fortune has no power.

[64] *s.* 159A.4: "With his will indifferent to money, God's martyr stands serenely calm against those who try to scare him with financial ruin. 'Let him take what I don't love', he says, 'Where will I feel it?' He's threatened with exile, but it's a vain threat to one who only longs for his heavenly homeland … disgrace is threatened, he has a ready answer *This is our boast, the testimony of a good conscience*. He is threatened with being stripped of his honors; but what a fleeting thing is honor!" (citing 2 Cor 1:12).

6.3. RECALLING

A second therapy advocated by Augustine is the remembering (*recordari*) of historical events which show the greatness of God and the virtues of Christ. This is formally similar to Epicurus' recommended therapy of recalling the mind from distressing thoughts to pleasing thoughts, which Cicero adapts and fills with Stoic content (recall true goods, virtues),[65] and to another therapeutic method for preventing passions recorded in Plutarch and used in the writings of Cicero and Seneca: recalling the deeds of exemplary men.[66]

In addition to justice, which was important in Augustinian and Senecan prerehearsal, another quality of God that receives a great deal of attention in Augustine's discussions of affective therapy is God's omnipotence. God, because he is omnipotent, can bring good out of evil. Here again we note some formal similarity to a present therapeutic technique, namely, focusing on the fact that adversity can be turned to advantage.[67] Augustine's refrain is that God is infinitely great, meaning that God can cause results to arise from states of affairs which are essentially and not merely accidentally contrary to the results (bringing good from evil, making something from nothing, making the mortal immortal).[68] This is in contrast to Seneca, who explicitly denies God the ability to do what is naturally impossible. This therapy is effective both for quashing preliminary passions, and also for facilitating the consent that makes good emotions.

What distinguishes this therapeutic method is the fact that it does not rely on an inference from abstract statements about the nature of God (such as "God is just," "God is omnipotent"), but engages the imagination by picturing concrete events. The specific content of what should be recalled is taken from Christian salvation history. This therapy thus becomes explicitly theological in content, meaning that it would only be available to people who believed that that history was real. Primarily, Augustine advocates calling to mind that the resurrection came out of the crucifixion, which he considers the star piece of historical evidence that God can bring good out of evil. This remembering does not stand alone as a therapeutic measure, but works in conjunction with the prerehearsal of the future goods of heaven, because Christ's own resurrection into a better state is emblematic of our future good state that will be brought from the bad circumstances of this life.

[65] *Tusc.* 3.15.32–33, 3.16.35–17.37. Cf. Hadot (1995) 84, citing Philo of Alexandria *LA* 3.6.18 and Galen *On the Passions and Errors of the Soul* 1.5.25.

[66] Plutarch, *prof. virt.* 85B: "the thought and recollection of good men almost instantly comes to mind and gives support to those who are making progress towards virtue, and in every onset of the passions and in all difficulties keeps them upright and saves them from falling." Trans. Babbitt (1927).

[67] See Dattilio and Freeman (1992) 8.

[68] Cf. *s.* 215.6 and see the citations in Ch. 5.1b.

Augustine gives a general account of how this "recalling" beats temptation, and applies it to temptations toward the passions of anger, sorrow, and fear. Here is the program in general terms:

> His voluntary suffering is our much-needed consolation, so that when we have to undergo something similar we may fix our gaze on our Head and be instructed by his example, and say to ourselves, 'If he suffered so, what of us? And as he bore it, let us bear it too.'… On the third day it [his body] rose again. What in him was done on the third day, that in ours shall be at the end of the world.[69]

Augustine says repeatedly that if we thus remember Christ, we will not assent (*consentire*) to temptations.[70]

Preliminary anger is the affect for which Augustine most often prescribes the therapy of recalling Christ;[71] but he explicitly says that it works not only for anger but for other incipient passions. Addressing the scenario to which Seneca had devoted his treatise *On Constancy* – the temptation toward anger, arising from a perceived insult – Augustine ties it to his own use of the apostles' being on the boat in the sea, wherein Peter had served as a representative of a preliminary passion:[72]

> You have heard an insult, it's a high wind; you've got angry – it's a wave. So as the wind blows and the waves break, the boat is in peril, your heart is in peril, your heart fluctuates (*fluctuat cor tuum*). When you hear an insult, you are eager to avenge it … Call to mind (*recordare*) Christ, wake Christ up in you, consider him … reflect upon him.… What I have said about [how to handle] anger, you should hold onto as a rule for all your temptations.[73]

> He endured pain, scourgings, reproaches, the cross, and death for you, and which of these was due to that Just One, which was not due to you, a sinner? Therefore keep your eyesight looking straight ahead (*directum*), lest it be disturbed by anger.[74]

> When we feel others ungrateful to us, not only in that they do not repay us with good, but even return evil for good, we should … conquer [the reactions of] our rational

[69] *en. Ps.* 34.2.1. Cf. *en. Ps.* 60.4–5 on *recordari*, *cogitare*.

[70] *en. Ps*. 60.5.

[71] In addition to the texts cited below, see e.g., *s.* 49.7 and 49.9: "*Let not the sun go down on your anger* (Eph. 4:26).… You are very ill, you are gasping, you're crippled with disease.… Look at your Lord hanging, look at him hanging, and giving you a directive from that kind of judicial bench which is the cross.… Look at him hanging there, and listen to him praying, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do* (Lk. 23:34)." Cf. *s.* 114A.5: "Look at the Lord himself, think about (*cogitate*) the Lord, to whom we come as regular beggars every day, saying 'Forgive us our trespasses.' And do you get fed up when your brother repeatedly says to you, 'Forgive me, I'm sorry'? How often do you say that to God? … Do you want God to say to you, 'Look, I forgave you yesterday, I forgave you the day before yesterday' … You don't want him to say to you, 'You're always coming with those words, you're always saying 'forgive us our trespasses' … So by all means enforce discipline, but rid yourself of anger."

[72] See Ch. 4.2a.

[73] *s.* 63.2.

[74] *en. Ps.* 36.1.9.

soul, by which we are borne on to the desire of revenge … [we do this when] we call to mind (*recordamur*) Christ's patience.[75]

Excessive sadness and fear can also be averted by this method of the example of Christ:

You are sorrowful for a little while … are you beginning to slip, amid your troubles? The example of Christ's sufferings is put before you. Picture for yourself (*vide*) what he endured for you … however much you may suffer, it will never come near to those insults and scourges he bore.… He who has invested his very sufferings with such honor, what does he reserve for his faithful servants? … Nor should we direct our thoughts (*adtendere*) to how much he permits the unjust to do, but how much he has in store for the just.[76]

Let us not be afraid (*timere*) of a hard journey. The one who made us the promise is truthful.… Why are you afraid of the hard ways of suffering and tribulation? He traveled them himself.[77]

Augustine elaborates on the cognitive dimension of the enterprise in the text about sadness just quoted; he explains that the imaginative "keeping our eyes fixed on (*intuentes*) the head [= Christ]" of which he speaks involves a "believing and seeing by thought and reason" (*cogitatione et ratione credimus et videmus*).[78]

The therapeutic effectiveness of this kind of imaginative "recalling" is twofold, a point that Augustine makes both explicitly and implicitly. First, explicitly, if Christ got through it, so can we; thus there is no need to give in to excessive grief, anger, etc.[79] Secondly and implicitly, Christ, throughout his ordeals, knew that he was going to rise again; thus the mental activity by which he got through them must have been the prerehearsal of his resurrection. Christ is therefore the exemplar of prerehearsal.[80]

In other texts, Augustine advocates the habitual and preventive practice of remembrance, as distinct from using it occasionally to fend off impending occurrent passions. Here he recommends calling to mind God's omnipotence by considering the natural world, which was made from nothing; this activity causes joy (*gaudium*, *iubilatio*).[81] And following a practice with which we are now quite familiar, he again takes a line from the Bible which says nothing about cognitive operations (Psalm 95:4), and turns it into an exhortation to the practice of this particular method of cognitive therapy:

For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised … even though throughout the whole day one should say, 'Great, great,' yet what would one say? Saying all day long,

[75] *en. Ps.* 108.5, trans. Tweed et al. adapted. Cf. *s.* 218.1 on patience.
[76] *en. Ps.* 36.2.4., trans. Tweed et al. adapted.
[77] *s.* 306.10. Cf. *s.* 343.2 with paragraph 4.
[78] *s.* 306.10. Cf. *s.* 343.2 with paragraph 4.
[79] Cf. *s.* 279.8, and cf. texts cited above.
[80] Cf. *s.* 279.3 on the meekness of Christ.
[81] *s.* 239.6, *s.* 215.1, *s.* 301A.6, *en. Ps.* 99.5, *en. Ps.* 102.6.

'Great,' one would at length finish, because the day comes to an end …. For what can a small tongue say towards the praise of the Great One? By saying, 'beyond praise,' he has spoken, and has given to thought (*cogitationi*) what it may keep in mind (*sapiat*), as if saying, 'What I cannot utter, you think about (*cogita*); and when you have thought about it, it will [still] not be enough.'[82]

It is easy to see what effect such a practice would have on emotional health, within Augustine's overall account. Someone who did this would not hesitate to assent – as did Sarah, Zachary, and the apostles – when told by a credible source that God was going to bring about, or had brought about, seemingly impossible good events.[83] Doubt about God's omnipotence would be precluded, and so preliminary good emotions would be bypassed for simply good emotions. On the other hand, someone who lacked this habit of continuous cogitation would be susceptible to doubt when surprised by good news, even from a credible source; but the way for her to overcome her doubt would be the same method: recalling the absolute greatness of God. And this, as we saw before, was indeed how Augustine seemed to conceive of the transition taking place in the case of people like Sarah.

6.4. CONTINUOUS MEDITATION ON THE LAW

Augustine developed this affective therapy from the mode of life advocated in the Psalms, Sirach, Proverbs, and Tobit.[84] Ancient Judaic culture's linking of intellectual development with moral and spiritual rectitude, resulting from its claim to have a revealed ethical code preserved in texts (requiring study and inquiry into implications)[85] came through in Augustine's Scriptures, making it susceptible to this kind of development by him. He takes himself to be participating in this culture, as an "interior Jew,"[86] when in the following texts he

[82] *en. Ps.* 95.4. Trans. Tweed et al. adapted.

[83] See Ch. 5.1.

[84] Psalm 1:2, "And he meditates on his law day and night," Psalm 118:15–17, "I will meditate on your commandments: and I will consider your ways. I will think of your justifications: I will not forget your words.… I will meditate on your righteousnesses always," Psalm 57:1, "judge right things, you sons of men," etc.; Sirach 3:22, "the things which the Lord has commanded you, think about them always"; Proverbs 21:20 LXX, "A desirable treasure will rest on the mouth of the wise; but foolish men will swallow it up"; Joshua 1:8, "Let not the book of this law depart from your mouth: but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe and do all things that are written in it: then you shall direct your way, and understand it"; and Tobit 4:16 (4:15 in some texts), "never do to another what you would hate to have done to yourself" (on which see especially Section 4a of this chapter).

[85] On the intellectual life of schools and synagogues in ancient Israel, and on scribal culture, see Van der Toorn (2007) 80–81; Schniedewind (2004) 134–136ff.; Grossfeld (1988) 1–3; and earlier, von Rad (1972).

[86] See e.g., *ep.* 196.2.9–10: "Interior" or "spiritual" (*in abscondito, spiritu*) Jew, meaning purity of heart or moral righteousness. He asserts that Christianity is an interior Judaism, without restricting this voluntary condition to Christians: the category includes the holy men and women of the Hebrew Bible.

advocates cognitive therapy via "the Law" for mental-emotional-moral health. While the general worldview was obviously vastly different from Stoicism in fundamental respects, the anthropology of the psalms and wisdom literature was sufficiently cognitivist for Augustine to see it as complementary to the kind of psychology and therapy he got from his pagan sources.[87] For instance, the "prerehearsal" recommended by Cicero and the "meditation" recommended in his translations of the psalms have nearly the same name (*praemeditatio* and *meditatio*), and he took them to refer to the same kind of mental act (*exercitatio ingenii*), namely, thinking things over.[88]

One of the more striking expositions of this therapeutic practice pertains to a problem which Seneca raises in the *On Constancy*: how can we avoid anger in the face of insults and injuries that others hurl against us?[89] Augustine describes how we should remain unmoved by passion, in terms which evoke the *City of God* 9.4's claim that we remain free of passions by keeping a true proposition "firmly fixed" in our mind (*mens ubi fixa est illa sententia*):

> As the heavenly luminaries traverse their onward course by day and night, and keep their path surely, while so great evils are taking place, nor do the stars fixed (*fixae*) in heaven above deviate … so ought the saints [to keep their path], if their hearts are fixed (*figantur*) in heaven … because then they dwell in the region above, and think of things above … from those very thoughts of things above, they become patient (*de ipsis cogitationibus supernorum patientes fiunt*).… Let them bear what is aimed against themselves.…The righteous ought to endure all the false charges that can be brought against themselves.…[90]

Like Seneca, therefore, he advocates remaining "above it all" and defines patience and tolerance as detachment from what other people do to and say about one.[91] But the next thing we hear is that "heaven" is the written book of the Law (the sky being figuratively compared to stretched vellum, on which the Law is written):

> Heaven, that is, the firmament, is figuratively taken for the book of the Law. Thus, it is somewhere written, *You spread out the heavens as a skin*. If it is spread out as a skin, it is spread out as a book, that it may be read … the written Law itself is our firmament; if our heart is there, it is not shaken by the wickedness of men.… He therefore

[87] So, summarizing the view he finds in the psalms: "All deeds, good or bad, proceed from the thoughts" (*en. Ps.* 118.24.5). See further Ch. 1.6.

[88] See *en. Ps.* 118.6.4–5.

[89] See Augustine on *iniuria* and *convicium* in the passages cited below; cf. Seneca on *iniuria* and *contumelia* in *const.* passim.

[90] *en. Ps.* 93.5.

[91] See Seneca, *const.* 19.2: "Liberty is having a mind that rises superior to injury …"; cf. 4.1, 8.3, 11.2. Augustine's description is also somewhat reminiscent of Philo's description of Moses as someone who properly belongs in the supernal realm and is characterized by *apatheia* (*sacr.* 8; cf. Winston [2008] 207–208) although the parallels are insufficient to argue for dependence of Augustine on Philo.

whose heart is on high, has a light in his own heart: he shines in heaven, and is not overcome by the darkness. For the darkness is beneath: but injustice is darkness.… The heart therefore is in the book; if in the book, it is in the firmament of heaven.… Do you want to imagine heaven? Think of the book of God. Hear the psalm, *and in his law will he meditate (meditabitur) day and night*.… Does he wish to bear all things patiently? Let him not come down from heaven, and let him meditate on his law day and night.[92]… For as the night does not extinguish the stars in heaven, so iniquity does not overcome the minds (*mentes non vincit*) of the faithful, when they are fixed in the firmament of God's scriptures.[93]

We are reminded here of Augustine's earlier assertion that "do not let the sun go down on your anger" means we should not assent to falsehood. He is spelling out exactly how we may prevent that: by continuously mulling over certain true propositions we will not "go down into the darkness of" falsity, but remain in the "light" of the truth, thereby avoiding a moral fall from moral rectitude (*iustitia*) to iniquity (*iniquitas*).

6.4a. Content of the Law as Therapeutic

What are the propositions upon which we need to continuously meditate? This can be gleaned from his descriptions of how the exercise is a source of righteousness. By "law" he means the moral law,[94] and especially the general

[92] *en. Ps.* 93.6 quoting Psalm 104:2, Psalm 1:2 and borrowing a turn of phrase from John 1:5. Augustine brings in two Pauline texts during the course of his commentary (Phil. 3:20, "our conversation is in heaven," and Phil. 2:14–15, "without murmurings (*sine murmurationibus*) … in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life"). The Pauline passages do not in themselves have any clear relation to the Senecan topics. Augustine's reason for tying them to these themes may have been a certain verbal assonance: Seneca offers virtually the same admonishment as Phil. 2:15 when he advocates patience and prerehearsal (Seneca *ep.* 107.9 *sine murmuratione*). Augustine goes beyond the actual written Pauline texts, directing them to his own purposes, and, strikingly, using the texts from the psalms as the interpretative framework for these lines from Paul. For all his interest elsewhere in Pauline statements that contrast the Jewish Law with the grace of the New Testament, asserting the latter's superiority, in this case the typical hermeneutical movement is reversed.

[93] *en. Ps.* 93.29. Trans. Tweed et al. adapted.

[94] With the turning of the era, he thinks, even the Torah's dietary prohibitions have an enduring legitimacy in their moral sense. E.g., regarding the stipulation that the Jews could only eat animals that chew cud and are cloven-hoofed (Leviticus 11:3): "the cloven hoof refers to morals, the chewing of the cud to wisdom. Why does the cloven hoof signify good morals? Because it doesn't fall down easily. For 'having fallen' (*lapsus*) is the sign for sin … those who *meditate on the law of the Lord day and night* are chewing the cud, as it were, and enjoying the flavor of the word with a kind of palate in the heart" (*s.* 149.4, citing Proverbs 21:20 LXX and Psalm 1:2. Trans. Tweed et al. adapted. Cf. *en. Ps.* 36.3.5). Notice the correlation with his depictions of preliminary passions as slipping, and passions as falling into sin: this hoofed and cud-chewing person would not fall into passions because she was continuously mulling over the Law.

principle, "That which you would not have done to you, do not to another."[95] He thinks of the second table of the Decalogue (adultery, theft, murder, coveting someone else's property or spouse) as simply a set of implications from this, and that these particular prohibitions will have further, more detailed applications: it is wrong not to honor a dead person's will where doing so arises from coveting their property, etc.[96]

Positive moral precepts such as "be kind to others," or "give money to poor people" might seem to add a distinct or supererogatory group of moral injunctions, but Augustine thinks that while they are "additions," they are further implications of both the general principle once recast into positive terms ("love your neighbor as yourself"),[97] and of the particular prohibitions.[98] He believes that the *foundation* for the original, negative formulation "That which you would not have done to you, do not to another" was a censure of the excessive love of temporal goods which *motivates* actions that fall short of the respect owed to human nature as such.[99] So the positive formulation, which commands love of others as human, is similarly derived from a censure of this excessive love for temporal things, and a sister principle to the negative one. Though not identical, both follow from this more general principle of detachment.[100] So the precept against coveting a neighbor's goods is actually a prohibition on the deeper moral disorder of greed, which leads on to the conclusion that instead of hoarding unnecessary wealth, we should spend it on food for the hungry. Similarly, the injunction not to kill is really a reference to the fact that we should not desire to harm others for the sake of temporal satisfactions. That principle also yields the idea that anger (desiring revenge) about a temporal harm is wrong, so that forgiveness must be practiced instead.[101]

Meditation on the law is therefore *thinking about how to apply general moral principles in all circumstances* (*cogitare semper*). It is not the mere mental recitation of rules, but a logical and comparative exercise by which one sees relationships of entailment, and the relevance of principles and precepts to empirical situations. As such, it names the kind of mental exercises Aristotle attributes to the virtue of prudence (*phronēsis*) and the Stoics associate with the

[95] Elsewhere again explicating rectitude (*iustitia*) as keeping this negative formulation of the law, which is from Tobit 4:16 (4:15 in some texts): *en. Ps.* 57.1.

[96] *en. Ps.* 57.1–2.

[97] Mark 12:31; cf. Matthew 7:12, Luke 6:31.

[98] *s.* 352.7; cf. *s. dom. m.* 1.1.2, 1.9.21, *ep Io. tr.* 10.4.

[99] *lib. arb.* 1.3.6ff.; desire for temporal things is given as the main obstacle to abiding by the commandments in the sermons cited below, as well.

[100] So *s.* 170.2, asserting that the same God is the giver of both laws.

[101] *lib. arb.* 1.3.6ff., *s.* 352.7. Thus Augustine reads Sirach 3:22, "The things which the Lord has commanded you, think about them always," as a reference to the injunction to "do mercy" (*en. Ps.* 130.13).

"hortatory" branch of ethics,[102] while also implying wisdom or understanding of unchanging principles.

How does this constitute affective therapy? As we have just seen, the sin of anger in particular is ruled out as an application of the precepts. But in general, someone who constantly thinks about these moral criteria constantly reinforces to herself the great importance of moral living, and will not have time to brood over or become absorbed by circumstantial sufferings or boons, exaggerating their importance.

Because "the Law" that prevents passions is not a set of ritualistic religious prescriptions but a set of moral norms, Augustine thinks that this therapy has a wider application than Jewish or Christian religious contexts. He thinks that the principles of this law are accessible by reason alone, and not merely by the Decalogue: the negative formulation of the Golden Rule is naturally contained in the human conscience or mind (*conscientia, mens*); it was because people did not want to listen to their consciences, that God also revealed it to Moses and the prophets.[103] The meditation on the "book of the Law" which he says will prevent the passion of anger turns out to be the same thing as thinking about how to apply the precepts of *natural law*,[104] although for a Jew or Christian who knows that God is the ground and source of both laws, the exercise also includes a dimension of personal communication with God, provoking "delight."[105]

So although it would be absurd to advise someone like Seneca to "meditate on the law" if this were an exhortation to think about the law *as commanded* by God to Moses, it would not be absurd if one were talking about the contents of the moral law, applications of the cardinal virtues which are naturally known to us. Therefore, he thinks it justifiable to intersperse Judaic recommendations about meditation with Senecan discussions of patience and anger control, despite the fact that these are historically and credally distinct traditions.

At the same time, frequenting the religious services of the Church is singled out as a lifestyle that supports this affective therapy, since the Church is

[102] See Ch. 2.2.

[103] *en. Ps.* 57.1–2; cf. *en. Ps.* 75.16 where the wrongness of theft, of drunkenness, of murder, and of hatred are moral *regulae* common to all humankind.

[104] For the term "natural law" (*lex naturalis*) and its content as identical with Tobit 4:16 (4:15 in some texts), see e.g., *ep.* 157.3.15. Augustine thinks that the content of these two laws is the same (*s.* 170.2) because in order to create and to command, God had to first know what he would create and command, this knowledge consisting of the patterns of natural things and the eternal law of morality for human creatures, which Augustine "locates" in the mind (Son/Wisdom) of God, and the latter of which he thinks is naturally possessed in the *memoria* of the human mind as an "image," the natural law. Cf. *en. Ps.* 61.21 on *regula iustitiae, iustitia manens*; and cf. *en. Ps.* 118.22.8: "man reaches the Wisdom of hidden things through obedience to the commandments."

[105] *en. Ps.* 118.6.5.

the place where the moral law is preached and its source is acknowledged. In particular, this habit is preventive of passions:[106]

> He should have imitated the ant, he should have heard the word of God, he should have gathered together grains, and he should have stored them within. There had come the trial of tribulation, there had come upon him a winter of inactivity, tempest of fear (*timor*), the cold of sorrow (*tristitia*), whether it were loss, or any danger to his safety, or any bereavement of his family; or any dishonor or humiliation; it was winter; the ant falls back upon that which he has gathered together in summer… What is this? See the ant of God, he rises day by day, he hastens to the church of God, he prays, he hears a reading, he chants a hymn, he digests (*ruminat*) that which he has heard, with himself he thinks thereon (*apud se cogitat*), he stores within grains gathered from the threshing floor.[107]

6.5. REFERRING TO THE TELEOLOGICAL HIERARCHY

A final, preventive, measure for guarding against passions and building emotional health, Augustine calls "referring" (*referre*). What distinguishes this therapy from the earlier methods is that it does not concern itself with providential distributions of temporal goods and concrete historical events, but with the place in a hierarchical metaphysical context of the particular temporal goods which surround us, and with a stirring up of the love (*eros*) for God who is at the top of this metaphysical ladder, the intellectual contemplation of whom is the primary source of happiness in the afterlife. We see Augustine enfolding a Platonic hierarchy of being into a teleology taken from Varro's Old Academy and Cicero's *On Invention*, that is ultimately Peripatetic in origin. The synthesis becomes a robust account of the human being's place in the cosmos, combining what are arguably the best elements from these two philosophical schools.

Varro placed the Stoics' primary things according to nature (preferred indifferents) into a teleological account that emphasized, in a way agreeable to the Old Academy though not to the Stoics themselves, the intrinsic goodness of the preferred indifferents: *all* the primary goods of nature give joy in and of themselves, though they are also to be used as a means to virtue.[108]

Augustine mapped Varro's account onto a Platonic hierarchy in which the "most excellent nature," that is, God, containing the immutable standards (Forms) of the virtues, was the intelligible beauty to be sought exclusively for its own sake; everything else, including one's own habitual virtue, was to be "referred" to this highest good.

[106] Cf. *s.* 53.12 and 53.15: "Force your heart to think about (*cogitare*) divine matters.… Reckon earthly things as [relatively] worthless, or else when tribulations come you may start saying it's been quite pointless your worshipping God, doing good works, persevering in them."

[107] *en. Ps.* 66.3. Trans. Tweed et al. adapted.

[108] *civ.* 19.3. Cf. Cicero, *inv.* 2.52.157; 2.55.166–2.56.169 paraphrased by Augustine, Questions 30–31 of *div. qu.*

This is why, for Augustine, the term "highest good" has a dual sense.[109] It refers to the best (happiest) state for a human being,[110] the final goal of total satisfaction toward which all choices are oriented. But it also refers to metaphysical supremacy. Hence Augustine sometimes personalizes *summum bonum* ("… summi boni, qui Deus est").[111] So when he says that the virtuous "refer" their virtues and the things that virtue uses to the end of the highest good,[112] this means both choosing with the right goal in mind, and *awareness* of the metaphysical hierarchy, with God at the top.

Thus people who "keep God in their thoughts"[113] will think of temporal goods as means to union with God, which is the primary good of the happiest life; this does not mean that they treat them as if they had less intrinsic value than they do, but rather that they know they are not to be enjoyed without *also at the same time* being used as conduits to God:[114] "whatever we do rationally in the using of temporal things, we … do with the contemplation of attaining eternal things, passing through the former, but cleaving to the latter."[115]

Habitual advertence to this teleological-hierarchical metaphysics obviously wards off passions. It is not possible to get overly attached to temporal things if one sees them as instrumental (though they need not be viewed as *merely* instrumental),[116] and as decidedly inferior to the highest good. Fear, grief, sadness, exultation, and desire will all be in the appropriate amounts, because they will be based on accurate judgments about the relative value of these goods.

[109] So O'Donovan (1980) 16.
[110] *civ.* 19.1; compare *fin.* 1.4.11.
[111] *civ.* 15.22.
[112] *civ.* 19.10.
[113] *civ.* 19.4.
[114] So Mann (1999) 149.
[115] *Contemplatione facere*, *trin.* 12.13.21.
[116] Augustine talks of using (*uti*) and seeking the lower things in the metaphysical hierarchy for the sake of (*appetere propter*) the end, order, which is sought for itself (*propter se ipsum*) (*civ.* 19.1). For thorough analysis of Augustine's brief flirtation with, discomfort with, and rejection of "use" as a way of describing love of neighbor (discomfort and rejection due to the overriding sense of instrumentality in the word "use"), see O'Donovan (1982), especially 386, 389, 390, 394; Rist (1994) 163–165.

7

Inspiration

Changing one's perceptions of value typically takes a lifetime of mental work, of training the mind to think the right sort of thoughts. That is the picture we get from Augustine's exhortations to practice the cognitive therapies. Yet there are two outstanding problems with that picture. One is a theoretical problem. In Augustine's ethics, it is not clear how someone who is completely unmotivated to begin to practice those cognitive therapies could ever become morally and emotionally healthy. This, of course, will not necessarily be a "problem," if Augustine is willing to say that such people simply can never improve. Yet he is not willing to say that, owing to empirical data which constitute the second, evidential problem. He thinks it is observable that some people undergo sudden perceptual shifts, which alter their loves and motivations, and, in consequence, their emotional reactions to events. Moral conversion, therefore, has both a theoretical and empirical role to play in Augustine's ethics, and our inquiry would be incomplete without asking whether or how his account of it coheres with the Stoic-Platonic motivational theory we have seen in previous chapters.[1]

Here we will be resolving three kinds of questions about Augustine and his place in the history of philosophical psychology and theology. First, this topic of moral conversion brings us full circle to some remaining questions about *Confessions* book eight. In Chapter 1, I mentioned that among the differences between Augustine and Persius was that in the latter's fifth *Satire*, avarice and the other dispositions which "whisper" mental language are dispositions which the subject already has; yet when Augustine perceives continence as attractive, he does not have a continent disposition. We have not yet explained this difference. Moreover, though we have considered the impression of continence and Augustine's consent, we have not yet considered what happens in between these (*Conf.* 8.12.28). Second, there are unresolved questions in the literature about

[1] See Ch. 2.4, 2.7a–b; Ch. 3.6.

Augustine's theory of grace and its development over time.[2] But grace brings about moral progress, according to Augustine; and Augustine also thought that moral progress was dependent upon motivational shifts. So it is only now that we have a more thorough grasp of his theory of motivation that we are in a position to clarify the proper meanings of terms such as "internal" and "external" grace, the significance of a "psychology of delight" in Augustine's account of grace, and the trajectory of Augustine's changing accounts of grace. Third, our deeper understanding of Augustine can bring clarity to an inconclusive early modern debate about the relation between grace and free choice (the so-called "De Auxiliis" controversy), which was in part a debate about the correct interpretation of Augustine.[3]

7.1. A PROBLEM: HABITUATION DETERMINES PERCEPTION

It was an ancient commonplace that habit influences perception,[4] and Augustine's philosophical sources emphasized that this is the case for moral perception, where habits of vice render one practically incapable of seeing that the moral good is good *for oneself*. Seneca is likely the main source for Augustine's descriptions of the phenomenon, though Cicero's record of a Stoic theory of degrees of habituation, with corresponding degrees of perceptual determination, also plays an important theoretical role for him.

According to Seneca, deeply ingrained bad habit creates a disposition of soul whereby one erroneously estimates the importance of various things.[5] Someone with a hedonistic lifestyle, for instance, will tend to perceive small inconveniences or difficulties as having great importance for his well-being, and thus easily become angered by them. We note the metaphor of the eyes being unaccustomed to the light, which will later be used by Augustine, and had earlier been used by Plato: [6]

[2] On this question, see Sections 3, 4f, and 5 of this chapter. The presence of a psychology of delight in Augustine's account of grace beginning in 396 was noted by Brown (1967) 154–155 (reprinted 2000); this view has recently been rejected by Harrison (2006) 267ff. and passim. On internal and external grace, and the question of Augustine's changing positions on these prior to and during the Pelagian controversy, see Cary (2008a) (2008b), cited and discussed below; Dodaro (2004) 84 n. 46 summarizes other secondary arguments beginning with the *locus classicus*, Burns (1980), who also had summarized earlier positions (see Burns [1980] 9–12).

[3] On this debate, see recently Stump (2003), 389–404; cf. Stump (2001) 136–142. As is seen below, Augustine has a view that is similar to but significantly different from Stump's "quiescence of the will" solution to the difficulty, which she develops from Aquinas.

[4] Cf. Nussbaum on Epicureanism ([1996] 165).

[5] *ep.* 75.11.

[6] The allegory of the cave alludes to "pain of the eyes" as part of the difficulty of trading false opinions for true beliefs; this pain results from a lifestyle of feasting and other pleasures, Plato *rep.* 541a.

Someone whom a slight breeze has made shiver is weak and sickly; eyes that a white garment offends are not healthy … When pleasures have corrupted both mind (*animus*) and body, nothing seems bearable, not because things are hard, but because the person experiencing them is soft … Nothing, therefore, is more conducive to anger than luxury that is intemperate and incapable of forbearance.[7]

Cicero makes a similar point when he summarizes the Stoic view that tendencies toward particular emotions are deeply set and enduring opinions about the goodness or badness of some class of things.[8] Upon beginning to give in to false opinions, one quickly enters a downward spiral. Each time it seems more appropriate to react the way one does. The possibility of seeing reality as it is decreases with each emotion. Such proclivities toward perturbations become progressively more settled as the perturbations continue to recur whenever one assents to the false propositions about value that are more and more frequently contained in her impressions.[9] Thus there are different degrees of proclivities that admit of classification as either less severe diseases (*morbi*), more advanced sicknesses (*aegrotationes*), or habitual vices (*vitiositates*, *habitus*).[10] What this implies for perception is that relatively shallow dispositions, such as sicknesses, influence or restrict one's perceptions to some limited degree, while the most settled, oldest, and therefore "hardest" habits make the resulting impressions practically impossible for the subject to question; assent would always be given to such impressions, since they would seem to be manifestly true.

Augustine's descriptions of the determination of perception focus on how motivating impressions, the more radical roots of behavior and of emotional patterns, are influenced through habituation. He concentrates not on the determination of perception in cases of particular passions, but on the more general problem of moral development and improvement. The virtues really are good for each individual. But poor habituation will prevent one from seeing the virtues hormetically. (One result of this will be false judgments about value in circumstances that provoke affective reactions; so morally bad passions will occur.) So how can the vicious person improve?

We see him raising the problem explicitly in the *Replies to Simplicianus* 1.2.21. The issue is that "people are variously moved when the same facts are shown or explained to them … the same thing spoken in one way has power to move and has no such power when spoken in another way, or may move one person and not another."[11] The problem is that our dispositions determine whether we will find something that is in principle hormetic for a human being – virtuous behavior – to be actually hormetic for us in particular, given

[7] *ira* 2.25.1–4, translation Kaster and Nussbaum adapted. Cf. *ira* 2.20.3.
[8] *Tusc.* 4.25–26. Examples given include e.g.: the desire for glory, the love of women, misogyny.
[9] See *Tusc*. 4.24–25.
[10] *Tusc.* 4.23–24, 29.
[11] 1.2.14. Trans. Burleigh (1953) adapted; subsequent quotations of *Simpl.* also follow Burleigh.

our prior habituation. And since human motivation is in the first instance passive, being initiated by motivating impressions (we recall his account of motivating impressions from Chapter 2.1–4 and 2.7), we cannot bootstrap ourselves into being motivated.

> Who has it in his power that his mind be touched by the kind of impression by which will may be moved … And who can welcome in his mind something which does not give him delight? Who has it in his power to ensure either that something that can delight him will turn up, or that he will be delighted when it turns up?[12]

The final query here isolates the difficulty. It is not so much that we will not come across the material possibility of being motivated to act correctly – that we will not encounter moral exemplars whom we might imitate, for example. Such exemplars are available in works of fiction, if not in real life. The problem instead is that we will not find them to be inspiring examples. We will not perceive it as being in our best interest to act as such people do. We will have merely epistemic impressions of their behavior, rather than motivating impressions characterized by supervenient delight. Consequently, we will not care to act like the exemplar.

In more poetic terms, he raises the same problem in the sermons. The metaphor of overly sensitive eyes, which we saw in Seneca, is pressed into service by Augustine.[13] He also indicates that a "sick" person (recall Cicero and Seneca on bad dispositions) will be unable to experience the delight that is supervenient on motivation to get great goods, that is, virtues: "When iniquity beckons alluringly and iniquity is sweet, then truth is bitter.… Truth is much, much better and more delicious; but it's to the strong and hearty that bread is tasty."[14] Sometimes he calls this an awareness of the sweetness of the Lord, because the criteria of good actions are contained in God's mind:

> *How great, how immense is your sweetness, Lord!* And if some godless fellow retorts, 'What is this immense sweetness, then?' I will answer, 'How can I demonstrate this sweetness to you, who have lost your faculty of taste in the fever of sin?[15]

[12] *Simpl.* 1.2.21: "Quis habet in potestate tali viso attingi mentem suam, quo eius voluntas moveatur …? Quis autem animo amplectitur aliquid quod eum non delectat? Aut quis habet in potestate, ut vel occurrat quod eum delectare possit, vel delectet cum occurrit?" Trans. Burleigh adapted.

[13] *en. Ps.* 72.7: "*How good is the God of Israel!* But to whom? To those that are of a right heart. How does he seem to the perverse? He seems perverse.… Just as the sun appears mild to one having clear, sound, healthy, strong eyes, but against weak eyes seems to dart cruel spears … so also when you have begun to be perverse, God will seem perverse to you (*tibi Deus perversus videbitur*)." Cf. *util. cred.* 8.29.

[14] *s.* 153.10 trans. Hill adapted. Cf. *s.* 48.5, *s.* 153.10, *en. Ps.* 32.3.

[15] *en. Ps.* 30.3.4.6. He continues: "…You have no palate in your heart capable of tasting the good things I am telling you about, so what can I do for you? It is useless for me to say, *Taste and see that the Lord is very sweet* to one who is not capable of doing so."

Poor habits, therefore, result in inaccurate impressions (*visa*), for Augustine as for Seneca and for Cicero before him.

7.2. ORIGINAL SIN AS A DETERMINING HABIT; THE PLASTICITY OF THE SOUL

The condition that Augustine calls "original sin," he classifies according to the Ciceronian account of degrees of habituation. Each of these has a correlative degree of influence on perception, ranging from relatively light influence to determination. Original sin is a set of "the most ancient cupidities, and age-old evil habits (*consuetudines*),"[16] meaning that it is the most ingrained and stable kind of disposition – not a proclivity that can be removed easily. The human soul became "vicious" with the Fall.[17] This condition has the psychological depth and staying power of a habit that is literally thousands of years old. The problem of how to recover from the fallen condition is, therefore, simply a specific form of the problem of how to recover from bad habituation.

With this notion of *innate* tendencies to inaccurate perceptions, Augustine still does not consider himself far afield of ancient pagan accounts. While his belief that inaccurate moral perception was caused by the historical event described in Genesis is specific to his religious context, apart from this question of the particular cause, the general idea of a proneness to error (both intellectual and moral) is found in his pagan philosophical sources, as he himself emphasizes during the Pelagian debates, citing Cicero.[18] Cicero emphasizes the commonness of bad habits and inaccurate impressions and judgments.[19] Augustine also had in Seneca an ambiguous account of a virtually universal subjection to diseases of the mind, making humanity a "mass of wrongdoers" characterized by "universal vice," which explains why only the fewest in every age turn out to be wise: the odds are against us.[20] Plotinus, of course, actually

[16] E.g., *c. Iul. imp.* 4.103, 5.64 on original sin being the same kind of thing as an acquired necessitating habit; *en. Ps.* 30.2.1.13: *vetusissimae cupiditates, annosae malae consuetudines* (citing the reference to fallen nature in Rom. 7); *c. Iul.* 6.18.55 comparing original sin to acquired habits like an addiction to wine; *exp.Gal.* 48 on *consuetudo naturalis*.

[17] E.g., *civ*. 14.19: "hae, inquam, partes [animi] in paradiso ante peccatum vitiosae non erant"; see also Ch. 4.5.

[18] Cf. e.g., *c. Iul.* 4.12.60, citing Cicero *rep.* 3.

[19] Despite the fact that habituation toward accurate judgments is possible in theory: opposed to *vitiositas* is virtue, a disposition (*affectio*) of soul characterized by consistency of accurate judgment (*Tusc.* 4.31, 4.34).

[20] *ira* 2.10.3–4, 2.10.6. Seneca means that human societies have been corrupted by bad customs, and that this is why from birth we make bad use of our mental powers (*ira* 2.10.3–4); but his rhetoric – the human race is subject to a darkness that fills the mind (*mens*) that is the love of erring, babes are destined to do wrong (*ira* 2.10.1–3, 2.13.1) – sometimes suggests an innate disposition.

spoke of a moral fall, an overestimation of temporal things, at the beginning of the soul's embodied life.[21]

The extent to which Augustine endorses the claim that habits determine perception can be seen by the use he makes of two other related claims found in ancient philosophy. The first is psychological compatibilism, and the second is the claim that the soul is malleable.

We are speaking of compatibilism in the sense that Aristotle is a psychological compatibilist: our own freely formed moral habits determine us to perceive reality in a certain way, and to choose the *kinds* of actions we choose. For the Stoics, this habituation is voluntary because assent to false propositions about value is voluntary.[22] Thus, the confusion that results from false judgments is the fault of him who assented to the falsehoods. The subsequent assents to falsehood that follow more easily after this, and involve one in the commission of vicious actions, are also the perceiver's fault.

Augustine's vivid lamentation in *Confessions* 8.7.18–8.9.20 that it was his own habitual actions that had forged the "chains" in which he now found himself, and which made him unable to assent to the impression of continence, explicitly endorses this position.[23] We always retain the power of choice (*liberum arbitrium*), which is the power to give or refuse assent to the sentential content of the impression; but this power will inexorably be used by an addict to serve her habit.

Now the remarkable thing is that the problem of *innate* skewed perceptions (original sin) Augustine also handles with this kind of compatibilist responsibility. We expect to see him backing away from it, in order to avoid the rather obvious objection: how can people be held responsible for the perceptions they have as a result of psychological conditioning by others[24] – especially when the others are removed by many generations? But he opts for an account of corporate responsibility and guilt for the fall: all of humanity participated in the original sin: "we were all one in Adam," contained in him as in an archetype.[25] So

[21] A fall was caused by pride (*tolma*), a desire to rule something (namely, a corporeal body) rather than to be subject to the Divine Mind (via contemplation) 5.1.1, 4.8.4. Cf. Torchia (1993) passim.

[22] Cf. Bobzien (1998) 160 on Aristotle and Epictetus, although there is no evidence that Augustine read Epictetus, as she suggests (161).

[23] Note that what I am speaking of here has more in common with what Stump calls "modified libertarianism" (rather than with the definition she assigns to "compatibilism") in (2001) 125.

[24] The objection is invited by Aristotle, who famously emphasized the importance of habit formation beginning in early childhood; cf. Plato, who stresses that by about age ten it will be too late to correct a poor parenting job (*Rep*. 501a, 540e–541a).

[25] Comparisons are sometimes made with the Hebrew Bible's notion that a people considered as a set can have a relation to God, or a moral quality such as fidelity; other times a comparison is made with Jung's notion of a collective unconscious. Cf. the texts cited and discussion in Rist (1994), esp. 121–129. For other examples in Augustine of an "archetypal" person, cf. the usage of "man" in *civ.* 15.18 in reference to the society of humans who live by God's standards,

someone is guilty of the bad choices he makes as a result of his poor perception, because he is a member of a corporate body that was effectively represented by the person whose choice caused the corporate body to perceive things inaccurately.[26] Whatever one may think of the merits of this position, it cannot be denied that it is a radical use of compatibilist responsibility (as defined earlier), and that Augustine held it.

Second, Augustine's commitment to the claim that habits determine perception can be seen in his adoption and adaptation of the Stoic account of the soul as malleable. Stoic compatibilism is underwritten by the claim that the soul is material. It is because every assent to falsehood damages the soul by altering it *physically* that "roots of foolishness" remain after each self-inflicted wound (assent to falsehood). Although Augustine vigorously denies that the soul is corporeal, he wants the philosophical benefit which attends the Stoics' materialism, namely, a way of speaking about its malleability. He therefore speaks of "quasi-matter" (*quasi materies*) in the soul, by which he means noncorporeal (nonthree-dimensional) stuff. This stuff is the subject of all the changeable qualities of the soul, and particularly of the soul's ability to acquire, hold, and lose evaluative attitudes. He toys with using this quasi-material to explain inherited proneness to faulty perceptions, considering spiritual traducianism[27] as a way of trying to explain how habits of soul can be passed down through generations. The proposal is that since each soul is a substance, each has both quasi-matter and form,[28] and that the soul's quasi-matter (that is, its habitual original sin, its set of erroneous attitudes and desires) is somehow passed on from parents to child. The higher intellect, or *memoria*, on the other hand, which is the form of the soul, is particular in each new person and created immediately by God. (This begs the question how attitudes and desires can be separated off from the parents' minds – whose would they be while in transition from parent to child?) Later Augustine distances himself from this theory,[29] speaking instead of physical generation as the vehicle of inheritance, though

and his explanation of the use of the pronoun "your" in reference to Zachary ("your prayer") in *s.* 291.3, where he asserts that as a priest, Zachary is the Jewish people in himself, since he represents them (*pro populo sacrificabat*).

[26] So *en. Ps.* 102.6, addressing his congregation, he says "you" disobeyed in the garden, so now "you" are sick with bad tendencies in the soul. Cf. *corrept.* 6.9, 10.28 and *c. Iul. imp*. 4.103, 5.64.

[27] *Gn. lit.* 7.6.9, 7.27.30. See also Frede (2011) 163–164, though in his summary he misses this later option.

[28] A position found in Plotinus, 5.9.2 ll. 18–23. For discussion of Augustine's relation to Plotinus on body-soul dualism, see Byers (2012a) 176–180.

[29] During the Pelagian controversy, when Julian alludes to this theory of his, Augustine says that his speculation on this question was done before the Pelagian debate, i.e., it should not be taken as an essential part of his argument about the existence of original sin and the need for grace (see *c. ep. Pel.* 3.10.26). That may be because by this time Augustine was aware that Jerome was a strict creationist.

never developing a metaphysical account of how defective inherited *corporeal* matter can introduce erroneous habitual *attitudes* to the incorporeal *soul*.

Thus Augustine received and adapted a set of claims and discussions about the relation between perception and habituation. One may be guilty of determining one's own perception in a defective manner. One is also warped in perception owing to inherited habits of perception.

7.3. A SOLUTION: DIVINELY GIVEN MOTIVATING IMPRESSIONS

7.3a. Motivating Impressions "Breathed Into" the Mind by God

Given that the condition of original sin is a determining habit, moral perception cannot be corrected merely by *rehabituation*. There is, primarily, a practical problem: because the innate habit is universal, all parenting and governing is dysfunctional, indeed morally corrupt and corrupting. So there is no way for children to be trained properly. In the second place, even if good parenting or governing were possible, the strength of the internal habit of the child is such that he will fail to assimilate the reasons why he should do the right kinds of deeds. Trying to educate such a child would be like taking someone whose habit of gambling is thousands of years old and attempting to make her fiscally prudent. Such a person, so long as she is kept under force or influenced by some powerful deterrent, might gamble little or not at all – and in this sense, habituation would be effective – but she would abstain from gambling for the wrong reasons, and likely turn to some other kind of high-risk, irresponsible behavior. So the habituation would have failed of its purpose as *moral* rehabituation.

By "moral" rehabituation, I allude to the fact that like Plato and Aristotle, Augustine thinks that there is a difference between "acting justly" in the sense of going through the motions out of fear of punishment, routine, social convention, or for a good reputation, and "acting justly" because one is just, which means not only knowing how particular actions conform to the definition of justice, but doing it *for the sake of* the fine (*kalon/honestum*), rather than for utility, pleasure, or avoidance of pain. "Just" acts done for any other reason than for the sake of the *kalon* are just acts by equivocation only. But original sin, as a set of dispositions in the soul, already determines us to view our own pleasure and utility as the goal of life. It is not that we are continually doing acts that are wrong in themselves, but that even our acts that appear good are really morally indifferent at best.[30] So Augustine's accusation against the Roman Stoics is an accusation against fallen humanity. He accuses the Stoics of doing the right deeds, but for the wrong reason, namely the desire to be successful, or superior

[30] Similarly, Frede (2011) 167. The position that aiming at the wrong end or goal disqualifies an action from being good is clear as early as *ep. Io. tr.* 7.7 and is a frequent theme during the anti-Pelagian works. He says initially that they are "not good," and then later that they are "sins" or "evil."

to fate.[31] They have fake virtue, because they do not act for the sake of, from the love of, God (who is the *kalon*, now given a neo-Platonic metaphysical status). The same general point applies to human beings generally, who because they are fallen, do not act for the sake of the morally fine. Hence Augustine's amusing analogy of an athlete running very fast, but not running on the track.[32]

At the theoretical level, all this suggests a hopeless picture in which one's own innate confusion about the proper goal of action, and the cumulative mistakes passed on through social customs and amplified through generations, are simply overwhelming. Meanwhile, at the empirical level, the existence of someone like Socrates, who was reputed to be morally superior to his own parents and the entire surrounding society, is problematic. How did he get to be the way he was?

The attempt to answer this latter question is not original to Augustine. Plato had said that if someone virtuous arose despite the lack of a virtuous republic – he was probably thinking of Socrates – this could only be explicable by divine fate (*theia moira*);[33] but he did not elaborate on how fate would protect such a person.

For his own part, Augustine makes an inference similar to Plato's, and then utilizes the Stoic-Platonic epistemological model we saw in Chapter 2 to explain how divine help makes someone see virtuous action as an attractive goal. If morally exemplary people, or sudden moral conversions, are to be possible then God must "breathe" motivating impressions "into" the human mind as gifts (graces). Thus, in the *Replies to Simplicianus*, when he raises the question that we saw earlier:

> who has it in his power that his mind be touched by the kind of impression by which will may be moved.… And who can welcome in his mind something which does not give him delight? Who has it in his power to ensure either that something that can delight him will turn up, or that he will be delighted when it turns up?

he answers as follows:

> If those things delight us which serve our advancement towards God … that is inspired and bestowed by the grace of God.[34]

Here Augustine is commenting on scripture and talking about grace, but his description utilizes technical epistemological terms from Stoicism – the scriptural term "call" he glosses as "impression," "obedience to the call" or "belief," he renders "consent."[35] He also makes reference to the Platonic elements of

[31] E.g., *civ.* 19.1, 19.10, 19.25, 22.24.
[32] *en. Ps.* 31.2.3–4; *s.* 169.18.
[33] *Rep*. 492e. On this set of problems in Plato, see Rist (1992) 113, 114.
[34] 1.2.21. "Cum ergo nos ea delectant quibus proficiamus ad deum … inspiratur hoc et praebetur gratia Dei." Trans. Burleigh adapted.
[35] Cf. e.g., 1.2.12–13.

love and psychic delight.[36] As we saw in Chapter 2, he had supplemented the Stoic motivating impression with these two elements.[37] Clearly, he is saying that the poorly habituated cannot be motivated to act well (*recte vivere, bene operari*) unless they receive from God the kind of impression which stimulates impulse (*tale visum quo voluntas moveatur*); and as we saw in Chapter 2, this is the motivating impression.

So, Augustine agrees with the standard ancient observation that habituation determines perception, and he thinks that exceptionally virtuous people like Socrates or Job exist, and that others – *like himself* – experience moral conversions. Moreover, he thinks that these exceptional cases of motivation to act well must, like all human motivation, occur via the synthetic Stoic-Platonic model of motivation to which he subscribed. So, he believes that this combination of facts yields an *evidential and philosophical* argument for the position that prevenient grace is necessary for moral improvement, and that this grace must be in the form of a motivating impression.

7.3b. Recognizing Augustine's References to Graced "Suggestions": Differences from Jerome, Pelagians, and Jansen

Augustine's literary imagination, cultivated by Seneca and other Greco-Roman literature, also prompts him to describe this motivational conversion in poetic terms. He says that God heals the overly sensitive "eyes," that is, the mind that has grown sickly through bad habits,[38] analogously to the way that ancient playwrights describe the gods intervening to alter people's visual perceptions.[39] Or else, grace is rain coming down from the sky, the heavens dripping[40] – a comparison probably remotely associated in Augustine's imagination with Zeus showering down into the lap of Danae.[41] But the metaphors are precise, in that they consistently refer to the same epistemological item: a motivating impression, a *suggestio*, given from God who is transcendent and hence "above."

In a number of other texts, Augustine alludes mainly to the delight that supervenes on the motivating impression. This is because of scriptural texts that allude to sweetness, as in "God will grant sweetness." But Augustinian grace is not merely delight, and it would be incorrect to say that Augustine

[36] *Simpl.* 1.2.21. For "love," see the beginning of the passage: "We are commanded [by scripture] to believe so that we may … become able to do good works by love. But … who has it in his power that his mind may be touched by the kind of impression by which will may be moved …?"

[37] Ch. 2.7a–b.

[38] E.g., Cf. *en. Ps.* 84.1; *pecc. mer.* 2.5.5; *nat. et gr.* 48.56.

[39] E.g., in Sophocles' *Ajax*, Athena makes Ajax see cattle as men, so that he slaughters them believing that he is killing the Greek army. Of course, unlike the pagan myths, Augustine does not think that God makes people see things *amiss*.

[40] E.g., *en. Ps.* 67.12, etc. These texts are discussed below.

[41] Alluded to in *conf.* 1.16.26.

thinks that a moral conversion is simply succumbing to pleasure.[42] "Inspired sweetness" is a term of art for the inspired motivating impression. What he means is that grace is God's action on the mind, whereby the intellect apprehends the beauty and goodness of virtue, and as a result formulates sayables, including an imperative, in the discursive reason. This is the motivating impression. The delight is the affective consequence of this impression, in the interior sense.[43] But in shorthand, God inspires delight. "God therefore teaches sweetness by inspiring delight (*Docet ergo Deus suavitatem inspirando delectationem*) … [he] teaches that we may do what we ought to do, by inspiring sweetness (*docet ut facienda faciamus, inspirando suavitatem*)."[44] "*You have prepared in your own sweetness for the needy, O God*.… in order that a good work may be done … from love."[45]

Strikingly, Augustine's confidence that there are such divinely given impressions makes him disagree with the likes of Jerome about the most fitting translation of psalms where "sweetness" is at issue. He repeatedly and self-consciously chooses the less standard "sweet" and "sweetness" for the *chrēstos* and *chrēstotēs* of the Septuagint psalms 67, 105, and 118, even while acknowledging that a number of copies have the translation "God is good" rather than "God is sweet."[46] Jerome rejects "sweet," citing the Hebrew in support of "good" in a letter written to some monks.[47] But Augustine has his own reason for selecting this translation:

> These verses of this psalm … begin from this: *You have made sweetness for your servant, Lord* … But what in Greek is *chrēstotēta* our translators sometimes render 'sweetness'

[42] This was the reading of Jansen; see recently Ogliari (2003), 246.

[43] Note that the causal priority here corresponds to the traditional distinction between gifts (Is. 11:1–2) and fruits (Gal. 5:22–23) of the Holy Spirit; joy is a fruit. Note also the later medieval agreement, e.g., Aquinas, *ST* IaIIae 112.5: "…Thirdly, things are known conjecturally by signs; and thus anyone may know he has grace, when he is conscious of delighting in God.…"

[44] *en. Ps.* 118.17.3.

[45] *en. Ps.* 67.13: "Parasti in tua suavitate egenti Deus… ut opus fiat … amore."

[46] *en. Ps.* 105.2, 105.5: "[For Psalm 105, verse one] some copies read, *For he is good (bonus)*, others *For he is sweet (suavis)*, one Greek word, *chrēstos*, having been differently translated (*en. Ps.* 105.2).… But for what is here written [in verse 4], *in goodness (bonitate)*, other copies have, *in sweetness (in suavitate)*, just as formerly for *For he is good*, others have *For he is sweet.* But it is the same word in Greek, thus it is also read elsewhere [in Psalm 67], *The Lord will grant sweetness (suavitatem)*, which others have also rendered 'goodness' (*bonitatem*), others again 'kindness' (*benignitatem*)" (*en. Ps.* 105.5). Cf. *en. Ps.* 135.1: "*Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good* (Psalm 135) … the expression, 'for he is good', in the Greek is *agathos*; not as in the 105th Psalm, for there 'He is good', in Greek is *chrēstos*. And so some have expounded that one, 'for he is sweet.'"

[47] Jerome *ep.* 106.67: "[Regarding] the One Hundred and Fifth [Psalm]: *Give glory to the Lord, for he is good*, for which you say that you have read in Greek, *for he is chrēstos*, that is, *sweet (suavis)*. It should be known that *chrēstos* can be applied to both 'a good thing' (*bonum*) and 'a sweet thing' (*suave*). Moreover, it is written as follows in Hebrew: *chi tob*, which everyone unanimously translated *quia bonus*, from which it is clear that *chrēstos* should be understood as 'good' (*bonus*)." My trans.

(*suavitatem*), other times 'goodness' (*bonitatem*).... We ought to understand the word 'sweetness,' which the Greeks term *chrēstotēta*, as referring to spiritual blessings; for on account of this our translators have wanted to call it 'goodness.' I think therefore that nothing else is meant by the words *You have made sweetness for your servant* except: 'You have made me feel delight in that which is good (*delectaret bonum*).' For when that which is good delights, it is a great gift of God.[48]

Clearly, he does not doubt that Jerome's translation is saying something true when it asserts that God gives us good things. Yet he wants to focus on the *manner* in which someone becomes *morally* good, and so he reads it as a reference to motivating grace.

Similarly, Augustine's disagreement with the Pelagians is not simply a theological argument about the proper interpretation of scripture, but a dispute about philosophical anthropology. Specifically, it is an argument about whether there are innate habits that interfere with our motivation to do good. Certainly, Augustine thinks that his position explains more scriptural passages than that of his adversaries; but as we have seen in Chapters 1, 4, and 5, it is Augustine's understanding of human nature which often guides his interpretation of scripture.[49] Hence the Pelagians are *defined* by him as people who deny the need for inspired motivating impressions (*suggestiones* breathed into the mind by God).[50]

7.3c. Back to *Confessions* 8.11.27

Now the fact that Augustine has just said that *some* motivating impressions are given by God does not in any way affect the conclusions we came to about the definition, function, and structure of motivating impressions, in Chapter 2. It would be an error to confuse the question of *what* something is, with that of *whence* it came. Indeed, we saw a large number of passages where Augustine uses the concept of the motivating impression without its having anything to do with grace, and that he is distinguished from his Christian peers by the comparative rarity with which he talks about otherworldly (e.g., demonic or divine) origins of "suggestions."[51] As he says, grace is like when God makes water flow from a rock:[52] just as in that case it is still the natural substance of

[48] *en. Ps.* 118.17.1 regarding Ps. 118:65; translation adapted.

[49] One example is Augustine's exegetical maneuvering during the late stage of the anti-Pelagian debate. E.g., in *c. Iul.* 4.3.25 he argues that Romans 2:14 ("When the gentiles who have not the law, do the works of the law") refers not to pagans acting well by natural law – apparently its plain sense – but to gentile Christians who have the law written on their hearts by grace.

[50] *spir. et litt.* 34.60, *ep.* 145.8. The motivating impression is the central issue in his debate with Julian; see *c. ep. Pel.* on *suggestiones*, or sweetnesses inspired by God: 1.19.37, 2.5.10, 2.9.21, 2.10.22, 4.6.13.

[51] Ch. 2.3c.

[52] For this comparison, see *en. Ps.* 113.1.12.

water that is flowing, so in a major motivational shift it is a human motivating impression that is being received, though it is being received from God.

In Chapter 2 we only addressed the question of *what* was going on in *Confessions* 8.11.27, and concluded that it described a motivating impression. So in fact we do need to ask about that passage: Granted that it describes Augustine's experience of a *suggestio* of continence, what was its origin: natural or divine? The question arises because at that point in the narrative, Augustine says that he was strongly habituated to be incontinent.[53] He had dismissed his cohabiting partner and become engaged to be married; but during his engagement – which was to be two years long owing to the young age of the girl – he had gotten a third woman to tide him over until his marriage. How was it possible for him to perceive sexual continence as a good for him and hence motivating, given his habit? He tells us that he had previously been unable to see continence as anything other than tortuous for himself,[54] even though he had known about it. But suddenly he perceives this virtue as attractive, in an apprehension of the virtue's *kalon/honestum* quality. Given his habituation, his sudden change in perception looks naturally inexplicable. Moreover, when he introduces the episode that provoked the impression (the story by Ponticianus), Augustine attributes what follows to the agency of God, saying, "Lord, my helper and redeemer, I will now tell the story … of how you delivered me from the chain of sexual desire."[55] It seems that this "deliverance" refers to the occurrence of the motivating impression itself, rather than merely the providential arrangement of circumstances so that he can hear Ponticianus' story about the monks.[56] For it is already a theme of Augustine's in the *Replies to Simplicianus* (395/396) that two people can hear the same information, and one be moved but the other not moved.[57] The *Confessions* were written just after this (397–400/401), and so it seems likely that the *Confessions* text is intended as an illustration of the claim about graced perception that is made in the *Replies*. Thus, the "appearance" of continence in paragraph 27 should

[53] On the strength of the habit, see *conf.* 6.11.20–22, 6.15.25–6.16.26, 8.5.10–11, 8.7.14, 8.10.24, 8.11.26.

[54] "vita mea … poena videretur" (*conf.* 6.12.22), "putabam enim me miserum fore nimis" (*conf.* 6.11.20), and of Ambrose: "caelibatus tantum eius mihi laboriosus videbatur" (*conf.* 6.3.3).

[55] *conf.* 8.6.13.

[56] Frede (2011) calls grace God's "setting things up," where by "things" he apparently means circumstances. Augustine's notion of grace is more than a providential arrangement of circumstances; cf. the distinction between Molina and Bañez in Section 4b of this chapter.

[57] See Section 1 of this chapter on *Simpl.*, and e.g., *en. Ps.* 84.15, citing Psalm 84:12, "From whence does that sweetness come to you, except from this, that *God shall give sweetness, and our land shall give her increase*? … Look, I have spoken the word of God to you, I have sown seed in your devout hearts … with devout attention you have received the seed; now cogitate the word you have heard, like those who break up the clods … [but] unless God rains upon it, what profits it that it is sown? … May the rain of God come and make to sprout what is sown there; and … may God give increase to the seeds I have sown, so that remarking afterwards your improved characters, I too may rejoice at your fruit."

be understood as one of these inspired motivating impressions. *Confessions* 8.11.26–27 describes Stoic-Platonic motivating impressions. But paragraph twenty-seven in particular is about an instance in which that kind of thing is given by God.

7.3d. Notes on "Justification"

"Justification," a scriptural term that Augustine glosses as the conversion from being oriented toward sin to being oriented toward virtuous action, we now see is a hybrid notion, combining adapted classical insights about habit and perception with a Christian theodicy in which grace comes from Christ. The term means to be put into interior order, made to see that virtue is more valuable than all temporal things, and therefore to be in the right relation to God,[58] who contains the criteria of all the virtues in his eternal mind. Grace is a necessary reorientation, the introduction of the correct goal (the *kalon*) into the mind, which makes virtue possible. It is an interior change in perception and motivation, thanks to God's granting of a *suggestio*. And because the historical event which made this grace available was, in Augustine's theodicy, the incarnation and redemption, becoming "justified" is also receiving a share of the holiness of Christ.[59] Christ is the means to virtue, though not a mere instrument;[60] converting grace "makes one into Christ," taking on the perceptions, attitudes, desires, and sentiments of Christ, who is the incarnation of the eternal criteria of the virtues.[61] (It is worth emphasizing this, because it means that trying

[58] Similarly, Dodaro (2004) 4–5.

[59] *en. Ps.* 34.1.14: "Christus iustificat impium"; cf. *en. Ps.* 105.5, "This is the Saviour himself, in whom sins are forgiven and souls healed, that they may be able to keep judgment, and do righteousness"; *en. Ps.* 34.1.12; *en. Ps.* 142.5; *s.* 169.16; *ep.* 140.21.52.

[60] I.e., not a means to something other than himself. See *en. Ps.* 31.2.6; *en. Ps.* 101.1.1; *en. Ps.* 118.32.3.

[61] E.g., "Let us be most grateful and give solemn thanks that we have not only been made Christians but Christ." ("*Christus facti sumus", ep. Io. tr.* 21.8); "It is by participation in him that happiness is found by all who are truly happy" (*civ.* 5.11); "The essence of religion is to be like the one whom you worship" (*civ.* 8.17). The participation is effected by Christ's role as mediator between the divine and human, which is possible because of his dual natures (divine and human), *civ.* 21.15; cf. *en. Ps.* 26, 2.2: "He is like a spotless lamb who redeemed us by his own spilt blood, uniting us into one body with himself and making us his members, so that in him we too are Christ … all of us belong to Christ, but we are Christ too, because in some sense the whole Christ is [identical with both] head and body."

Dobell (2009) 75ff. claims that Augustine was a Photinian until the year 395. This claim conflicts with evidence that Augustine learned the doctrine of the Nicene Creed (likely through Victorinus' anti-Arian neo-Platonic Trinitarian writings) and accepted it by the period 388–395 (for this evidence, see e.g., Barnes [1999] 32). Moreover, Dobell's claims that Augustine was not "orthodox" in his writings prior to 395 are based on an anachronistic comparison with the formulation of the hypostatic union made at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, which is irrelevant to the question of Augustine's Photinianism, because Chalcedon focused on a different question, namely, *how* both the human divine natures subsisted in Christ. Dobell cites *quant.*

to construct an Augustinian theology without this metaphysically grounded Christology will mean foregoing the claim that grace improves one morally; the latter is strictly dependent upon the former, per Augustine.)[62]

Because grace is thus understood as the transfer of perceptions and their underlying habitual attitudes from Christ into the one who receives grace, grace

an. 34.78 (dated to 388), but the most natural way to take this is as a rejection by Augustine of his earlier Photinianism, i.e., as a clear stipulation that a mere man, even if supremely wise, is not to be worshiped (whereas Christ, who is to be worshiped, is not a mere man).

[62] For those living after the time of Christ (cf. next note), this motivating impression that is divinely inspired is not only an impression by which will may be moved toward living well, but an impression by which will may be moved to *explicit* "faith," where faith is defined as "believing in" Christ, which means believing that Christ is the only means to virtue. This is equivalent to forming a resolution to enter the Church, the repository of additional grace, through baptism. As mentioned to some extent in Ch. 2.7c, the reason why the decision to be baptized, the moral conversion, and belief in Christ are the same, is that the motivating impression which proposes the relevant virtue also shows one the *means* of acting in accord with the virtue. In this case of conversion, the means is Christ, who is indistinguishable from the Church, Augustine thinks (see e.g., *ep. Io. tr.* 5.6.2, 5.8.3). Thus although Cary (2008a) 64–65, (2008b) 169, 172 is right that Augustine's conversion in book eight of *Confessions* is a decision to be baptized, it is not true that "believing in Christ" in the relevant sense is a stage in a person's life distinct from and prior to grace or love in the heart, or from/prior to a decision to be baptized (enter the believing community). "Belief in" Christ (*credere in,* cf. *Simpl.* 1.2.14) has a technical meaning, which necessarily includes the practical ("living faith") and as such is linked with love, that is: the motivation for virtuous actions as made possible through Christ, because one sees that Christ is divine and therefore has the power to make one virtuous (cf. *ep.* 157.6 and 8). This is distinguished from merely believing that the statements of the Christian creed are true, as abstract propositions. See e.g., the long explanation in Dolbeau's *s.* 19.3 and 19.5; cf. *s.* 279.9; *en. Ps.* 77.8; *ep.* 140.30.73; *civ.* 20.6; *spir. et litt.* 32.55; *ep. Io. tr.* 10.1.2ff. This notion of "belief in Christ" is found already in *Simpl.*, earlier than *Confessions*, *pace* Cary (2008b) 172 n. 67.

In relation to this point, the phrase in *Simpl.* 1.2.21, *tale visum quo voluntas moveatur* is in full, *tale visum quo voluntas moveatur ad fidem*. As can be seen from the context, "fides" here means adopting the *lifestyle* (conduct) integral to the Christian faith, and is therefore inseparable from love or motivation. "The faithful" (*fideles*) are said to be those "who do the will of God" (*facientes voluntatem Dei*) (1.2.15); the question Augustine is concerned with is how people come to "believe and live righteously" (*credere et recte vivere*) (1.2.15). The "will" that is being moved thus refers to both the impulse to say "yes" to the motivating impression, i.e., to consent or believe, since believing/consenting is an act (cf. *spir. et litt.* 31.54–32.55, *ep.* 186.11.38; cf. also Frede [2011] 159 on Stoic and Augustinian choice to believe); but this is the same as the will *to do* the actions proposed by the impression (be baptized and thereby embark on a life of authentic virtue), because consent to the impression is consent to its sentential content, which itself refers to the external action. (For this reason I would be disinclined to accept Frede's [2011] 158 conceptual contrast between choosing to act and choosing to assent to a hormetic impression, merely on the grounds that bringing the action to completion is outside of one's direct control; it seems to me that the former psychological distinction does not follow from the latter fact about the contingency of success). So the phrase does mean "the kind of impression by which will may be moved toward assent to belief in Christ" and "the kind of impression by which will may be moved toward acting virtuously." But it does not mean merely "the kind of impression in which the propositions of the creed (the Faith) are presented to someone."

is symmetrical with and medicinal for the set of habitual attitudes inherited as "original sin." Hence, Augustine's claim that we are either "in Adam" or "in Christ." This model also serves as his way of answering in advance, as it were, questions that will arise in later medieval accounts of grace, such as the question of how an infused virtue can be a *habit*. It is a habit of Christ's, in which the one being justified participates.

Paradoxically, when Augustine makes Christ the source of authentic moral goodness, it allows him to explain the intentionality of pagans who actually do aim at the *kalon* for the sake of the *kalon*, even though they do not know that the *kalon* is the Christian God. At first it looks as though he simply misses this distinction, and assumes that ignorance of trinitarian metaphysics or of the Christian dispensation must entail a lack of right intention. But he does in fact see the problem and addresses it by asserting that non-Christians,[63] when they act virtuously, do so because of the grace of Christ, whom they do not explicitly know:

> … without faith, then, in the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ … the righteous of old could not have been set free from their sins and be justified so that they might be called righteous. This holds true for those righteous persons mentioned by sacred scripture as well as for those who were not mentioned there … not only among the children of Israel, but also outside this people, for instance, Job. For their hearts were cleansed by the same faith in the mediator, and love was poured into them by the Holy Spirit, who *breathes where he wills*… At that time the grace of the one mediator between God and human beings, the man Jesus Christ, existed in the people of God, but it was hidden as rain upon fleece … But now … it lies revealed in all the nations.[64]

This will, of course, make Augustine's theory look rather circular: in order to establish that Christian grace is necessary for virtue, he points out that human society is generally corrupt and that non-Christians lack virtue; but when non-Christians do have virtue, he says it is owing to grace. Augustine's response to

[63] This looks to be restricted to the time before Christ (since he holds that baptism – by sacrament or martyrdom – is necessary for all those living *after* the time of Christ, cf. Rist [1994] 170 n. 46); however, an occasional statement of his would require him to expand this principle to the C.E. In *s.* 112A.8 he allows that there are present-day Jews who have not yet begun to think about the Church but who "cherish the law of God in their minds, and live according to it without blame … having a good conscience." This *nunc forte aliquis iudeus, qui in mente habuit legem dei* looks like the concept of "interior" or "spritual Jew" (*in abscondito, spiritu*) by which Augustine refers to moral righteousness, asserting that Christianity is an interior Judaism in *ep.* 196.2.9–10. If so, then he would have to extend the above principle to C.E. cases of authentic moral goodness in order to be consistent.

His claim that the grace of Christ could be communicated to people before the time of Christ is owing to his belief that Christ is only one person, but both eternal God and a human being; as such the efficacy of his redemptive act, which produced grace, is not limited by the temporal flow of time. See, e.g., *s.* 213.4, *s.* 214.7.

[64] *gr. et pecc. or.* 2.24.28–25.29, citing Jn. 3:8. Trans. Teske (1997). Cf. *nat. et gr.* 44.51.

this accusation of circularity presumably would be that his position is supported by empirical evidence in three areas. First, pagans who actually do act for the sake of the *kalon* are rare; the existence of such rarities does stand in need of some special explanation (namely grace). Second, the presence of grace in a society reduces wrongdoing,[65] but it does not eradicate it. This suggests both that there is an inextricable interior moral problem with human beings, and that grace does indeed have a medicinal effect upon it. Third, the same phenomenon is observable in the lives of individuals: the justified are significantly morally better than they were before conversion; yet still they commit small sins daily.[66]

7.4. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN "INSPIRED" MORAL CONVERSION: AUGUSTINE, BAÑEZ, AND MOLINA

But how exactly is a moral *conversion* effected? We have seen that Augustine thinks conversion requires a divinely given motivating impression. But an impression is not the same as consent, and an actual change of one's behavior requires consent. So, an impression does not a moral conversion or justification make.[67] Accounting for this subsequent act of consent will involve us in the thorny question of the relation between human freedom and grace.

If Augustine held that in cases of conversion to a life of virtue, the impression is given by grace, but consent is given by the perceiver, then the role of human responsibility would be easily established. However, it is not clear from the texts we have been considering that he held this. The end of the *Replies to Simplicianus* goes on to say that in the transition from bad works to good works, a person receives from God the effective use of the imperative: "He [i.e., God] grants, he bestows that there is for us a command of impulse, earnest effort, the [doing of] works by burning love."[68] This looks like a claim that the consent itself, the ratification of the imperative in the *suggestio*, issuing in occurrent impulse to do good actions, is a gift of God. Moreover, in the late work, *On the Predestination of the Saints*, he explicitly says that *before* writing the *Replies to Simplicianus*, he believed that we can consent of ourselves, but

[65] E.g., the lobbying of Christian bishops, including, prominently, Augustine, served to bring about a decrease in the use of corporal punishment in the Roman Empire (see Atkins and Dodaro [2001] 260 n. 7) and Christians, including Augustine, used church funds to purchase the freedom of slaves (see, e.g., Possidius, *Life of Augustine* 24); note that both of these are important corrections to the false dichotomy between the real and the provisional in Nussbaum (2001) 556. See also the data in Stark (1996) 95–128 on the improved condition of women within the Christian community in the Roman Empire – owing to the Christian ethic as compared to earlier Roman practices.

[66] So *Conf.* 10.29.40–10.41.66.

[67] So *Simpl.* 1.2.12.

[68] *Simpl.* 1.2.21. "… quia ut sit nutus uoluntatis, ut sit industria studii, ut sint opera caritate feruentia, ille tribuit, ille largitur." Trans. Burleigh adapted.

that while writing the *Replies*, he ceased to hold that position.[69] Furthermore, the "gift of consent" view has support in other statements of Augustine's, such as his "command what you will, and grant what you command," and "the grace of God cannot be in the power of a human being to frustrate" – statements made in the *Confessions* and *Replies*,[70] which Augustine reiterated in the later Pelagian debates.

7.4a. One Grace or Two Graces in Conversion?

So, in the *Confessions* and the *Replies to Simplicianus* – which were written one after the other – consent is given by God. But there are in fact two different senses in which consent is "produced" by God. Our understanding of the epistemology which undergirds Augustine's account now enables us to identify an important difference between the *Confessions* and the *Replies to Simplicianus*.

In the *Confessions*, consent is efficiently caused by God as a second grace, subsequent to the grace of impression which came in 8.11.27. We see this in the description of consent in 8.12.29. Augustine recounts that after receiving the impression of continence, he was helplessly unable to assent to the impression,[71] but almost immediately after, in paragraph twenty-nine, his consent is effected when he reads words from the Bible that *reiterate the sentential content of the impression* of continence.[72] This account seems to be saying symbolically that the act of consent was authored by God in and through Augustine's power of consent. For Augustine believed scripture was God's word, the human author being merely the secondary author. So the consent was given by the agency of God with Augustine exercising a secondary causality.[73] This would not mean that Augustine was not the subject of his consent,[74] but rather that because a human subject is an image of God, his decision, divinely given, to conform to the criteria of the virtues makes him more truly the kind of subject that he is meant to be.[75]

In contrast, at the end of the *Replies to Simplicianus* (1.2.21ff.), there are not clearly two graces. Augustine says that God gives the motivating impression and consent, but he gives no indication that there is a time lag or possibility of rejecting the impression in between these two. Instead, the text reads as if Augustine is implying that the graced impression is *self-evidently*

[69] *praed. sanct.* 3.7.
[70] *conf.* 10.29.40; *Simpl.* 1.2.13.
[71] *conf.* 8.12.28.
[72] On this consent, cf. Ch. 2.6.
[73] On the double agency of scripture as God's word spoken by Augustine (though not specifically in this context), see Boulding (1997) 25. For faith as both ours and given by God, see Burnaby (1938) 223; for rational assent in *delectatio*, see O'Daly (1989) 91–93.
[74] The question is posed by Katayanagi (1990) 654. See further Section 5.
[75] So, a faithful versus a tarnished image; cf. *Io.ev. tr.* 40.9, *ep. Io. tr.* 9.3.2.

true to the perceiver[76] – Augustine probably had in mind the Stoic cataleptic impression[77] – and that therefore, cognizing the impression makes recognizing its truth value, or assenting, unavoidable. As soon as one understands the sentential content of the perception, one assents. So consent is not done by God in the person's power of free choice, as in the *Confessions* model; but still the impression *makes* one assent.

So, the single grace of a self-evident impression explains cases like that of Paul, who was "suddenly converted by a very powerful grace."[78] The account of two graces with the possibility of hesitation intervening, explains cases like that of Augustine in the *Confessions*. Augustine apparently thought that God gives grace in one way to some people, and in another way to others, for his own providential purposes.

7.4b. Grace and Freedom in a Related Early Modern Discussion

Now this is particularly interesting because it allows us to assess which side of a famous but inconclusive early modern debate between, primarily, Domingo Bañez and Luis de Molina, had the more accurate development of Augustine's position – an unresolved question in the history of philosophical theology.[79] Though some of the parties to this debate about the relation between justifying grace and human free choice wrote commentaries on Aquinas and referred to themselves as Thomists, the debate dealt with questions not explicitly addressed by Aquinas, and in any case, the prevailing assumption on both sides was that Aquinas and Augustine substantially agreed on the theory of grace. For these reasons, references to Augustine are not uncommon in the texts of the controversy.[80]

This so-called "De Auxiliis" controversy (c. 1582–1607) ranged over a number of topics, including the concurrence, providence, and knowledge of God. Our purpose here is not to compare Augustine to the early moderns on all of these issues, but to focus on the particular question of how grace is received by the human mind.

[76] He cites the example of Paul (1.2.22), also described in *praed. sanct.* 2.4.

[77] A cataleptic impression or an impression able to grasp reality (*phantasia katalēptikē*) is an impression that corresponds to reality and that represents its object with a clarity that does not accompany false impressions. See Cicero *ac.* 1.40–41, 2.19, 2.37–38, 2.57, 2.77–78. Cf. the discussion in LS I, 250–252.

[78] *Simpl.* 1.2.22, also described in *praed. sanct.* 2.4.

[79] The debate became the subject of a papal commission because the parties were members of religious orders; because it seemed intractably inconclusive, it was halted by order of Paul V in 1607.

[80] The references to Augustine are more thick in the Dominican texts than in Molina. On the quantities of references to Augustine in Bañez and Herrera, see notes in Section 4d. In Molina, see e.g., *Concordia* IV 50.15, 52.26 and 29 (citing *civ.* 5.9 and 5.10 and *lib. arb*. 3.4 on God's foreknowledge not being the (efficient) cause of sin).

Augustine's use of a Stoic epistemological framework (impression-consent) as the foundation for his account of conversion had set the terms for what became the accepted doctrine of grace in the west.[81] His term "prevenient" grace, for instance, which became standard, was a reference to the fact that the *impression* must be given by God in order to initiate conversion. But by the time of the "De Auxiliis" controversy, the original epistemological context of this phrase was not necessarily familiar to the late scholastic theologians.

Both parties to the debate were committed to the claims that conversion is effected by grace, which must be prevenient, that is, coming before any movement toward God from the side of the human being. The prevenient grace was said to have a certain sufficiency in moving one toward consent. It was described by both sides in recognizably Augustinian terms, as "a divine inspiration," or "a certain rapid illumination and exciting by God who is calling and inviting the soul to good … prior to the time at which he himself thought about adhering to God," received merely passively (*mere passive*) by the human being before the exercise of human free choice in the matter.[82] On the other hand, both parties were also committed to the claim that human consent, and therefore human responsibility, is a necessary ingredient in justification. Their attempts to reconcile these statements gave rise to two divergent psychological accounts.

Domingo Bañez, the first chair in theology at Salamanca and the representative for the Dominican party, which included such others as Herrera,[83] explained the axis of the disagreement thus:

> Around this turns the entire difficulty and controversy between the Preacher Fathers [Dominicans] and the Fathers of the Society [the Jesuits] … Whether the same prevenient grace, without another one added to it, suffices for the consent of free choice and the conversion to God; or whether another aid is added, by which the mind of man actually consents to God and is converted to him.[84]

The Jesuits, led by Molina but including others such as Bellarmine, held that the prevenient grace is the only one. They thought that God offers a calling

[81] The Second Council of Orange in 529, Canon 7, and the Council of Trent's (1545–1563) Decree on Justification Session 6 Ch. 5 reiterated most of the main elements in Augustine's epistemology of grace (calling/inspiration, sweetness (though this is left out of Trent), consent, and the possibility of rejecting grace), but without clearly ascribing a temporal sequence to the elements, or going into any detail about how they are related.

[82] See Bañez, *tr. vera legit. conc.* II.2.7: *repentina quaedam illuminatio et excitatio Dei vocantis et invitantis animam ad bonum; divinae inspirationes; auxilium omnino praeveniens usum nostrae libertatis*. Translations of Bañez are my own. Cf. Molina on illumination, stirring, moving, calling: *concordia* IV 52.18, 53.1.8, 53.3.8, 53.4.14.

[83] On Herrera, see notes in Ch. 7.4d.

[84] *tr. vera legit. conc.* II.2.7: "Circa hoc versatur tota difficultas et controversia inter patres Praedicatores et patres Societatis … An illud idem auxilium praeveniens non alio adjuncto, sufficiat ad consensum liberi arbitrii et conversionem in Deum; an vero aliud auxilium accedat quo mens hominis actualiter consentiat Deo et convertatur in illum."

which is custom-made to attract the recipient.[85] God knows by "middle knowledge" how a person would react to every possible manner of calling, and he offers to some people a call perfectly suited to their interior dispositions and conditions. This "congruous" grace is "sufficient" for one's consent. God, however, does not cause the consent by an intrinsically efficacious gift of consent. Consent is left up to the human being.[86] The way that God acts on the soul in justifying grace is therefore by "moral causality," that is, moral suasion or persuasiveness.[87] In fact, Molina allows that people who receive the kind of "illumination" that Paul received *actually do* dissent, though rarely (*raro*).[88] We might say that in this model, grace has its effectiveness analogously to the way that, for Locke, a substance "has" a secondary quality. An efficacious grace is a sufficient grace to which the recipient has reacted with consent.

The Dominicans took the position that an additional grace was needed after the prevenient grace, and that this second grace was intrinsically efficacious. As Bañez explains:

> It is not said [by us Dominicans] that the [first] grace is sufficient because it is strong enough to be effective without the [subsequent] motion of the First Cause, but it is called sufficient for constituting man as it were in first actuality, by means of which he realizes that the good of the supernatural end is possible [for him to attain] by the grace of God, and [also] realizes the means to this end … but if he [subsequently] consents, he is converted with God as the author and by a special grace operating efficiently, consenting through his own free choice.[89]

This second grace, Bañez elaborates in another text, constitutes a person in second actuality.[90] (This distinction has its roots in Aristotle's example in *On*

[85] So, e.g., Molina *concordia* IV 50.15, 52.18, 53.2.30; Bellarmine, *contr. lib. arb.* 6.14, "that is said to be 'efficacious' grace, by which God so calls man, as he sees to be congruent to him, so that he will not reject the calling (gratia efficax dicitur illa, qua Deus ita vocat hominem, ut videt congruere illi, ut vocationem non respuat)." Translations of Bellarmine are my own.

[86] So Molina *concordia* IV 52.1.7–8, 53.2.30, 53.4.12, 53.4.14. Sometimes it can sound like Molina thinks that God cooperates with this act of consent by an additional cooperative actual grace (47.14, 53.3.8, 52.18), but what he means is that God cooperates with the human will by setting up circumstances which he knows will make a person accept the prevenient grace (e.g., 52.18: the way that God is a proximate cause of the conversion is by the determination of his own will, a determination by which he decided to place human beings in that order of things in which he placed them). Hence Bañez's stipulation that God "intimately moves the will to consent" is a reaction against this description of an external "set-up" by God.

[87] See e.g., Bellarmine, *contr. lib. arb.* 6.14.

[88] *concordia* IV 53.4.14.

[89] Bañez *tr. vera legit. conc.* II.4.1: "Non enim dicitur auxilium sufficiens quia valeat efficere sine motione primae causae, sed dicitur sufficiens ad constituendum hominem quasi in actu primo, quo mediante, proponitur sibi ut bonum possibile ex auxilio gratiae Dei finis supernaturalis et media ad illum finem.… Si autem consenserit, Deo auctore et speciali auxilio efficaciter operante convertitur, consentiens per liberum suum arbitrium."

[90] *comm.* IaIIae 109.8, para. 6: "… hoc vero constituit in actu secundo efficaciter; et dicitur auxilium efficax, cui nullus duro corde resistit."

the Soul 2 (412a22–23) and *Nicomachean Ethics* 7.3 (1147a10–14), where the possession of knowledge is first actuality, the use of it second actuality.) The Dominicans also dubbed the second grace "physical premotion," a rather obscure piece of terminology with a simple meaning: by "physical" they meant that efficient causality was being exercised directly on the soul by God (as opposed to the moral suasion of the Molinists), and by "premotion" they referred not to temporal priority, but indicated its origin in God, who is metaphysically prior, and who grounds the act as its cause.[91]

For Bañez, the ability to do otherwise than consent to the first grace is preserved by the possibility of "rebelling" in the brief time lag between the two graces. He says, for instance, that after (*postquam*) the prevenient calling, "We exercise our freedom. And this can happen in two ways. In one way, while that excitement that was completely prevenient still remains with him, he knowingly resists God who is calling and exciting him."[92] This person does not receive the second, efficacious grace of consent: "then the help of the grace of God is converted into anger, on account of the malice of the recipient."[93] Whoever does not rebel, however, exercises freedom by consent.[94] What this means is that God rewards the soul with the second grace, the grace of consent. As we have already seen, the consent is given by God through direct efficient causality on the soul's power of choice,[95] and therefore the consenting person has freedom of alternate possibilities only in what Bañez calls the "divided" sense – that is, in the abstract, considered apart from the actual circumstances of God's action on the soul.[96]

[91] See e.g., Banez, *comm*. IaIIae 109.1, paragraph 2 (summarizing Cajetan). Note that the term *praemotio physica* is used for both natural aids (the normal operation of providence) and supernatural aids (grace ordered to a supernatural end). Thus, grace is qualified as a *praemotio physica supernaturalis*.

[92] *tr. vera legit. conc.* II.2.7: "nostrum libertatem exercemus. Et hoc dupliciter potest contingere. Uno modo ita ut perseverante illa excitatione quae fuit omnino praeveniens, jam homo advertens et sciens prudens resistat Deo vocanti et excitanti." Cf. *tr. vera legit. conc.* II.2.7: "And about these same [inspirations, i.e., prevenient graces] it is also said in Proverbs 1:24: 'I have called and you have refused,' that is, after you became aware of my calling, you also refused."

[93] Ibid.: "Et tunc gratia Dei convertitur in iram, ex malitia recipientis."

[94] Ibid.: "The other way in which man is accustomed to exercise his freedom is by consenting to God calling and exciting him." ("Altero modo solet homo exercere suam libertatem consentiendo Deo vocanti et excitanti.")

[95] Hence the full summary of the position (a portion of which was quoted earlier) is: "… And this [the prevenient grace] is the beneficence of God, which excites man and incites him by a certain illumination of his intellect and by a certain sufficient inspiration of his will … but if he rejects it, it will be imputed to him as a guilt, which he can do from his own power, and without God being its author; but if he consents, he is converted with God as author and by a special grace operating efficiently. And thus God distinguishes him, by means of this efficacious grace, from another who is not converted, to whom he did not give efficacious grace" (*tr. vera legit. conc.* II.4.1.).

[96] Freedom of alternate possibilties in the "composite sense" is lost with the "composition" of God's action and the agent. On composite and divided, see e.g., Bañez, *ap. c. conc. Mol.* 1.12.2,

In contrast, as Bañez laments, the Molinists introduced a novel clause into the traditional definition:[97] "free choice is that which, *with all the requisite things in place for the doing of an action*, can do and not-do, or do one thing in such a way that it could also do the opposite."[98] A person always has freedom of alternate possibilities in the composite circumstances. This is why a person can always dissent from congruous grace even while receiving it.[99] The Molinist account is therefore rooted in the view that human free choice makes it impossible for grace to be efficacious per se. It is not merely that God *does not* efficiently cause consent, but in fact he *could not*, given the natural power of free choice.

7.4c. Comparing These Early Modern Accounts to Augustine

Given that we saw both a one-grace and a two-grace model in Augustine's *Replies to Simplicianus* and *Confessions*, how are we to assess these early modern accounts, which similarly speak of one and two graces? First of all, it is now clear that part of the reason why the early modern debate was inconclusive, was that each side insisted on only one account of justifying grace, whereas Augustine himself had two accounts. But there is more to say than that.

Neither Bañez's nor Molina's account is the same as Augustine's in different words; each has captured some of the elements in Augustine's account – especially Bañez – though they both differ from it. Bañez's use of the first actuality-second actuality distinction in a two-grace model comes close to the details of Augustine's foundational epistemology. The Augustinian motivating impression provides the perceiver with information about an action, hence,

Molina *concordia* IV 52.30. The "composite" sense means that, once certain circumstances are already established, other possibilities are ruled out. The example that was used in the De Auxiliis debates is that of sitting in a chair: for one who is sitting, it is necessary that he be not standing. However, it is not absolutely necessary (necessary in the divided sense, i.e., in the absence of this circumstance) that he be not standing: he could have decided to stand instead, in which case it would then be necessary in the composite sense that he was not sitting, etc. In this context of grace, the Dominicans said that once "all things requisite" had been placed by God (i.e., once God acts on the soul physically to make it consent), refusing consent was ruled out, although in other circumstances (e.g., in the case of someone who rejected God calling and exciting him) the circumstances of God's effective action would not have been in place, and so, it was not absolutely necessary that a person consent even when it was compositely necessary.

[97] *ap. c. conc. Mol.* 1.12.1: "Molina and his camp use a definition of free choice which was not found in Aristotle, nor in Saint Thomas, nor in the Master of the Sentences [i.e., Peter Lombard], but in Almainus and in certain other names of that sort [i.e., Scotists]."

[98] *ap. c. conc. Mol.* 1.12.1: "Liberum arbitrium est, quod *positis omnibus requisitis ad agendum*, potest agere et non agere, aut ita agere unum ut contrarium etiam agere possit." Emphasis added. Cf. Molina on freedom as freedom of indifference: e.g., *concordia* IV 47.7, 50.15, 51.18, 52.20, 53.2.30.

[99] *concordia* IV 53.2.30–31; 53.4.14.

it can rightly be compared to Aristotle's "possession" of information (first actuality); and assent can be compared to a kind of "use" of those propositions (second actuality). Another point of intersection is Bañez's statement that prevenient grace provides information about the means to attain one's proper end. As we have seen,[100] Augustine's motivating impression of continence includes a reference to the means by which he can live this virtue. And because Augustine holds that virtue is constitutive of happiness, what is being perceived is the means to happiness, one's proper end.

Moreover, Bañez's understanding of why the second grace does not violate free choice is very similar to what we find in Augustine. According to Bañez's conception, free choice is an instrumental power; its purpose is to choose the means by which the end desired may be achieved.[101] For one can remain indifferent to various options (only) insofar as they are perceived to be means lacking a necessary connection to the end desired;[102] once a necessary connection between means and end is discerned, indifference is lost, though one is "free" because of pursuing what one wants. A similar notion, though without the heavy Aristotelian emphasis on means-ends relations, is attested in Augustine's corpus, as for instance in *On Free Choice*, where he stresses that *liberum arbitrium* is an "intermediate good" because it (like the power of thought) may be used well or badly, although its purpose is to be used for the sake of attaining the highest good.[103] Given this understanding of free choice, it is possible to maintain that an efficacious grace of consent is a free act of the human being, because in it God is moving the creature in accord with its nature, toward its happiness.[104] So, the grace of consent is merciful help, rather than the imposition of something radically unwanted, and does no damage or disrespect to the creature. As Augustine had put it in the *Replies to Simplicianus*, "free choice is most important; it exists, indeed, but of what value is it in those who are sold under sin?"[105] Molina's claim that free choice is always able to do otherwise, even when being acted upon by God, is foreign to the principles of classical psychology and normative eudaimonism that are foundational in Augustine.

On the other hand, there are two points of intersection with Augustine's view that we find only in the Molinist line. One, of course, is that justification can be effected by a single grace; as we have seen, Augustine does think that in the case of people like Paul, there is only one (cataleptic) grace. Nevertheless, this similarity is only skin-deep owing to Molina's insistence on autonomy. As

[100] Ch. 2.7c.

[101] *tr. vera legit. conc.* I.1.6.

[102] *tr. vera legit. conc.* I.1.6.

[103] *lib. arb.* 2.18.49–2.19.50.

[104] See Bañez, *comm.* IaIIae 109.1, paragraph 2. Cf. Augustine, *lib. arb.* 3.3.7ff., *s.* 26.3; *ep.* 157.1.7, 2.10; *ep.* 194.2.3; *gr. et lib. arb.* 15.31; *corrept.* 1.2, 8.17–18, 11.32, 13.42.

[105] *Simpl.* 1.2.21: "Liberum voluntatis arbitrium plurimum valet, immo vero est quidem, sed in venundatis sub peccato quid valet?"

we have seen, the grace is not self-evidently true to the perceiver in Molina's world, because people actually do dissent from it.

As an interpretation of Augustine, the Molinist account looks textually defensible by means of a portion of the *Replies to Simplicianus* (1.2.12–13), though again this is only skin-deep. Here Augustine considers the possibility that the calling (impression) is efficacious of good will (*si vocatio ista est effectrix bonae voluntatis*) because it is adapted to the needs of the individual, a case of God calling someone congruently (*congruenter*). The human part would be to "follow" the calling (presumably, to consent). However, this passage is not Augustine's final position on the matter within this work. The *Replies* are a written record of Augustine unravelling the problem of conversion, and proposing various models.[106] He is figuring out what he thinks as he writes, and later in the same work it becomes clear that he thinks we do *not* have autonomy in following or not following the congruous call. With a tone of finality, Augustine makes the stronger claim noticed above, that in a conversion our actual will to perform actions is "granted" by God (1.2.21). Thus, though we "follow," we cannot dissent, any more than we could to any other self-evident proposition.

The second main intersection of Molina with Augustine is Molina's notion that God tailors grace to the individual. If this be taken as a general principle, and applied in a way that Molina himself does not apply it – namely, to mean that God will show a person the *kalon* quality of whichever virtue she particularly dislikes – then this allows us to retain an important piece of the Augustinian account that we see in the *Confessions*. In contrast, Bañez gives the impression that the grace of conversion in an adult is the same for everyone who receives it – being the introduction of a supernatural end. With this absence of particularity, something important drops out of the picture.

Finally, it should be noted that *neither* Bañez nor Molina retains Augustine's dominant *emphasis* on grace as "medicinal" for moral conversion to natural virtues like temperance. There is implicit in Bañez's approach – owing to his greater use of the Aristotelian-Thomistic teleology – the idea that grace corrects moral vices and bestows the cardinal virtues. But it is not the main focus of his attention. For Molina, too, the purpose of grace is the introduction of a supernatural end, and the ancient background of a need for rehabituation does not inform his account even implicitly; he does not treat the case of virtuous action as different from other kinds of nonevil free acts, for instance, but focuses on issues of necessity in God's knowledge of free acts generally (being engaged with Ockhamist and Scotist discussions of these types of questions).[107]

[106] So Wetzel (1992) 190–192 speaks of a "fruitful confusion" in the work.

[107] See *concordia* IV 51.3. In *concordia* IV 50.11, 50.13 he says he sees that the problem of motivation to virtuous action differs from that of other kinds of free acts because of original sin in the soul, but does not take it up, arguing instead that Bañez's account implies that the original fall could not be known by God.

7.4d. The Ability To Decide Otherwise in Augustine's Two-Grace Account: Entertaining an Impression, Repenting, Invoking God

As we have seen, Augustine's cataleptic grace model only allows for freedom in the *normative* sense during the receipt of grace, that is, liberty to attain true happiness, whereas the two-grace model allows a window in which to exercise freedom of *alternate possibilities*, in between impression and assent.

An interesting question therefore remains, which is: How does Augustine think that this freedom of alternate possibilities is exercised in the two-grace account? Our method of looking to the sermons for details of epistemology and moral psychology pays off yet again, in answering this intriguing question. For here we uncover material that moves us beyond Bañez's model, in which the only two possible responses to the prevenient impression were (1) rejection of the impression, and (2) consent, given by God, to the impression. We can also explain the significance of *Confessions* 8.12.28, which we have not yet addressed.

The first thing to notice is that, unlike the subject of grace in Bañez's model, Augustine in *Confessions* eight performs acts in between his receipt of the impression and the divinely efficiently caused consent. After God makes continence seem attractive by touching Augustine's mind with a *suggestio*, Augustine does not reject or refuse to consider the impression, but says that he was "moving toward a decision," telling himself inwardly, "let it be now, let it be now," although he could not bring himself to actually consent.[108] He compares his own present moral character to the attractiveness set forth in the impression of continence, and he sees his ugliness: "At that moment, the more ardent my affection for those [continent] young men of whom I was hearing … the more was the detestation and hatred I felt for myself in comparison with them."[109] Then, he repents of his past life, weeps, and calls on God to help him come to a decision: "'How long, O Lord? How long, Lord, will you be angry to the uttermost? Do not be mindful of our old iniquities.' For I felt my past to have a grip on me."[110]

What exactly are these acts, and is this narrative in the *Confessions* representative of a general account of how freedom can be used positively in the two-grace model? Let us first ask a preparatory philosophical question: what is it that *could* happen in between an impression and assent, given Augustine's epistemological theory?

[108] *conf.* 8.11.25. In Augustine's narrative, this order is interrupted for an excursus against the Manichees, and is rearranged to highlight the impression of continence. But extracting the excursus and putting aside for the moment the competing impression of incontinence, we have this psychological sequence. When put into correct epistemological order, the textual order would be: 8.6.14–15, 8.11.27, 8.11.25, 8.7.16–17, 8.8.19/8.12.28, 8.12.29.

[109] *conf.* 8.16–19.

[110] *conf.* 8.12.28. Cf. *en. Ps.* 84.7–8.

It seems that it should be an "entertaining" of the *suggestio*. Augustine uses this notion of entertaining, when he speaks of temptations; it is a familiar notion to us, and a common experience. An idea occurs to us to do something, which seems attractive, yet we are not convinced it is right or in our true best interest. Nevertheless we dwell on the idea for a moment, and wish it *were* in our best interest to do it, because doing it appeals to us. Augustine describes this kind of mental act in the *On the Trinity* and the sermons: it is an act in which the mind "holds and fondly turns over" (*tenens et volvens libenter*) the content of an impression, without yet having consented to it.[111] Notice that because entertaining is an act, it presupposes the *consent to entertain*, though not consent to the sentential content of the temptation itself. (Entertaining is affirming that it is fitting "to consider doing" the act proposed, rather than affirming that it is fitting "to do" the act.) It follows that entertaining a temptation can be morally evaluated: it is itself wrong, although less seriously wrong than consenting to do the act.[112]

Does Augustine think it is possible to similarly "entertain" a *suggestio* that comes from God? If he does, then his two-grace model will perhaps be comparable to other accounts on offer about the relation between grace and free choice, such as Stump's "quiescence of the will" or "failing to refuse grace,"[113] and Maritain's "not nihilating a weak grace";[114] and it will be interesting to tease out the differences and similarities as we proceed.

Here we need to scout around in Augustine's sermons for material that will help us answer this question. In fact we do find that in the context of justifying grace, he says that it is possible to "avidly taste" (*gustare aviditate*) the sweetness, as opposed to being "unwilling" (*noli*) to savor it.[115] Other references also look like they refer to entertaining a *suggestio* from God: "Eagerly listening" (*studio audire*) to and "holding onto" (*tenere*) God's interior prompting (*excitatio*) to do some action.[116] Here we have something

[111] *trin.* 12.12.18. Cf. *s.* 57.11 and *s.* 77A.3.

[112] Asserted by Augustine in *trin.* 12.12.18. Cf. *s.* 57.11, *s.* 77A.3 (in this sermon, he uses the words "conceiving", "allowing ourselves to be lured", "consenting", "thinking it over" and "entering into temptation" for the act of *entertaining*, i.e., consenting to consider or dwell on it, and "bringing forth" for the act of consent, or resolution, to actually do the action).

[113] Stump (2001), 139–142 (suggesting that Augustine's account would be more palatable had he adopted Aquinas' notion of quiescence as described in *ST* IaIIae 9.1 and 10.2).

[114] Maritain (1942), 37.

[115] *en. Ps.* 106.2: "Confess this, that he is sweet: if you have tasted, acknowledge. But one who refused (*noluit*) to taste, cannot confess; for how will he be able to say that that with which he has not familiarized himself, is sweet? But if you have tasted how sweet the Lord is, *Confess to the Lord that he is sweet.* If you have tasted with eagerness, break forth in confession" (citing Psalm 106:1). The context of Augustine's remarks about avidly tasting the sweetness is ability to act well; he also mentions "heretics," and so this looks to be toward the beginning of the anti-Pelagian debate. See, e.g., *en. Ps.* 106.5, .10, and .15.

[116] Cf. *s.* 179.7–8, where God teaches interiorly and stirs one up to show approval of the preacher's commendations of justice; in response, you can either listen avidly, holding on to the

that looks like it corresponds to Augustine's "moving toward a decision" in *Confessions* book eight.

Unlike the case of entertaining a temptation, however, Augustine links willingness to taste or listen to God's *suggestio* with another concept, namely repentance. The idea seems to be that lingering on the suggestion allows space for a comparison of the proposed behavior to one's own present kinds of behavior. But given that one is not yet virtuous, the beauty of the proposed behavior contrasts with the ugliness of one's present failures, causing compunction. (This comparison, we have noticed, is an explicit part of the *Confessions* narrative.) So, God's interior suggestion has as a natural consequence "confession":

> *'As I listen,'* he [the psalmist] says, '*you will give me delight and gladness.'* [The psalmist is saying,] 'I will find my joy in listening to you, not in speaking against you.' You have sinned; why try to defend yourself? You want to do the talking; but let it be, listen, yield to the divine enunciations (*cede divinis vocibus*) … God is prepared to grant you forgiveness … he is prepared to give, so do not put up a barrier of defense, but open your whole self by confession (*aperi sinum confessionis*) … when we listen interiorly to him making some suggestion and teaching us (*suggerentem et docentem intus audimus*) … we are subject to our teacher.[117]

We are to yield by pausing and listening to the divine enunciations, by which God suggests something to us. In other words, when God inspires a motivating impression with its imperatival sayable content, we should entertain it. The use of the word "yield" here is interesting, for in the *City of God* and sermons he alludes to yielding "in order to" or literally "toward" consent to sin (*cedere ad consentiendum*), as if to indicate that consenting can be the result of yielding. Yielding means weakening one's resistance to the temptation, and it makes consent more likely.[118] Thus, yielding bears comparison to the "holding and fondly turning over" a temptation, described in the *On the Trinity*. It would appear here that motivating impressions given by grace, are also the kind of thing to which one could "yield" as preparatory to consent, and that such yielding to or pausing to consider ("listen to") the content of the graced impression provokes repentance.

prompting, or can fail to hear, be inattentive. The general context is God as the source of righteousness, justice (cf. paragraph 5). The case under discussion here is not that of justifying grace but is analogous to it.

[117] *en. Ps.* 50.13 (citing Psalm 50:10).

[118] The context in these passages (*civ.* 1.25, 19.4, *en. Ps.* 34.1.14; *s.* 18D(= 306E).10, *en. Ps.* 118.26.2, *en. Ps.* 118.27.7, *s.* 18D(= 306E).1, *s.* 286.7) is that there is some powerful influence, such as inital or anticipated pleasure or pain. These kinds of conditions allow for a weakening of mental resistance not because the sentential content as such seems true, but because of the pain or pleasure. (In the case of yielding to God, the powerful influence seems to be awareness of God's power or authority.)

Inwood (1985), 75–77 suggests that the Stoics may have used the term "yield" (*eixis*) to designate the psychological act in animals that is analogous to human assent: following appearances, without having consented to them.

This again corresponds to the *Confessions* narrative, when, after receiving the *suggestio* of continence, and entertaining it, Augustine compares his own behavior to the impression of continence, feels revulsion for it, and cries over it, unhappy that it is displeasing to God.

But repentance is not a stand-alone item in Augustine's sermons; he consistently links it with "invoking" God, which is calling on God in order to be filled by God.[119] So, in response to grace "raining down,"[120] so that one may "bring forth" good actions by love, one should "grow weak" (*infirmari*; compare "yield"), and the natural progression is then crying out for assistance, or calling on the Lord's name:

The Lord will grant sweetness, and our earth shall produce its fruit… Where would this fruit come from, unless the Lord gave sweetness? … You can see how our earth, that is to say our hearts, our souls, how our earth does not give its fruit, unless God sends rain on it. *The earth was moved*; it was moved to bring forth, to give birth.… *the earth was moved, for indeed the heavens dripped from the face of God*. It was moved by God, because it would not have been moved except by a voluntary[121] rain.… So then, *setting apart, O God, a voluntary rain for your inheritance, and it grew weak.* One who brings forth also grows weak. The earth, you see, was moved in order to bring forth; and it would not bring forth, unless it first grew weak (*nec pareret, nisi praecederet infirmitas*). *You* [God]*, however, have perfected it*. What does "grew weak" mean? Did not rely on itself. What does "grew weak" mean? Hoped for everything from you … Let it cry out, weak as it is, to the Lord, *Convert us, God of our healings*… it understood it could not be perfected by itself.[122]

Gracious is the Lord, and righteous, and merciful.… Gracious in the first place, because he has inclined his ear to me; and I knew not that the ear of God had approached my lips, until I was aroused (*excitarer*) … that I might call upon the Lord's name: for who has called upon him, save him whom he first called? Hence therefore he is in the first place gracious.[123]

[119] See *en. Ps.* 74.2–4. Cf. *en. Ps.* 137.11; *s.* 153.10; *s.* 254.2 and .4.

[120] Cf. *en. Ps.* 67.12: "Grace itself is understood to be the voluntary rain." ("Voluntary" Augustine takes to mean "freely given by God.")

[121] Augustine glosses this term to mean gratuitous, i.e., grace is not merited.

[122] *s.* Dolbeau 19(= 130A).8–9, citing Psalm 84:13, Psalm 67:10, Psalm 67:9, Psalm 84:4: "*Dominus dabit suavitatem, et terra nostra dabit fructum suum*.… Unde iste fructus, nisi Dominus det suavitatem? … Videtis quia terra nostra, id est cor nostrum, anima nostra, terra nostra non dat fructum suum, nisi Deus pluat. *Terra mota est*. Mota est ad parturiendum et pariendum … *terra mota est, etenim caeli destillauerunt a facie Dei*. A deo mota est, nam non moueretur, nisi pluuiam uoluntariam … *Pluviam* ergo *voluntariam segregans Deus hereditati suae, et infirmata est*. Infirmatur et quae parturit. *Terra* enim *mota est* ad parturiendum, nec pareret, nisi praecederet infirmitas. *Tu vero perficisti eam.* Quid est *infirmata est*? Non de se praesumpsit. Quid est *infirmata est*? De te totum sperauit.… clamet ad Dominum infirma: *Conuerte nos, deus sanitatum nostrarum*.… Intellexit se a se non posse perfici." Cf. *en. Ps.* 67.13, .31.

[123] *en. Ps.* 114.5. On Augustine's words in my second lacuna (= "by those beautiful feet," a reference to preaching), see below.

Here God first "excites" a person, which is presumably a reference to motivation, and the recipient then invokes God. The same idea is found when Augustine speaks of entertaining or "avidly tasting the sweetness"; that, he says, results in being "humbled" and crying out to the Lord, acknowledging one's inability to act well without additional divine aid.[124] And again, this corresponds to the *Confessions* when, after the impression of continence but before consent, Augustine's repentance is accompanied by a crying out for mercy and help: "How long O Lord? Do not be angry …"

I earlier used the term "receptivity" to describe entertaining and the confession of sin and invocation which follow from it, and this indicates the main difference between what Augustine describes, and the more recent accounts in Stump and Maritain. Stump's quiescence of the will is passivity and a suspension of judgment; Maritain's is similarly the mere absence of an act of rebellion. But Augustine does not think that doing nothing is possible: one must either allow the impression to remain, which is a kind of giving countenance to it (entertaining), or one must eject it from one's mental field. And given that the impression is a motivating rather than a merely epistemic kind of impression, it will be difficult to explain how quiescence of desire can be an option. It is nevertheless true, of course, that in relation to consent, entertaining is a state of suspense;[125] and in this it is like the model Stump proposes.

It is ironic that Bañez develops no account of these receptive acts, given that he at one point quotes a passage from a text by the pseudo-Augustinian *On Predestination and Grace*,[126] which does give "lamenting" (*ingemuere*) for sin as the contrary of rebellion against the first grace of impression.[127] "Lament" can easily be identified as a reference to repentance; and it is set in opposition to "fighting against" God, which is precisely how Augustine sets up the dichotomy in the sermons. The significance seems lost on Bañez, however, and this is understandable. The pseudo-Augustinian text makes no use of the concept after briefly mentioning it, and it is not to be expected that Bañez would have recognized it as representative of a general account unless he had made a thorough survey of Augustine's writings, especially the commentaries on the

[124] Taking *en. Ps.* 106.2, .5, .10, and .15 together, e.g.: "He hears, 'Live well,' … He tries; he cannot. He feels himself bound; he cries to the Lord.… When you have been pressed by your own evil, your heart will be brought low (*humiliabitur*) in labor, so that now with a humbled heart you may learn to cry out.… '*Their heart*' therefore, '*was brought low in labor, they became weak*.…"

[125] So *conf.* 8.11.25 (*suspendebat*).

[126] Bañez believes the text to be authored by Augustine. This author was evidently relying on Augustine's *div. qu.* #68, or his *exp. prop. Rm.* On these texts of Augustine's, see Section 5.

[127] *Praed. et Gratia* 15.17: "Why else did [God] make their [Nebuchadnezzar's and Pharao's] ends different, except because one [person, namely Nebuchadnezzar], feeling the hand of God, in remembering his own iniquity, lamented (*ingemuit*), but the other [person, namely Pharao], fought against (*pugnavit contra*) the most merciful truth of God?" Cited in *Tractatus* II.3.5 and II.4.5; also printed in PL 45 col. 1665ff.

psalms, and the other sermons, in conjunction with the *Confessions* and *On the Trinity*.[128] He evidently did not have the opportunity to do this. Reading Bañez, one has the sense that he is working off of a (sizable) list of proof texts. He does not cite the portion of the *Confessions,* or sermons, which contain the impression-yielding model.[129]

Philosophically, there is something in Augustine's model of preconsensual receptivity that should be attractive to those who want some freedom of alternate possibilities (in the composite circumstances) to be operative in conversion. An intrinsically efficacious grace of consent (a Bañez-style consent) is no longer an unprovoked compelling grace, given that invocation has occurred after the impression. Invocation is the acknowledgment that one needs more aid from God. So, God's granting consent does not constitute God's doing something that the person has not wanted (antecedently) to have done to him. For even if, in invocation, one does not foresee *how* one is to be brought to moral health – does not explicitly petition that consent be given as a grace – in these acts of self-abandonment one gives God a generalized permission to "save" one from one's present condition.

7.4e. The Dialogue Model of Conversion and Its Theodical Interest

Famously, the next event in the *Confessions* is that Augustine hears a voice[130] instructing him to read scripture, and his reading of it effects consent to the impression of continence. This is the grace of consent. So, it looks as though *Confessions* 8.11.27–8.12.29 represents a "dialogue" model of conversion. The giving and receiving of grace is apparently a conversation: God initiates contact, and subsequently grants consent or does not, depending upon the recipient's reaction to the impression. This would make sense given Augustine's ethical analysis of "entertaining," for recall that Augustine thinks that entertaining is an act for which one is responsible; a "reward" in the form of an additional grace (consent) would therefore be fitting.

[128] Strangely, the Dominican Herrera, who is in Bañez's camp, actually does mention two sermons which contain the dialogue model of grace (*en. Ps.* 50, *en. Ps.* 67), but he apparently does not know or notice the significance of the particular paragraphs that contain this model. See, e.g., Petrus de Herrera's *comm.* IaIIae, the introduction to Q. 109, 111.2 and 111.4.

[129] E.g., *tr. vera legit. conc.* contains twenty-two references according to my count, none of which is to the *Confessions* and only one of which is to a sermon (*s.* 13); of fifty-four references to Augustine occurring in his *comm.* IaIIae 109.1, 110.2, 112.5, and 113.2, *conf.* 4.12 and *conf.* 9.13 are mentioned, and *en. Ps.* 35.

[130] As has been much discussed, Courcelle followed the oldest manuscript, but not the MS with the most authority, in arguing that the voice was heard *de divina domo* (from the divine house, Courcelle argued this was a reference to Augustine's own soul), rather than *de vicina domo* (from a nearby house). For my purposes, it does not much matter which it was; it operates as a motivating impression (with the imperatives, "Take and Read") from God. Note that *tolle, lege* may have been a song sung by children in the field when picking crops ("take, pick" instead of "take, read"); see O'Donnell (1992) commentary on 8.12.29 n. 11.

Indeed, the sermons indicate that repentance and invocation are followed by justification: "Christ has begun to dwell in the inner man through faith, and has begun *when invoked* to possess him *who confessed*."[131] Again: "*The Lord will give sweetness, and our earth will give its fruit … It* [the earth, i.e., soul] *grew weak*. Let it not, then, be so presumptuous as to rely on itself, let it cry out, weak as it is, to the Lord, *Convert us, God of our healings.* So it continues there: *And it grew weak; you, however, have perfected it.* Why have you perfected it? Because it grew weak itself, because it understood it couldn't be perfected by itself."[132] We find the elements of the dialogue model also in the following sermon, where God "cries" to the soul inside the soul, enjoining the person to live well, and then there is compunction:

> Out of heaven, therefore, the Lord looked down.… He himself indeed with his voice aroused him [a person dead in sin] from the tomb, he himself restored his life by crying to him.… This takes place in the heart of the penitent: when you hear a man is sorry for his sins, he has already come again to life … but the dead man himself cannot be aroused except by the Lord crying within him (*intus clamante*); for God does this within him.…

Now Augustine elaborates on the possible answers one might give to the initial call. One can refuse to listen to it altogether:

> *'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,'* – he cries out and is not answered – *'how often I would have liked to gather your children … '* There is no answer: rain comes from above, and thorns are brought forth instead of fruit.…

But the ideal "answer" of consent or justification[133] is done by God in us:

> What does it mean, *'She has answered him'*? She despises him not when he calls. What does it mean, *'She has answered him'*? He sent rain, she gave fruit. *'She has answered him.'* But where? *'In the path of his strength.'* Did she do so in herself? For what could there be in herself, or what voice could she find within and from herself (*in se, de se*), except the voice of sin only, the voice of iniquity? Consider her own words, what do you find but, as always, '*I said, "Lord, be merciful to me: heal my soul, for I have sinned against you."*' Moreover, if she is justified, she responds to him, not from her own merits, but from the work of his hands (*ipsius*).[134]

[131] *en. Ps.* 74.4, emphasis added. Cf. *en. Ps.* 84.15; 142.11–1.

[132] *s.* Dolbeau 19(= 130A).8–9.

[133] Faith, yielding a life of good actions (see *en. Ps.* 101.2.6).

[134] *en. Ps.* 101.2.3 and .6–7, citing Psalm 101:20, Matt. 23:37–8, Psalm 101:24. The final *ipsius* is a reference to *Christus ipse*. This is a complex patchwork of allusions, only some of which I have included in the quote: Lazarus represents the dead soul, the Lord calls him out of the tomb and draws him out of the tomb by his power (*virtute*); Jerusalem also represents the soul, and there are two Jerusalems – one does not respond, whereas the other does. He mentions also that confession can be done in the Church, because the Church has the power to loose sins (.3), but insists that the prompting to confess must be an interior calling from God. This indicates that he thinks of the interior repentance in response to the call as oriented toward the sacrament of baptism or, for post-baptismal lapses, confession to the bishop.

So again we have the conjunction of calling as a being stirring up interiorly by God, followed by repentance and crying out for mercy (invocation), with God granting the actual justification (consent).

More generally, the dialogue pattern matches the general principle, enunciated in the sermons, that God gives (additional) grace to those who humble themselves, and refuses it to those who do not.[135] The principle applies also to those already converted but not yet completely perfect;[136] apparently all moral progress is a conversion, of greater or lesser degree.

Recognizing the *Confessions* as a three-step model of (1) impression, (2) entertaining, repentance, invocation, and (3) consent, also brings a fresh perspective to some obscure passages of the anti-Pelagian texts. In the *Against Julian*, when Augustine insists that "grace came first and touched the heart so that it would ask God for the good that would make it truly happy,"[137] this "asking" looks like the invocation of the *Confessions* and the sermons. Again, in *Letter* 157, we find:

> By God's calling [= impression] they understand to whom they must groan [= repentance] and call upon him in whom they rightly believe, saying, 'Have mercy' [= invocation] … When someone stretches out to him, therefore, and groans in that way, there will happen what follows: where sin abounded, grace was even more abundant [= consent] … as a result of which there comes about the fulfillment [= actions] of the [moral] law … We have said much about these questions in our other works and sermons in church.[138]

Other works seem to contain similar allusions to this model.[139]

The early modern problem of how to reconcile divine efficaciousness with human free choice thus seems a bit less intractable given Augustine's dialogue model. In his dialogue model, Augustine's prevenient grace is "sufficient" in the sense that it provides all that is needed for entertaining, repentance, and invocation to occur; and these acts, if performed, will be rewarded by God with an efficacious grace of consent. The Jesuits can assert that God initiates justification by a sufficient grace tailored to the individual, and the Dominicans can

[135] *en. Ps.* 145.2, *s.* 279.6; *s.* 270.6. Cf. *en. Ps.* 31.2.18, *en. Ps.* 33.2.23, *en. Ps.* 39.11, *en. Ps.* 56.7, *en. Ps.* 68.1.19, *en. Ps.* 103.4.12–13, *en. Ps.* 137.11, *s.* 136A.3.

[136] E.g., this appears to be the context of *en. Ps.* 84.15. Cf. *pec. mer.* 2.19.33, *s.* 136A.2–3.

[137] *c. Iul.* 4.8.41.

[138] *ep.* 157.2.16 and 157.3.22. Trans. Teske (2004).

[139] *nat. et gr.* 31.35, 32.36, 43.50; *gest. Pel.* 3.5, 3.7, *gr. et pecc. or.* 1.12.13–1.14.15. This may also be the reason why Augustine sometimes talks as if faith can be distinguished from the grace of love (e.g., *ep.* 145.3, *ep.* 186.3.7), but also implies in the same works that they are synonyms or inextricably linked (e.g., *ep.* 186.3.8, 186.3.10): the first grace of impression is called by him faith or the beginning of faith, or the beginning of believing rightly, the second grace of consent to the impression, in which one's motivation is sealed and made effective, he refers to as love being "poured in." That is, the suggestion or beginning of effective belief vs. the living belief/faith/justification itself. On justification as living faith, refer back to Ch. 7.3d notes.

uphold their authentically Augustinian claim that the consent to this grace, effective of justification, is an intrinsically efficacious grace.

Philosophically, there is of course a theodical benefit to this model, which was first pointed out by Augustine himself at the time of Question 68 of his *83 Questions* (dated to just before the *Replies to Simplicianus* and the commencement of the *Confessions*).[140] Namely, the dialogue model mitigates, though it does not eradicate, the problem of apparent arbitrariness on the part of God in making some people, but not others, righteous.[141] (Because all of the players in this drama – Augustine and the parties of the De Auxiliis debates – want to save the scriptural stipulation that "many are called, but few are chosen,"[142] universal justification, which would also remove any arbitrary distinction among people by God, is not an option.) By building in voluntary acts of entertaining, repenting, and invoking, Augustine can give a somewhat more satisfying answer to the question, "Why does one person receive the second grace, whereas another is denied it?" Some people entertained the graced *suggestio*, repented, and invoked God, whereas others refused to entertain it.

That having been said, there will still be a mystery remaining in Augustine's account of grace, even when receptivity is counted as a positive act. For instance, Augustine does not assert that the grace of impression is given to everyone. He even bypasses an opportunity to so interpret a scriptural passage that might seem to assert this very thing.[143] Thus, God looks arbitrary in the giving of this first grace, or as Augustine would prefer to put it, if some people are given this first grace but others are not, that will be owing to the inscrutable (but just and right) judgment of God.[144]

Moreover, Augustine's account leaves it unclear why some people entertain the first grace, a grace that is sufficient for one's entertaining, repenting, and invoking God, but others do not. Here his account must fall back on his claim that creatures are prone to entropic lapses away from God *even when they have enough going for them to make the right choice*, because they are created from nothing, or because, as other than God, they are capable of distraction away from God to self-worship – even while "seeing" the beauty of God (in this case,

[140] Compiled at the beginning of Augustine's episcopacy (in 395 or 396) (*retr.* 1.26.1).

[141] *div. qu.* 68.4–5. At this time, (just prior to *Simpl.* and *conf.*) he described "calling" as *either* exterior sensory data, *or* a motivating impression caused by God's direct action on the mind, though that does not affect my point here. On these changes in the use of "call," see Section 5.

[142] Matt 22:14.

[143] Psalm 144:12: "God is sweet to all" (Suavis Dominus omnibus). Augustine interprets this as a reference to the beauty that is present everywhere in creation thanks to the action of God the creator (rather than reading it as a reference to grace, despite his usual usage of "sweetness" as a term of art for an inspired impression).

[144] This is the "explanation" given for why God gives converting grace to some but not others in the one-grace model: God's judgments are inscrutable (*Simpl.* 1.2.15).

seeing the beauty of virtues which have their criteria in God). These are the explanations he offers for the falls of the angels and the first parents, who had sufficient grace; and so his account of "failure to entertain a sufficient grace" will be symmetrical with his account of original sin, although there will remain a certain inexplicableness about the pull of evil.[145]

7.4f. The Plot Thickens: Repentance as Cooperated by God, with a Changing Account of "Cooperation" in 418

Just when we thought we had a "dialogue" model of justification wherein human receptive acts were performed without God's direct causality, the plot thickens. In fact, Augustine wants to say that these receptive acts are cooperated by God, and he changes his mind about the way in which entertaining/repentance/invocation are possible because of God's "cooperation."

In one sense of "cooperation," Augustine always held that a person entertains, repents, and invokes only because of God's cooperation. This sense is found referenced in the anti-Pelagian works written between 411–418; and arguably the same account is being used in the *Confessions*. In this model, for God to "cooperate" with us, or as Augustine usually says in this period, to "help" us (*adiuvare*), is for God to call us, but our receptivity in reaction to it is our own contribution.[146]

However, in 418 Pelagius uses a short quote from Ambrose that speaks of God's "cooperation" in our good acts. This prompts Augustine to appropriate the Ambrosian notion of cooperation, which is different.[147] (Note that Burns was right that there is a shift for Augustine in 418, though this is a shift in the meaning of cooperation, and not in the notion of call or consent per se.)[148] This kind of cooperation is metaphysical *concurrence*, and is reminiscent of Plotinus' account of the immaterial divine World-Soul active in the cosmos,

[145] MacDonald (1998) 125–133 has a very interesting account, inspired by Augustine, of the primal sins of the angels and of the first humans as inattentiveness to information possessed, and a gradual moral Fall. Space does not permit me a full discussion of it; I just note here that this account will work better for humans than for angels, given Augustine's high estimation of the nature and power of the angelic intellect.

[146] See *spir. et litt.* (dated 412/413) 5.7 with 34.60: God gives the impression, but to assent or dissent is up to us; *nat. et gr.* (dated 415) 31.35: God's mercy goes before us but we are to respond by "confessing" (repentance); cf. *pecc. mer.* (dated 411/412) 2.5.5, 2.5.6. I am using the phrase "receptivity," a purposely broad term, because Augustine during this period actually thinks (by regression to his earlier position) that we can *consent* to justification by ourselves (a complication discussed in Section 5 of this chapter). Thus I intend "receptivity" to cover entertaining/repentance/invocation as well as consent.

[147] This concept of "cooperation" is later taken up by Julian as well. He wants to say that we need grace (only) as cooperating with us in doing good actions that we have undertaken by our own free will, or which follow from faith, which we have acquired by ourselves. Augustine argues back that the beginning of faith is from God, that is, that God gives the impression; but he also adopts Julian's and Ambrose's idea of concurrence and incorporates it into his account.

[148] See Burns (1980) 9, 50, 131.

drawing all things back to the Good. The power of God cooperates everywhere with human efforts, so that no one can build anything without the Lord, no one can guard anything without the Lord, no one can begin anything without the Lord, says Ambrose.[149] Prior to this, Augustine was accustomed to thinking of providence along the lines of Seneca's *On Providence*, where the ethical purposes of providence are discussed *sans* the context of Stoic immanentist physics: God arranges events from the outside, as it were, and "looks on" at human action analogously to a set designer watching a drama, or the emperor watching gladiators in the amphitheater. In that context, graces were God's extraordinarily reaching into the world to "touch" a person with an impression, or to "flip the switch," as it were, of consent in them. Now, however, Augustine begins to describe cooperating grace as God's concurrent power, saying that we need grace not only for the proposal of the idea to do good, or for the consent to justification, but also as a kind of energy supporting from the inside the actual performance of any good act (such as entertaining, repenting, invoking) – God interiorly maintains good volitions already in progress.[150] Otherwise, someone will lose her right intention in the midst of entertaining or repenting, owing to the entropic tendency of creatures made from nothing to lapse from the good, and owing to the additional weight of original sin.

It seems to be in this new sense of "cooperation" that Augustine says in his *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* (c. 420/1), for instance, that "opening to God" at the beginning of faith – recall that we have seen in the sermons that "opening" means repentance[151] – requires God's "cooperation":

> A human being prepares the heart, but does so only with the help of God who touches (*tangit*) the heart in such a way that the human being prepares the heart. But in the answer of the tongue, that is, in that which the divine tongue answers to the prepared heart, the human being does nothing, but all comes from God.…[152] For, although without the help of him without whom we can do nothing we cannot open our mouth, we do, nonetheless, open it by his help and our effort, but the Lord fills it without our doing anything.… In one of these [the opening] he [God] cooperates with the human being who does it (*cooperatur homini facienti*), but in the case of the other [the filling], he does it alone (*solus facit [Deus]*).[153]

[149] See *gr. et pecc. or.* (dated 418) 1.44.48; *c. ep. Pel.* (dated c. 420/1) 4.11.30, both citing Ambrose's *Exposition on the Gospel of Luke*, 2.84.

[150] *gr. et pecc. or.* (dated 418) 1.3.4 (the human is so weak that one is always assisted by the aid of grace in impulse (*voluntas*) and in action (*actio*)), 1.6.7, 1.19.20, 1.25.26; *ep.* 194.4.16 (dated 418); *c. ep. Pel.* 2.10.22; *gr. et lib. arb.* 17.33ff.

[151] Cf. *en. Ps.* 80.15: "*open wide your mouth* in confessing," and *en. Ps.* 50.13, cited in Section 4d of this chapter.

[152] *c. ep. Pel.* 2.9.19.

[153] *c. ep. Pel.* 2.9.19–20, citing Proverbs 16:1 LXX ("It is up to a human being to prepare the heart, and the answer of the tongue comes from God"), Psalm 80:11 ("Open your mouth and I will fill it"), and John 15:5. Trans. Teske (1998). It is clear that for Augustine, to prepare the heart and open the mouth are two different ways of describing preconsensual receptive acts (*c. ep. Pel.* 2.9.10).

"Touching the heart" should be read as the first grace of impression, given that "touch the mind" is how Augustine had referred to the inspired impression in the *Replies to Simplicianus* (*viso attingitur mens*). The mouth "being filled" should be read as a reference to consent, which is the completion of cognition, the closing in on certainty (compare *animo amplectitur*, *Replies* 1.2.21), given that he often glosses "mouth" as the interior organ of consent to propositional content of impressions. "Our opening" or "our preparing" should refer to the intervening entertaining, repenting, invoking, as already noted. These phrases can refer neither to the impression (that is by definition merely passively received), nor to the consent of justification itself (because he tells us God does it alone). So what we have here is a reference to the dialogue model. But we also have the clear stipulation that opening is done "with God cooperating" in the person's doing, and not merely making it possible by fulfilling a preceding necessary condition. According to this model, then, when Augustine invoked God in the Milanese garden, that would have been "physically" done by God (to use Bañez's later term) *with* Augustine – although it was not until twenty years after he had written the *Confessions* that he came to this understanding.

Augustine never develops this Ambrosian idea of cooperation into a full-blown account of metaphysical concurrence such as we find in later scholasticism, wherein all acts, even morally indifferent or evil acts, require God's sustaining power. It does not cause him to revise his general theory of providence. This kind of cooperating grace is merely a "spurt" of concurrence – God remains continuously active in a person *for as long as a morally good act continues*, and then ceases to assist the act. But it is a change in Augustine's thinking that will ultimately lead to other changes. And historically it is interesting to note that this new idea later becomes quite amplified, for instance, in Bañez's account (mediated by Aquinas), where all grace is described as a specification of God's constant efficient concurrence; the only difference between *natural* concurrence and *grace* is the end to which a person is being helped in each case (natural versus supernatural respectively).

On Augustine's "spurt of concurrence" account of cooperation, the only difference between God's cooperating with us, and God's doing something alone "in" us, is the strength of the grace. A merely cooperating grace is a weak grace, but when God does something alone in us, it is an operating or strong grace. This weak grace Augustine will ultimately (after 425) find unsatisfactory as a description of the grace of Christ, as we shall see.

7.5. A DOUBLE EVOLUTION IN AUGUSTINE'S THOUGHT: INTERNAL VERSUS EXTERNAL GRACE

In addition to this expansion of the notion of "cooperation" in about 418 is a set of changes in Augustine's thinking about whether grace is internal or external,

a matter that has been debated in the secondary literature. Our newly acquired understanding of Augustine's epistemology helps us to recognize these stages. Scholars have been asking whether Augustine has a linear development, or a constant position. No consensus has been reached because neither of these two interpretative options can explain all the texts. There is a development, but it circles back on itself.

Strange as it may seem, Augustine thought through the same set of questions twice, and went through the same shift in opinion twice. There is an evolution in his thought on the questions whether grace is internal or external, and how we respond, during the years 394–400. Then there is a hiatus from 400–411. Then the same evolution repeats itself during the years 411–420/421. That is why the change in position between two early texts like the *83 Questions* and *Replies to Simplicianus* is comparable to that discernible between the later *On the Spirit and the Letter* and the *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*. The reason for the repeated development was, apparently, that after thinking through the mechanics of justification early on, Augustine put aside detailed consideration of it for more than ten years (c. 400–411). During that time, he was concerned with many other matters – primarily, arguing against the Donatists and running his busy diocese. By the time he was provoked to defend grace against Pelagius beginning in 411, he remembered that he believed in prevenient grace,[154] but no longer had present to mind all the details of his theorizing about how it initially works on the mind at the beginning of faith. He returned to consideration of that question *not* in a systematic way in one sitting in 411, but only as it became necessary with the progression of the anti-Pelagian debate.[155] In this way, he rediscovered his own characteristically "Augustinian" position.

We can see this happening when we read the texts in chronological order. His earliest attempt, in 394, to explain what a divine "calling" is, was that it is preaching. This calling is merely "external," meaning that God is not acting directly on the mind to give a motivating impression (*suggestio*), but is merely providentially arranging that a person hear a preacher proclaim texts that were written by divine inspiration.[156] We consent and thereby bring ourselves into a state of faith after hearing. But Augustine immediately begins to see a problem with this view, namely that two people can hear the same preacher and one be moved to change his life, while another is not so moved. The preacher is functioning as the occasion of a *suggestio* for one listener, but a merely epistemic

[154] So *ep.* 140 (a.k.a. *gr. t. nov.*) 26.63, 30.71. This is the first treatise of the anti-Pelagian writings, written in 411 or 412.

[155] Even as the debate began to progress, his attention was not undividedly focused on the finer points, since he was still administering his diocese, and working on *City of God* and *On the Trinity*.

[156] See *exp. prop. Rm.* 60, commented on in *praed. sanct.* 3.7, *retr.* 1.22.

visum for the other.[157] This causes Augustine to expand the notion of "call": God urges on and calls "either interiorly or exteriorly."[158] Exteriorly means, again, a sensory impression such as hearing preaching or seeing a miracle; but "interiorly" he does not yet describe. Apparently he means that God will have to internally cause the *suggestio* if a person's acquired dispositions do not allow her to naturally perceive the content preached as motivating. Subsequent to the call, Augustine says, we may repent, or will peace (anticipating the repentance/invocation of the *Confessions* and sermons). If we do so, we will be given a second mercy.[159] In his next text, *Replies to Simplicianus*, Augustine realized for the first time[160] that, given original sin, and given the text of 1 Corinthians 4:7 ("What do you have that you have not received?"), it is necessary to hold that *everyone* needs God to directly touch the mind with the *suggestio*; without that, preaching will always fail to be motivating. No one who is not yet justified has the dispositions necessary for experiencing preaching as a *suggestio*. Merely hearing preaching or viewing a miracle is being called ineffectively. Then, as described earlier, he elaborates two ways that the inspired *suggestio* may affect us. In the case of someone like Paul, this impression is experienced as self-evidently true, or cataleptic, and thus cannot be resisted. In the alternative case, there is a dialogue of conversion in which the inspired impression is not experienced as cataleptic, and needs to be followed by entertaining, repentance and invocation, after which there is a second grace (consent).

When Augustine later comes back to the question of converting grace, about ten years after finishing the *Confessions* and about twenty-five years after his own experience in the Milanese garden, he first makes only general claims that God "helps" us to see rightly; and he says that we contribute consent by ourselves.[161] Then we begin to see a progression that mirrors his earlier trajectory. In *On the Spirit and the Letter* (412/13), he says that we come to faith because God calls "either (*sive*) externally or (*sive*) internally," where exteriorly means preaching.[162] This is a repetition of the *83 Questions #68* position. Again, the meaning is that given people's diverse dispositions, hearing preaching can be motivating for one person but not for another, and that only in the latter case will God have to internally cause the *suggestio*.[163] And he reiterates that we

[157] Refer back to Ch. 2.1.

[158] *div. qu.* 68.5, compiled in 395/6.

[159] His statement in *retr.* 1.26 reinforces what he has said here in *div. qu.* 68.5: the calling is first, then repentance, then mercy. God would not give the second mercy without repentance, but repentance would not happen without the call.

[160] *retr.* 1.22.

[161] *ep.* 140.6.18 and 140.35.8; *pec. mer.* 2.5.5–6. In *ep.* 140.37.85, we need only receive from God (providentially) an occasion on which someone admonishes us externally (that counts as prevenient grace at this point in his thinking), and the inner teacher (the natural innate ideas) will enable us to recognize the truth of what they say.

[162] *spir. et litt.* 34.60. Cf. *en. Ps.* 102.16.

[163] He says that both the external and the internal call can be weak or strong, both can be intrinsically persuasive impressions (*suasiones visorum*).

contribute consent by ourselves and can actually dissent from God's call.[164] Quickly, however (in 413/414), he again begins to make *inspired* sweetness *necessary* for virtuous action,[165] and increasingly clearly to insist that preaching does not motivate without interior grace (by 416).[166] Here he has progressed to part of the *Replies to Simplicianus* position, that part which insists upon the necessity of a graced impression. Once he refastens on this insistence that God's direct action on the mind is necessary to make the (fallen) mind perceive righteousness hormetically, he repeats it consistently from then on.[167] Furthermore, by at least the time of the *Deeds of Pelagius* (417), he has picked up the other part of the *Replies to Simplicianus* position and the *Confessions* position, namely that consent itself is given as a grace in the case of justification. He distances himself from the claim that consent is something we do of ourselves, distinguishing "being driven" from "being governed," and asserting that grace does not merely govern, but "drives" us, so that we do hardly anything by ourselves.[168] Faith is made "in" us.[169] There is a replication of the single cataleptic grace model for Paul, such as was seen in the *Replies to Simplicianus*, in 420/421, when he says that Paul was "converted by a sudden and miraculous grace" from unwilling (*aversus, reluctans*) to motivated (*excitatur*).[170] Statements that seem to reference the alternate *Confessions* dialogue model of impression-entertaining/repentance/invocation-consent are also found between 414/415–420/421.[171]

Why in his *Retractations* or the *Predestination of the Saints*[172] did Augustine not refer to the fact that he had gone through this repeated evolution in his thought, doubling back on his own earlier development? This is indeed puzzling, but the strangeness of it cannot alter what the texts actually say. He was in his seventies when he completed the *Retractations* (427) and it was already

[164] *spir. et litt.* 34.60; cf. 33.58.

[165] *ep.* 145.7 (dated 413/414).

[166] *ep.* 186.11.38, 2.5 (dated 416).

[167] *ep.* 194.3.10 (dated 418); *gr. et pecc. or.* 1.10.11 with 1.13.14–14.15 (dated 418), *corrept.* 2.3–2.4, 7.12 (dated 426/427); *praed. sanct.* 8.15 (dated c. 427–430); cf. *praed. sanct.* 8.13 with *gr. et pecc. or.* 1.13.14; *doct. chr.* 4.15.32.

[168] *gest. Pelag.* 3.5.

[169] *ep.* 194.3.9 (dated 418).

[170] *c. ep. Pel.* 1.19.37, cf. 1.18.36, 2.5.10.

[171] See the texts cited in Section 4d. The dating of sermons by scholars is conjectural, but those quoted above as examples of the concepts of "entertaining" and repenting/confession seem to be clustered around the times of the *Confessions* and the anti-Pelagian writings: *en. Ps.* 106 estimated to 411–412 or 415 or later; *en. Ps.* 50 estimated to 411 or 413; *en. Ps.* 114 estimated to before/by 400; *s.* 130A (= Dolbeau 19) estimated to after 404 by Dolbeau, to 419 by Hill; *en. Ps.* 101.2 estimated to 395 or later. On the *en. Ps.* dating cited here, see Müller (1996–2002) (reporting the views of Hombert, Zarb, etc.).

[172] In *praed. sanct.* 3.7 he says that before *Simpl.* he had believed the calling was merely preaching, and that we can consent on our own to justification; but he does not avert to the fact that he also held these positions during the early anti-Pelagian years.

several years since he had completed the repeated evolution. Maybe he forgot that he had ever forgotten his earlier positions of the *Confessions* and *Replies to Simplicianus* at all. Perhaps, too, he was being helped by an assistant to review his writings, and that person was not sensitive to these changes. Neither of these answers is entirely satisfying, so we must with others simply acknowledge the fact that he did not note all his changes of mind in his *Retractations*.[173]

Thus, with regard to the positions of interpreters, we can say first of all that both Bañez and Molina are mistaken insofar as they portray their positions as genetic developments from Augustine, because they assume that he has a monolithic account. Owing to this assumption, Bañez is forced to say that in works like *On the Spirit and the Letter* (412/413) Augustine is only talking about ability to dissent in the divided sense, which is overly subtle and conflicts with the plain sense of the text. For their part, the Molinists have to misleadingly generalize from the case of this work to Augustine's overall "position."[174] With regard to the work of Burns, we can point out that the *Replies to Simplicianus* and *Confessions* do not give an account of environmental or external calling with human autonomy;[175] Augustine is already using a model of internal grace there, though he will later forget about it and then return to it. Katayanagi is right about the *Replies to Simplicianus* describing an "internal" grace, but it is not true that *On the Spirit and the Letter* is the same as that position, and is representative of a consistent account.[176] Claims made by other scholars can be sorted and assessed along similar lines.

7.6. Augustine's two theodicies, unequally satisfying

There is a final change in Augustine's thinking about grace, and it is not a return to anything he said previously. Augustine branches away from the *Confessions* model beginning with *Grace and Free Choice* (426) onward. He begins to insist that conversion is God's "operating through us" (*operari per*) to the *exclusion* of cooperative grace, and the Pauline case alone is given as the paradigm.[177]

Why does Augustine drop the *Confessions* dialogue model of conversion beginning in 426? We can figure this out, although he does not tell us explicitly. It is part of a larger trend in his thought.

[173] So, e.g., Burns (1980) 8.

[174] Cf. Burns (1980) 126, 11–12 noting the more recent errors of Leon-Dufour and TeSelle, who do the same thing. On difficulties about the consistency of *spir. et litt.*, cf. Burnaby (1938) 229.

[175] See Burns (1980) 9, 50, 131.

[176] Katayanagi (1990) 649–650, 654–655.

[177] *gr. et lib. arb.* 14.28, 16.32, 17.33, 20.41, 21.42; *praed. sanct.* 2.4, 16.32, 16.33–17.34, 20.41. Note that in *gr. et lib. arb.* Augustine does sometimes speak of cooperation, but it is when he is speaking of the process of perfection *after* conversion/justification, when the soul has already been significantly healed by the grace of conversion. Conversion itself is done by God (17.33).

After Augustine starts to use what I have called the "spurts of concurrence" account[178] to describe how God cooperates with our acts of entertaining, repentance and invocation (c. 418), he begins to worry that cooperating grace, defined as "weak" grace from which one can dissent, jeopardizes God's omnipotence.[179] He is concerned that if God assists someone in performing an action, with an efficient causality that in itself fails to produce the action, then God's efficacy is impugned. At the same time, he comes to believe that the grace of Christ is an essentially powerful kind of grace (as opposed to the weak kind of grace given to Adam): a new, improved brand, as it were.[180] And he thinks that it is the grace of Christ that is being given in conversion. These three beliefs cause him to conclude that if someone fails to entertain/repent/invoke, this must *only* be because God "abandons" (*deserere*) the person.[181] For the same reasons, from 426 onward his talk of "cooperation" gives way to the idea that all grace, whether in justification or in the subsequent lifetime of continuous progress toward perfection, is simply God's "operating through" (*operari per*) us, meaning that God makes one do an act infallibly, one cannot dissent from it in the composite circumstances.[182]

So Augustine has two basically different accounts of the relation between grace and freedom in conversion. One, the model of the *Confessions*, some sermons, and some anti-Pelagian works (between 414/415–420/421), allows for cooperating grace as well as operative grace in justification. The other, of 426 and following, does not.

The former of these is more satisfying in its implications for theodicy – specifically for defending God's rationale in giving Adam only "weak grace" to begin with. For if cooperating grace has no importance in itself as fitting to free creatures, then God wasted his own time in not filling Adam with powerful grace. And surely if God is omnipotent, the incarnation was not necessary for the production of a new brand of powerful grace that it was impossible for God to grant before the incarnation. On the other hand, the late position (426 and following), which makes Paul the sole paradigm and *all* graces operative, even those related to "perseverance" or perfection in virtue, is certainly problematic for theodicy, even granting that operative grace is a greater mercy for the recipient than is cooperating grace. The fact that God *could* (operatively) convert anyone because he is omnipotent, is not particularly important. The fact that God "abandons" people by not doing that – instead merely granting them cooperating grace – is actually better from the point of view of God's general rationale in creating and redeeming

[178] See Section 4f.

[179] For evidence that omnipotence is uppermost in his mind, see, e.g., *gr. et lib. arb.* 14.29; *corrept.* 8.17, 14.45.

[180] *corrept.* 11.31–12.35.

[181] E.g., *gr. et lib. arb.* 6.13, *corrept.* 9.24, *corrept.* 12.38. Cf. *c. Iul.* 4.3.28, *persev.* 9.22.

[182] E.g., *corrept.* 12.38; *praed. sanct.* 11.22.

human beings as a class, although it is a loss for the individual who is not caused to repent.

A satisfying theodicy does not require us to reject the Pauline cataleptic grace entirely. It allows us to take the *Replies to Simplicianus* and the *Confessions* together, and says that freedom to dissent from or entertain grace is available in the composite circumstances in most cases of justification. God typically acts as he did in Augustine's own case, making the grace of consent conditional upon receptive acts. The case of someone like Paul is relatively rare, and therefore the fact that grace is here irresistible in the composite circumstances is not problematic for Augustine's account of the economy of grace in general. Augustine can say that God has a *reason* for dealing with people like Paul as he does: it is for the sake of the common good.[183] God's rationale in giving Adam only weak grace, and allowing a fall, are not jeopardized.

But what shall we do with Augustine's misgivings about the weakness of "cooperative" grace in relation to God's omnipotence? These are actually not well founded. The evidential argument he gives for his claim that the grace of Christ must be an essentially powerful kind of grace, and therefore that all graces coming from Christ must be operative, is invalid.[184] His more substantive philosophical concern that cooperating grace is essentially injurious to God's efficacy is also vulnerable. One might simply reject Augustine's premise that if God efficiently participates "weakly" in an occurrent action – as a mere contributor rather than the driver – then God's omnipotence is in jeopardy. If God wills to give a weak grace, it is weak because God has willed it to be weak. So the grace is efficacious in accomplishing what God wills it to accomplish. God's omnipotence is not impugned. And God might have providential reasons for giving some graces that are not compelling, but merely suggestive or cooperating. Thus, Augustine has no reason deriving from philosophical theology to reject his dialogue model, wherein human justification depends upon some human receptive acts with which God merely cooperates.

[183] He could say, for instance, that someone with a special leadership mission, who needs to be made immediately available for a role in which she must stand out as an example of the mercy and power of God, might receive this kind of grace. This species of argument is one he uses to explain why God does not save everyone: those whom God leaves in sin, he leaves as examples of fallen humanity, so that those he predestines can learn by comparison that their own moral goodness is owing to the mercy of God (see, e.g., *c. Iul.* 4.8.45).

[184] He says that the endurance of the martyrs is evidence of this new, improved brand of grace (*corrept.* 12.35); but it does not follow from the case of the martyrs that *all* graces post-Christ need be of exactly the same kind or strength.

Appendix I

Text of *Confessions* 8.11.26–27 in English and Latin

(Latin text of O'Donnell [1992]; English text by Chadwick [1992], adapted.)

26. Vain trifles and the trivialities of the empty-headed, my old loves, held me back. They tugged at the garment of my flesh and whispered: 'Are you getting rid of us?' And 'from this moment we shall never be with you again, not for ever and ever.' And 'from this moment this and that are forbidden to you for ever and ever.' What they were suggesting in what I have called 'this and that' – what they were suggesting, my God, may your mercy avert from the soul of your servant! What filth, what disgraceful things they were suggesting! I was listening to them with much less than half my attention. They were not frankly confronting me face to face on the road, but as it were whispering behind my back, as if they were furtively tugging at me as I was going away, trying to persuade me to look back. Nevertheless they held me back. I hesitated to detach myself, to be rid of them, to make the leap to where I was being called while the overwhelming force of habit was saying to me, 'Do you think you can live without those [acts]?'

26. Retinebant nugae nugarum et vanitates vanitantium, antiquae amicae meae, et succutiebant vestem meam carneam et submurmurabant, 'dimittisne nos?' et 'a momento isto non erimus tecum ultra in aeternum' et 'a momento isto non tibi licebit hoc et illud ultra in aeternum.' et quae suggerebant in eo quod dixi 'hoc et illud,' quae suggerebant, deus meus, avertat ab anima servi tui misericordia tua! Quas sordes suggerebant, quae dedecora! Et audiebam eas iam longe minus quam dimidius, non tamquam libere contradicentes eundo in obviam, sed velut a dorso mussitantes et discedentem quasi furtim vellicantes, ut respicerem. Tardabant tamen cunctantem me abripere atque excutere ab eis et transilire quo vocabar, cum diceret mihi consuetudo violenta, 'putasne sine istis poteris?'

27. Nevertheless it was now putting the question very halfheartedly. For from that direction where I had set my face and towards which I was afraid to move, the chaste dignity of continence was appearing, serene and cheerful

without licentiousness, enticing me honorably to come and not to hesitate. To receive and embrace me she stretched out pious hands, filled with numerous good examples for me to follow. There were large numbers of boys and girls, a multitude of all ages, young adults and venerable widows and elderly virgins. In every one of them was continence itself, in no sense barren but the fruitful mother of children, the joys born of you, Lord, her husband. And she smiled at me with an encouraging smile as if to say: 'Are you incapable of doing what these men and women have done? Do you think them capable of achieving this by their own resources and not by the Lord their God? Their Lord God gave me to them. Why are you relying on yourself, only to find yourself unreliable? Cast yourself upon him, do not be afraid. He will not withdraw himself so that you fall. Make the leap without anxiety; he will catch you and heal you.' I blushed with embarrassment because I was still hearing the mutterings of those vanities, and racked by hesitations I remained undecided. But once more it was as if she said: 'Stop your ears to your impure members on earth and mortify them. They declare delights to you, but not in accord with the law of the Lord your God.' This debate in my heart was a struggle of myself against myself. Alypius stood quite still at my side, and waited in silence for the outcome of my unprecedented state of agitation.

27. Sed iam tepidissime hoc dicebat. Aperiebatur enim ab ea parte qua intenderam faciem et quo transire trepidabam casta dignitas continentiae, serena et non dissolute hilaris, honeste blandiens ut venirem neque dubitarem, et extendens ad me suscipiendum et amplectendum pias manus plenas gregibus bonorum exemplorum. Ibi tot pueri et puellae, ibi iuventus multa et omnis aetas, et graves viduae et virgines anus, et in omnibus ipsa continentia nequaquam sterilis, sed fecunda mater filiorum gaudiorum de marito te, domine. Et inridebat me inrisione hortatoria, quasi diceret, 'tu non poteris quod isti, quod istae? An vero isti et istae in se ipsis possunt ac non in domino deo suo? Dominus Deus eorum me dedit eis. Quid in te stas et non stas? Proice te in eum! Noli metuere. Non se subtrahet ut cadas: proice te securus! Excipiet et sanabit te.' Et erubescebam nimis, quia illarum nugarum murmura adhuc audiebam, et cunctabundus pendebam. Et rursus illa, quasi diceret, 'obsurdesce adversus immunda illa membra tua super terram, ut mortificentur. Narrant tibi delectationes, sed non sicut lex domini dei tui.' Ista controversia in corde meo non nisi de me ipso adversus me ipsum. At Alypius affixus lateri meo inusitati motus mei exitum tacitus opperiebatur.

Appendix II

"Will" (*Voluntas*) as Impulse toward Action (cf. Stoic *Hormē*) in Augustine

Augustine uses the term *voluntas* for dispositional and occurrent forms of *hormē* of a rational being, *hormē* being the Stoic concept of "impulse" toward action.[1] In what follows I shall first demonstrate this, using mainly books twelve and fourteen of the *City of God*. There is need of such a demonstration, for although much ink has been spilt over the sense of "will" in Augustine's texts, interpretations have varied greatly. Next I shall draw attention to a number of corroborating texts from works spanning thirty years of his writing career, highlighting how this Stoic concept, together with Stoic epistemology, makes sense of the uses of *voluntas* in book eight of the *Confessions* and of "free will" (*libera voluntas, liberum arbitrium voluntatis*) in the *On Free Choice*. I conclude with suggestions about specific texts and authors influencing Augustine's usage.

II.1. OVERVIEW

Augustine explicitly mentions the Stoic concept of *hormē* in book nineteen of the *City of God*, where he tentatively translates it by *impetus vel appetitus actionis*.[2] We see that he understands it as an impulse, which does not need reason in order to effect action, but which does reflect rationality in a healthy human who is beyond the age of reason: "the insane say or do many absurd things that are for the most part alien to their own aims and characters … *hormē* … is included among the primary goods of nature – is it not responsible for those pitiable movements and actions (*facta*) of the insane that shock us, when sensation is distraught and reason is asleep?"[3]

[1] See Stobaeus, *Eclogues* 2.88, 2–6 (LS 33I) and the texts printed in LS 53 and LS 57; cf. Inwood (1985) 20, 53.

[2] *civ.* 19.4: "Impetus porro vel appetitus actionis, si hoc modo recte Latine appellatur ea quam Graeci vocant *hormēn*." The use of *impetus* or *appetitus* to translate *hormē* is Senecan and Ciceronian.

[3] *civ.* 19.4: "Phrenetici multa absurda … dicunt vel faciunt, plerumque a bono suo proposito et moribus aliena … *hormēn* … primis naturae deputant [Stoici] bonis, nonne ipse est, quo

When he wants to refer specifically to the *hormai* of *rational* beings, he uses *voluntates*. There is a proof text for this claim in *City of God* 5.9, which clearly shows that by *voluntas* Augustine means efficient cause of action, and that he thinks its proper sense is restricted to rational beings, although it may be used for the *hormē/motus* of animals in an analogous sense. It runs as follows:

> Human wills are the causes of human deeds … voluntary causes [in general] belong to God, or angels, or men, or animals – if those *motus* of animals lacking reason, by which they do anything in accord with their nature, when they either pursue or avoid some thing, are nevertheless to be called *voluntates*.[4]

Moreover, as we are about to see, Augustine follows the Stoics in understanding impulse as having two forms: occurrent and dispositional.[5] Rational impulse comes in both of these forms. There is also scattered evidence that Augustine knew and was influenced by the Stoics' account of a particular kind of dispositional *hormē* – "primary impulse" toward self-preservation (*prōtē hormē*), which the Stoics asserted was present in all animals.[6] We hear echoes of this in the *City of God*, the *On Free Choice*, the *On the First Epistle of John*, and the *Sermons*, when Augustine speaks of the *voluntas humana*, an innate drive to preserve one's own life, by which man naturally "wills to live" (*vivere vult*).[7]

A thorough demonstration of Augustine's indebtedness to the Stoic account of *hormē*, however, depends upon detailed work on three groups of texts: *City of God* books twelve and fourteen, *Confessions* book eight, and the *On Free Choice* in conjunction with *Literal Meaning of Genesis* book nine and *City of God* book five.

II.1a. *City of God* 12 and 14

Books twelve and fourteen of the *City of God* are of the utmost importance because they are thick with references to *voluntas*. We need not be concerned here with the ostensibly "theological" context, which describes the original sins

geruntur etiam insanorum illi miserabiles motus et facta quae horremus, quando pervertitur sensus ratioque sopitur?" (For quotations from the *civ.* in this appendix, I have used, but often adapted the translations in Levine et al.) Compare the Stoics per Inwood (1985) 112. Augustine refers to an age of reason in *civ.* 22.24.

[4] *civ.* 5.9: "Humanae voluntates humanorum operum causae sunt.… Iam vero causae voluntariae aut Dei sunt aut angelorum aut hominum aut quorumque animalium, si tamen voluntates appellandae sunt animarum rationis expertium motus illi quibus aliqua faciunt secundum naturam suam cum quid vel adpetunt vel evitant." My trans., emphasis added.

[5] *Eclogues* 2.87 lines 10–13; cf. Inwood (1985) 32, 45, and 224–225 with 229 on *hexis hormētikē*.

[6] Cf. Inwood (1985) 190–193 and 218–223.

[7] *Ep.Io.tr.* 9.2.3, *lib.arb.* 3.6.18–3.7.21 (*esse vis*), *civ.* 14.25, *s.* 299.8: "Amari mors non potest, tolerari potest.… Natura ergo, non tantum homines, sed et omnes omnino animantes recusant mortem et formidant."

of the fallen angels and of Adam and Eve.[8] For our purposes, the only important features of the context are that, as we have already seen, Augustine included angels as well as humans in the category "rational," and that by "sin" (*peccatum*) he meant an evil (internal or external) act.

In book twelve Augustine tries to account for sinful occurrent *appetitus,*[9] which for the time being I shall transliterate as "appetite" so as not to beg the question of whether it is indeed Stoic "impulse." He assumes that "appetites" must arise out of (*ex eo esse*) preceding states of the soul – either the soul's nature[10] or an *affectio*, an accidental state of the soul by which it happens to be qualified prior to the receipt of an impression (*visum*).[11] Because the appetites in question are sinful, he reasons that they cannot have their source in the natures of souls as created (which must be good, because created by God). Their sources must be acquired dispositions. He calls these dispositional roots of occurrent appetite *voluntates* or *cupiditates*:

> It is not permissible to doubt that the contrary *appetitus* of the good and bad angels arose not from differences in their original natures, since God, the good author and creator of all forms of being, created both classes, but from their respective *voluntates* and *cupiditates*.[12]

Augustine here plays on the word *voluntas* as a translation of *boulēsis*, one of the *constantiae/eupatheiai* predicated of the Stoic sage,[13] in order to heighten the contrast between the good and bad angels, emphasizing the depravity of the demons by means of the more lurid "cupiditas."[14] The *voluntas* of the good angels is persistent, holy, and tranquil;[15] the *cupiditas* of the demons is arrogant,

[8] For philosophical currents, including Stoic ones, in Augustine's understanding of "fallen-ness," compare Augustine *en. Ps.* 30.2.13 and *conf.* 8.9.21–22, 8.11.26 to Seneca *ira* 2.10.2, 2.10.6, 2.13.1, and see Torchia (1993) 11–17.

[9] As Holte (1962) 33, 201, 256, 283 and Bochet (1982) 150 n. 1 have pointed out, Augustine does use *appetitus* for a tendency – by which I take them to mean a disposition of the soul to pursue certain things (for examples see *conf.* 10.35.54, the unspecified appetite to know, and *en. Ps.* 118,11.6, where he explains *pleonexia* as a habit by which someone *appetit* more than is enough); at least in book twelve of *civ.*, however, Augustine consistently uses it for occurrent appetites.

[10] *civ.* 12.6.

[11] E.g., see the discussion of *visum* and *affectio* at 12.6; Augustine uses *affectio* for a quality of the body or the soul (e.g.. "eadem fuerat in utroque corporis et animi affectio," *civ.* 12.6). Cf. Cicero *Tusc.* 4.29, 4.30, 4.34 and *inv.* 1.36, 2.30, wherein *affectio* is a more or less settled disposition, called *habitus* if more settled and weakness or sickness (*morbus*) if less settled.

[12] *civ.* 12.1: "Angelorum bonorum et malorum inter se contrarios appetitus non naturis principiisque diversis, cum Deus omnium substantiarum bonus auctor et conditor utrosque creaverit, sed voluntatibus et cupiditatibus exstitisse dubitare fas non est." Trans. Levine et al. adapted.

[13] *Tusc.* 4.6.11–14.

[14] Cf. *civ.* 14.7: "idiomatic usage has brought it about that if *cupiditas* and *concupiscentia* are used without any specification of their object, they can be taken only in a bad sense." Cf. Bonner (1962) 303–314.

[15] *civ.* 11.33: "sancto amore … tranquillam [societatem angelorum]", 12.1.11: "constanter," "caritate Dei et hominum persistunt," 12.6: "voluntate pudica stabilis perseveret."

deceitful, envious – in a word, it is "impure."[16] Yet the impure *cupiditas* of the demons is also persistent;[17] it is a disposition.

In the surrounding text, however, this *cupiditas* also goes by the name of *voluntas*. He identifies the demons' *cupiditas* with *voluntas perversa*,[18] using *voluntas* for a vicious condition of the soul (e.g., *civ.Dei* 11.17: *vitium malitiae … voluntas mala*).[19] Elsewhere, too, *voluntas* is applied to bad, as well as good, dispositions from which occurrent appetites arise.[20] Thus Augustine consistently retains the sense of disposition and constancy that the word *voluntas* has in Cicero's use of it for Stoic *boulēsis*, but frequently drops the association with virtue, only capitalizing on that association when he wants to contrast the demons with the angels. The association is not a constant or even a typical feature of his use of the word *voluntas*.

Augustine describes these dispositional *voluntates* or *cupiditates* as orientations toward types of objects. The two societies of angels are mirrored in the two "cities" of men on earth; the bad human society is comprised of subgroups, with each group "pursuing the advantages and *cupiditates* peculiar to itself."[21] Thus we are dealing with *dispositions* to pursue *classes* of objects.

While occurrent appetites arise out of comparably stable states, these states themselves result from an interior act of the rational soul. In the case of the demons, Augustine calls this the act of "turning away" (*conversio*) from the object of their previous, good will.[22] The first vicious disposition arose in these angels because they "sank," by a "spontaneous lapse," from their glorious state into a vitiated state; this lapse was a discrete psychic event in which they began to prefer a new class of goods.[23]

Similar to this account is the description of Adam and Eve's original sin in book fourteen. In order to explain an occurrence (in this case, an external act rather than an *appetitus*), Augustine again posits a preceding disposition. He assumes that there must have been a foregoing vicious state of soul, which he again calls a *voluntas* (*praecessisset voluntas mala*),[24] in order to explain how Adam and Eve's performance of the evil deed, eating from the forbidden tree,

[16] *civ.* 11.33: "inmundo amore fumantem [societatem angelorum]."

[17] Their having *cupiditas* is synonymous with their having acquired certain character traits: "superbi fallaces invidi effecti sunt," a state comparable to *caecitas* (*civ.* 12.1).

[18] *civ.* 11.33.

[19] Again, Augustine's *voluntas* is like Cicero's *affectio*; for the identification of *affectiones* with *vitia*, *Tusc.* 4.29, 4.34. Cf. *civ.* 12.6: "voluntatem malam … ipsa quia facta est, adpetivit."

[20] Cf. *civ.* 11.17–12.9 passim, e.g., 12.3: "inimici enim sunt resistendi voluntate;" 12.6: "aut habet aut non habet aliquam voluntatem; si habet, aut bonam profecto habet aut malam.… Erit enim, si ita est, bona voluntas causa peccati, quo absurdius putari nihil potest"; 12.9: "sine bona voluntate, hoc est dei amore, numquam sanctos angelos fuisse credendum est." Cf. also *conf.* 8.5.10: "ex voluntate perversa libido."

[21] *civ.* 18.2, "utilitates at cupiditates suas quibusque sectantibus." Trans. Levine et al. adapted.

[22] *civ.* 12.6.

[23] "defluxerunt," *civ.* 12.1; "a bono sponte deficit," *civ.* 12.9.

[24] *civ.* 14.13.

could have occurred. The contrast he invokes is clearly one between doing and being: "the evil act (*opus*), i.e., the transgression involving their eating the forbidden fruit, was committed by those who were already bad. For only a bad tree [disposition] could have produced that evil fruit [the deed]."[25] As in the case of the angels, this disposition is also said to have originated occurrently. The bad tree is a "*voluntas* which had grown dark and cold," a vitiation of the original nature of man.[26] This *voluntas mala* had its beginning (*initium*) in an act of "defection" from or "desertion" of the good sought beforehand.[27] The defection was an *appetitus* for self-exaltation.[28]

It is clear throughout both of these books, and throughout his corpus, that Augustine thinks the original sins of the angels and humans were essentially the same: a turning away from God by rational creatures, through pride. Thus the "turning away" (*conversio*) of the good angels who became bad is the same sort of psychic event as the "defection" – i.e., *appetitus* – of the human pair who also fell away. Thus, in both cases, an occurrent appetite preceded and caused a dispositional will (*appetitus* → *voluntas*).

The case of Adam and Eve now differs from that of the demons only insofar as it seems to jump from a dispositional *voluntas* to an external action (*voluntas* → *opus*), whereas the demons' disposition was said to yield occurrent appetite (*voluntas* → *appetitus*). However, if Augustine holds that an occurrent appetite is necessary for the doing of any external deed, we will need to insert an *appetitus* between the humans' disposition (*voluntas*) and act (*opus*). Then the psychological progression would be the same for the human pair as for the demons, up until the point of the *opus* which completes the series (*appetitus* → *voluntas* → *appetitus* → *opus*). In fact, this is what Augustine tells us in *City of God* 5.9; and throughout his corpus, he constantly describes action as effected by a preceding *appetitus actionis*.[29] Thus the psychology of action operating in the human pair should indeed be described as:

appetitus → *voluntas* → *appetitus* → *opus*
occurent → disposition → occurrent → external act

What is most interesting, however, is that the first and third elements in this sequence also go by another name: *voluntas*. Augustine repeatedly refers to the efficient cause of an action (the third element) as a *voluntas* (most explicitly, *mala voluntas causa efficiens est operis mali*, *civ.* 12.6) when speaking of

[25] *civ.* 14.13: "Non ergo malum opus factum est, id est illa transgressio ut cibo prohibito vescerentur, nisi ab eis qui iam mali erant. Neque enim fieret ille fructus malus nisi ab arbore mala." Trans. Levine et al.

[26] *civ.* 14.13.

[27] "deseruit," *civ.* 13.15; *civ.* 14.11: "defectus ab opere Dei ad sua opera"; *civ.* 14.13: "deficit homo."

[28] *civ.* 14.13.

[29] See esp. *conf.* 13.32.47, *conf.* 2.9.17, *conf.* 10.20.29, *trin.* 9.12.18, 10.2.4, 11.2.2, 11.11.18, 12.13.21, 15.26.47, *en. Ps.* 74.3, *Simpl.* 2.4, *civ.* 14.18, 14.26, 22.22.

the demons.[30] He also refers to the initial turning away or defection (the first *appetitus* in the series) as a *voluntas*: "the first evil *voluntas* … was a falling away (*defectus*)."[31] In other words, we find the following:

voluntas → *voluntas* → *voluntas* → *opus*
occurrent → disposition → occurrent → external act

An orientation toward action runs through the whole of this psychological sequence. The third *voluntas* in the series is a *causa efficiens operis*, also known as *appetitus actionis*, as we have already seen. The first *voluntas* is as well, for Augustine says that this occurrent *voluntas*, the *appetitus* for perverse self-exaltation which was the defection, was "a falling away from the work (*opere*) of God to the will's own works (*opera*)."[32] And as shown earlier, the dispositional *voluntas,* or second item in the series, is a disposition toward pursuing (*sectari*) goods of the class toward which one is oriented. Thus occurrent and dispositional *voluntates* are, for Augustine, occurrent and dispositional forms of *appetitus actionis*.

Because Augustine translates the Greek *hormē* by *appetitus actionis*, and because the Stoics spoke of both an active and a dispositional form of *hormē*, it is quite reasonable to conclude that in these texts he is using *voluntas* as a translation for Stoic *hormē.*

II.1b. *Confessions* 8

Turning to *Confessions* book eight, we find confirmation of our theory, and discover additional Stoic features of his usage. When he famously describes how he was divided between "*voluntates,*"[33] also called "parts of *voluntas,*" he relies on the concept of dispositional *hormē.* He recounts:

> My two wills … were in conflict with one another, and their discord robbed my soul of all concentration.[34]
>
> So there are two wills. Neither of them is complete, and what is present in the one is lacking to the other.[35]
>
> A will half-wounded, struggling with one part rising up and another part falling down …[36]

[30] Cf. *civ.* 5.9: "humanae voluntates humanorum operum causae sunt," *civ.* 12.6.15: "quid est enim quod facit voluntatem malam, cum ipsa faciat opus malum?" In *trin.* 9.12.18 occurrent *appetitus* and *voluntas* are interchanged, as they are at *trin.* 15.26.47.

[31] *civ.* 14.11; cf. 12.6, passim.

[32] *civ.* 14.11: "Mala vero voluntas prima … defectus … fuit quidam ab opere Dei ad sua opera."

[33] In addition to the following passages, see *conf.* 8.10.24.

[34] *conf.* 8.5.10: "duae voluntates meae … conflingebant inter se atque discordando dissipabant animam meam."

[35] *conf.* 8.9.21: "ideo sunt duae voluntates, quia una earum tota non est et hoc adest alteri, quod deest alteri."

[36] *conf.* 8.8.19: "Semisauciam … voluntatem parte adsurgente cum alia parte cadente luctantem …" Trans. Chadwick adapted.

These wills or "parts" of will are dispositions to pursue distinct classes of goods, and have been formed by habitual actions, as he says: "… my two *voluntates*, one old, the other new … were in conflict with one another … I was split between them.… But I was responsible for the fact that habit (*consuetudo*) had become so embattled against me."[37] One "will" tends toward a sensual lifestyle and has been forged by his habitual relations with women;[38] the other tends toward a celibate life and has been formed by repeated musing on the philosophical ideal of study and on biblical exhortations to the unmarried state, as well as by frequenting (*frequentare*) the church.[39]

Voluntates are also occurrent impulses toward particular acts in this book. Augustine indicates that the repeated actions which had built up his dispositional *voluntates* had each been preceded by the occurent willing of individual actions: "I was responsible for the fact that habit (*consuetudo*) had become so embattled against me, because it was [by] willing (*volens*) that I had come to be where [i.e. in the state which] I did not [now] want [any longer]."[40] Later, too, the assumption underlying his usage is that the efficient causes of individual actions are occurrent *voluntates*. He explains that when one deliberates between going to the theater and going to church, there are "two wills quarrelling with one another."[41] Similarly,

> both *voluntates* are evil when one is deliberating whether to kill a person by poison or [to kill] by a dagger; whether to encroach on one estate belonging to someone else or [to encroach on] a different one … whether to buy pleasure by lechery or avariciously to keep his money; whether to go to the circus or [to go] to the theater … or … to steal … or … to commit adultery.[42]

Again, the wills are good when one is deliberating whether "to take delight in a reading from the apostle … to take delight in a sober psalm … [or] to discourse upon the gospel."[43] Augustine makes explicit that these wills, or occurrent impulses to act, are each aimed at attaining one intentional object: "They tear the mind apart by their mutual incompatibility – four or more wills, according to the number of things desired."[44]

[37] *conf.* 8.5.10–11: "Ita duae voluntates meae, una vetus, alia nova … conflingebant inter se …. Sed tamen consuetudo adversus me pugnacior ex me facta erat."

[38] See *conf.* 6.15.25–6.16.26, 8.11.26; cf. 8.10.24 (*familiaritate*).

[39] See *conf.* 6.12.21–22, 6.14.24, 8.6.13, 8.1.2.

[40] *conf.* 8.5.11.

[41] *conf.* 8.10.23: "Si ergo quisquam … altercantibus duabus voluntatibus fluctuet, utrum ad theatrum pergat an ad ecclesiam nostram…"

[42] *conf.* 8.10.24.

[43] *conf.* 8.10.24. Trans. Chadwick adapted.

[44] *conf.* 8.10.24: "discerpunt enim animum sibimet adversantibus quattuor voluntatibus vel etiam pluribus in tanta copia rerum, quae appetuntur." Trans. Chadwick adapted.

II.2. "FREE CHOICE (OF THE WILL)" IN *ON FREE CHOICE*, *LITERAL MEANING OF GENESIS* 9, AND *CITY OF GOD* 5

Finally, Stoic action theory and epistemology help to clarify the meaning of Augustinian "free will," the phrase often used to translate Augustine's *arbitrium voluntatis*, *liberum arbitrium voluntatis*, and *libera voluntas*. It is evident that he does not mean by these terms to refer to a faculty of uncaused willing, since he agrees with the Stoics that every event has an efficient cause.[45]

II.2a. *(Liberum) Arbitrium Voluntatis*: Augustine, Cicero, and Early Christian Writers

We begin with the phrase *arbitrium voluntatis.* As we have noticed, the Stoics asserted that human impulse is preceded by assent to a passively received hormetic impression. They contrasted this with the case of nonrational animals, which lack the power of assent;[46] in these, impulse simply follows such impressions. If Augustine is deeply indebted to Stoicism for his notion of *voluntas*, we would expect that when he uses the phrase *arbitrium voluntatis* he is being somewhat redundant, using *arbitrium* to stipulate in what way *voluntas* is specifically rational *hormē* – namely that it is *hormē* that follows on assent (choice, *arbitrium*). Augustine might feel the need to spell this out, given that we have seen him allowing the term *voluntas* to be used of irrational impulse in an extended, nontechnical sense.[47]

Our expectation is met in a number of texts. In *Literal Meaning of Genesis* 9.14.25, while making epistemological claims that clearly show his debt to Stoicism, Augustine interchanges *arbitrium* with *iudicium* and associates these with *voluntas* in order to distinguish the impulse of rational beings from that of any living creature, which he calls *appetitus*:

> For every living soul, not only rational, as in men, but also irrational, as in beasts and birds and fish, is moved by impressions. But the rational soul either consents to the impressions or does not consent, by a choice which generates impulse: but the irrational [soul] does not have this judgment; nevertheless in accordance with its nature it is propelled once having been affected by some impression. And it is not in the power of any soul which impressions come to it, whether [they come to it] in the bodily sense or in the interior spirit itself [i.e., the imagination]: [but in all cases it is true that] by such impressions the impulse of any animal is activated.[48]

[45] See e.g., *civ.* 5.9, where he argues against Cicero: "The concession that Cicero makes, that nothing happens unless preceded by an efficient cause (*causa efficiens*), is enough to refute him in this debate [with the Stoics].... It is enough when he admits that everything that happens, happens only by virtue of a preceding cause (*causa praecedente*)."

[46] See Inwood (1985) 44.

[47] *civ.* 5.9, cited earlier.

[48] "Omnis enim anima viva, non solum rationalis, sicut in hominibus, verum etiam irrationalis, sicut in pecoribus, et volatilibus, et piscibus, visis movetur. Sed anima rationalis voluntatis

Because the judgment (*iudicium*) referred to is identified as consent (*consentire*) or refusal of consent to an impression, we know that the "choice" (*arbitrium*) that is given as its synonym is a choice between the options of mentally asserting that the impression is accurate, or asserting that it is false.

This phrase *arbitrium voluntatis* also occurs in *City of God* 5 when Augustine argues for the Stoics, against Cicero, that God's foreknowledge is compatible with what he calls *arbitrium voluntatis*; and it again shows Augustine's Stoic patrimony. He summarizes the philosophical challenge posed by Cicero in the *De Fato*[49] thus:

> If all future events are foreknown … the order of causes is fixed (*certus est ordo causarum*) … If this is the case, there is nothing really in our power, and there is no rational impulse (*nihil est in nostra potestate nullumque est arbitrium voluntatis*). And if we grant this, says Cicero, the whole basis of human life is overthrown: it is in vain that laws are made, that men employ reprimands and praise … and there is no justice in a system of rewards for the good and punishment for the bad.[50]

The phrase *arbitrium voluntatis* is Augustine's addition to Cicero's text; he gives it as a synonym for Cicero's phrase *in nostra potestate* (*eph' hēmin*). It becomes clear that Augustine understands the *voluntas* in this phrase to mean *hormē/appetitus,* and that *arbitrium* is a reference to assent, when we consider the original passage from *De Fato* 40, which he is summarizing. It says: If an impression received from the outside is the cause of impulse (*appetitus*), assent (*assensio*) or action (*actio*), then these are not in our power (*in nostra potestate*), in which case there is no justice in rewards and punishments.[51] Thus Augustine intends to sum up in one phrase (*nihil est in nostra potestate nullumque est arbitrium voluntatis*) the linkage between concepts (*appetitus*, *assensio*, and *in nostra potestate*) that Cicero establishes over the course of two sentences.

In the following paragraphs of *City of God* 5.9, Augustine repeatedly interchanges this *voluntatis arbitrium* with other phrases. One of these is *liberum voluntatis arbitrium*, where *liberum* seems to be applied for emphasis, the idea being that because assent is by definition a choice between options (to approve or not approve an impression), it is therefore necessarily "free."[52] Augustine

arbitrio vel consentit visis, vel non consentit: irrationalis autem non habet hoc iudicium; pro suo tamen genere atque natura viso aliquo tacta propellitur. Nec in potestate ullius animae est, quae illi visa veniant, sive in sensum corporis, sive in ipsum spiritum interius: quibus visis appetitus moveatur cuiuslibet animantis." My trans.

[49] Attributed to the *veteres*. See *fat.* 40.

[50] *civ.* 5.9: "Si praescita sunt omnia futura … certus est ordo causarum … Quod si ita est, nihil est in nostra potestate nullumque est in arbitrium voluntatis; quod si concedimus, inquit, omnis humana vita subvertitur, frustra leges dantur, frustra obiurgationes laudes … neque ulla iustitia bonis praemia et malis supplicia constituta sunt." Trans. Levine et al. adapted.

[51] *fat.* 27.40.

[52] See also *lib.arb.* 1.16.34–35 for the interchange of *eligere* and *liberum arbitrium*: "quid autem quisque sectandum et amplectendum eligat in voluntate esse positum constitit … id faciamus ex libero arbitrio … liberum arbitrium, quo peccandi facultatem habere convincimur."

goes on to describe *voluntas* itself as "in our power" rather than "necessary" – i.e., to assert that it is free: "If the term 'necessity' should be used of what is not in our power (*non est in nostra potestate*), but accomplishes its end even against our will (*etiamsi nolimus*), for example, the necessity of death, then it is clear that our wills (*voluntates nostras*), by which we live rightly or wrongly, are not under such necessity."[53] The basis for this truism is the fact that *arbitrium* precedes human impulse;[54] it makes human impulse by definition "free" or "in our power."

When Augustine defends the justice of God's punishments in the *On Free Choice*, he also associates *voluntas* with *liberum arbitrium*, and again Stoic epistemology and action theory are at work. *Voluntas* is said to be a necessary condition for acts to be evaluated morally – "no action would be either a sin or a good deed which was not done *voluntate*"[55] – and it is interchanged with *in libero arbitrio*. Thus we find:

> The first man could have sinned even if he were created wise; and since that sin would have been a matter of free choice (*in libero arbitrio*), it would have been justly punished in accordance with divine law.… The transitions between wisdom and folly never take place except through will (*numquam nisi per voluntate*), and for this reason they are followed by just retribution.[56]

Augustine goes on to explain why he has interchanged these two. *Voluntas* is impulse rooted in the rational capacity of assent to impressions:

> But since nothing incites will toward action except some impression,[57] but whether someone either affirms or rejects [it] is in his power, but there is no power [for him over whether] he is touched by this impression, it must be acknowledged that the rational soul is affected by both superior and inferior [kinds of] impressions, with the result that the rational substance chooses from either class what it wills, and by virtue of its choosing either misery or happiness follows. For example, in the Garden of Eden …

[53] *civ.* 5.10.

[54] Thus he asserts that it is necessary (by definition) that "when we will, we will by free choice" ("dicimus necesse esse, ut cum volumus, libero velimus arbitrio") (*civ.* 5.10). This is the reason why at *civ.* 5.10 we hear that *voluntas* cannot exist, except as the *voluntas* of the one who wills, and not of another person (*nec alterius, sed eius*); will by definition belongs to the one who wills. For other texts asserting that one cannot be compelled to will, see Rist (1994) 134, 186.

[55] *lib. arb.* 2.1.3.

[56] *lib. arb.* 3.24.72–73: "Etiam si sapiens primus homo factus est potuisse tamen seduci, quod peccatum cum esset in libero arbitrio, iustam divina lege poenam consecutam.… Illa autem numquam nisi per voluntatem, unde iustissimae retributiones consecuntur." Augustine contrasts such transitions with passing from sleep to wakefulness and vice versa, which he says is involuntary (*sine voluntate*). Trans. adapted from Williams (1993). For synonymous use of *libera voluntas* and *liberum voluntatis arbitrium* in the *lib.arb.*, see e.g., 2.18.47.

[57] On the necessity of a foregoing motivating impression, or *suggestio*, cf. *lib.arb.* 3.25.75; cf. Ch. 2.3.

man had no control over what the Lord commanded or what the devil suggested. But it was in his power not to yield to the impressions of inferior pleasure.…[58]

Plainly *voluntas* is here a rational being's impulse toward action, and to be rational is to have the capacity to yield or not yield to impressions. As was the case in the *City of God*, this capacity is what prevents humans from being necessitated; and by it God's justice in punishing human actions is saved. The voluntary movement of soul (*motus animi*) by which all sin occurs is in our power because it follows from rejection or approbation of impressions;[59] and so God does not cause everything he foreknows – rather, human beings are responsible for their acts.[60]

Augustine's use of the phrase (*liberum*) *arbitrium voluntatis* should also be seen in the context of earlier Christians writing in Latin – Cyprian, Marius Victorinus, Ambrose, Paulinus of Nola[61] – who speak this way when making a distinction between things we are forced to do and things we do voluntarily, that is, from an interior impulse, *sponte* (cf. Cicero's usage of *voluntate*). In these writers, the expression (*libero*) *arbitrio voluntatis* apparently means the same thing as *ex arbitrio et voluntate* (wording found e.g., in Tertullian, *Against Hermogenes*). It is coming out of Hellenistic philosophical currents including, prominently, Stoicism (perhaps through conduits such as Pantaenus, Clement of Alexandria's Stoic teacher). For it is in Stoicism that we find the claim that properly human acts originate in *prohairesis kai hormē*[62] (cf. e.g., Clement of Alexandria *Stromata* 1.17). *Prohairesis* means power of choice/consent (cf. *arbitrium*); the Latin writers pair *arbitrium* with *voluntas* (so *voluntas* presumably taking the place of *hormē*).

A remaining question is why the authors who put *hormē/voluntas* into the genitive – giving us *voluntatis arbitrium* instead of *ex arbitrio et voluntate* – do this. It may be intended as an objective genitive stipulating that one is choosing to have impulse, in the case of rational impulse. (Here we are reminded of Frede's distinction between choosing to will and choosing to act, and his assertion that Epictetus allows the former to human beings though not the latter.[63] The former could presumably be alluded to with this kind of objective genitive: my choice is of willing, not of the successful completion of the action itself, since success is outside of my control.) In this sense, the point of

[58] *lib.arb.* 3.25.74. My trans., except the second to last sentence, which is Williams'.

[59] See also the passages on consent in *mend.* 9.12–14 and *s. dom. m.* 1.12.34; these are discussed by Kirwan (1998) 186, 190.

[60] *lib. arb.* 3.1.2–3.1.3 and 3.4.11.

[61] Cyprian *de habitu virginum* 23 (*voluntatis arbitrium liberum*), *ep*. 72.3.2 (*voluntatis arbitrium liberum*); Marius Victorinus *adversus Arium* 4.32 (*voluntatis arbitrium*), Ambrose *de fide* 2.6 (*voluntatis arbitrium*), 4.11 (*voluntatis arbitrium*).

[62] Cf. Bobzien (1998) 160–164.

[63] Frede (2011) 46–47. But see my comment on this distinction, Ch. 7 n. 69.

the phrase is that when one has an occurrent or dispositional will it is one's own responsibility because it has been chosen (though not directly so, since the object of assent is the sentential content of the impression).[64] It may be intended as a kind of explicative genitive meaning practical judgment (as opposed to merely epistemic judgment), that is, consent to an action-inducing impression (a *suggestio*), which generates impulse. The idea would be that we have impulse because there was assent to the sayables in a *motivating* impression.[65] Rist (1994) 186–189 suggested it was a possessive and that *voluntas* refers to a (dispositional) set of wants (citing a sense of *prohairesis* in Epictetus and of *voluntas* in Seneca) from which occurrent choices result. And of course medieval commentators took it as a possessive indicating an act of choice proceeding from a faculty of will. In response to Rist, whose suggestion is the more plausible of these last two, I would say that while it is true that Augustine thinks we choose as we do because of our dispositions, he uses the phrase *arbitrium voluntatis* where it is occurrent (not dispositional) *voluntas* that is at issue.

II.2b. *Libera Voluntas*

Thus far we have seen that Augustine calls both *arbitrium voluntatis* and *voluntas* "in our power," and also makes the former synonymous with *liberum arbitrium voluntatis* in the *City of God*. We have observed, moreover, that he interchanges *in libero arbitrio* with *voluntate* in the *On Free Choice*. It comes as no surprise, then, that elsewhere in the *City of God* he substitutes *arbitrium voluntatis* for *voluntate facere,* for *in nostra voluntate*, and, occasionally, for *libera voluntas*.[66] Moreover, when summarizing Cicero, he uses *in nostra voluntate* to stand in for Cicero's phrase *in nostra potestate*.[67] Apparently he considers it enough to say "in our impulse" (*in nostra voluntate*) or "to do by [rational] impulse" (*voluntate facere*) to indicate that an act is in our power, given that assent has preceded. Thus *libera voluntas, arbitrium voluntatis*, and *liberum arbitrium voluntatis* are synonymous, meaning "rational impulse

[64] Similarly Kirwan (1989) 86, although without reference to the Stoic background and without stipulation that *arbitrium* understood as assent is the real locus of this "freedom": "When he [i.e., Augustine] does say that the human will is free (e.g., *duab. an.* 12.15), he usually means, I think, that men are free *whether* or not to exercise their wills – to engage in the activity of willing."

[65] Compare the definition of rational impulse (*hormē logikē*) in Stobaeus 2.86.17–87.6 (LS 53Q): rational impulse is a movement of thought (*dianoia*) toward something in the sphere of action (*epi ti tōn en tōi prattein*).

[66] *civ.* 5.9–10.

[67] See *civ.* 5.9, when summarizing what he takes to be the Ciceronian objection.

which is by definition free."[68] And *pace* Rist, the term *libera voluntas* is not new to Augustine but is in Cicero's *fat.* 9.20.

When *libera voluntas* occurs in the *On Free Choice*, it is sometimes interchanged with *voluntas*; both have a clear connection to action[69] and are linked to recognizable Latin terms for *hormē*: *voluntas libera* "has *motus*,"[70] *voluntas* is "turned by *motus*,"[71] and when people turn *libera voluntas* toward inferior things, they *appetunt* those inferior things.[72] Given that *voluntas* and *libera voluntas* are interchanged, the *libera* again seems to have been employed for emphasis.

Nor is it non-Stoic that the phrases *libera voluntas* or simply *voluntas* are sometimes used for a power (*potentia*) of the rational soul (*animi*)[73] – something given to man by the creator,[74] which remains in us[75] regardless of whether we use it well or badly:[76]

Libera voluntas is a good, since no one can live rightly without it.… The powers of the soul, without which one cannot live rightly, are intermediate goods.… *Voluntas* itself

[68] Similarly, Rist (1994) 186 n. 91: "The phrase 'free will' (*libera voluntas*) occurs rarely, if at all, before Augustine, who might seem to use it merely as an alternative for *liberum arbitrium voluntatis* (*lib.arb.* 3.1.1)."

[69] *libera voluntas* is "of asking, of seeking, of striving" ("liberam voluntatem petendi et quarendi et conandi non abstulit [Creator]," *lib.arb.* 3.20.), is oriented toward doing (*ad faciendum*) ("Video enim ex hoc quod incertum est, utrum ad recte faciendum voluntas libera data sit, cum per illam etiam peccare possimus, fieri etiam illud incertum, utrum dari debuerit"/ "It is uncertain whether free will was given for acting rightly, since we can also sin through it; consequently it is also uncertain whether it ought to have been given" (*lib.arb.* 2.2.5)). Thus the question is whether the power was given for acting *rightly* as opposed to *wrongly*, it being assumed that the power is oriented toward action.

[70] "Si ita data est voluntas libera ut naturalem habeat istum motum …" (*lib.arb.* 3.1.1). (The question here is whether *voluntas libera* by necessity has a sinful *motus*.) This translation and those following, unless otherwise noted, are (often adapted) from T. Williams, *On Free Choice of the Will* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993).

[71] *lib. arb.* 3.1.1: "Cupio per te cognoscere unde ille motus existat quo ipsa voluntas avertitur a communi atque incommutabili bono."

[72] *lib. arb.* 2.19.53: "Ita fit ut neque illa bona quae a peccantibus appetuntur ullo modo mala sint neque ipsa voluntas libera … sed malum sit aversio eius ab incommutabili bono et conversio ad mutabilia bona."

[73] "voluntas libera tibi videbitur nullum bonum, sine qua recte nemo vivit? … potentiae vero animi, sine quibus recte vivi non potest, media bona sunt" (*lib.arb.* 2.18.49–2.19.19.50).

[74] *lib. arb.* 2.1.1: "Debuit igitur deus dare homini liberam voluntatem"; Book Two assumes that *libera voluntas* is a thing in the soul; the question is whether to count it as a good thing, e.g.,: "utrum in bonis numeranda sit voluntas libera" (*lib.arb.* 2.3.7), "utrum expediri possit: inter bona esse numerandam liberam voluntatem" (*lib.arb.* 2.18.47).

[75] "Non nego ita necesse esse … ita eum [Deum] praescire ut maneat tamen nobis voluntas libera atque in nostra posita potestate" (*lib.arb.* 3.3.8).

[76] The intermediate goods, the powers of the soul, can be used either well or badly ("mediis … non solum bene sed etiam male quisque uti potest" (*lib.arb.* 2.19.50)). Cf. *civ*. 13.14: "a liberi arbitrii malo usu series calamitatis huius exorta est."

is only an intermediate good. But when *voluntas* turns away from the unchangeable and common good toward its own private good, or toward external or inferior things, it sins.... Hence the goods that are pursued by sinners are in no way evil things, and neither is *libera voluntas* itself, which we found is to be counted among the intermediate goods.[77]

The Stoics also spoke of *hormē* as a power of the rational soul.[78] This usage of *voluntas libera* for a power is not common in Augustine's corpus, though it is repeated as late as the *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* (in 426): "We always have free will, but it is not always good.... Our ability [to will] is useful when we will [rightly]."[79] In such cases, he is using *voluntas* and *voluntas libera* as shorthand ways of referring to the capacity for having impulse that follows on assent.

II.3. THE QUESTION OF AUGUSTINE'S SOURCES

As we have seen, by *voluntas* Augustine does not mean the virtuous person's "good emotion" of reasonable desire (desire for real goods, viz. the virtues), despite the fact that Cicero uses the word as a translation for this Stoic *eupatheia* in the *Tusculanae*. Augustine uses *voluntas* for human *hormē* generally, and considered apart from affective feelings. Who, then, *was* Augustine's historical source for this usage?

Certainly another text of Cicero, the *De Fato*, is important. *Voluntas* is clearly used for impulse in *De Fato* 5.9, when it is paired with *appetitio,* and associated with action: "to sit and to walk and to do some thing."[80] Later (when summarizing Carneades),[81] Cicero exchanges the word *voluntas* for "voluntary impulse of the rational soul" (*motus animi voluntarius*);[82] thus again we see that he intends this word to refer to a specific kind of impulse – rational impulse. Cicero also speaks of *libera voluntas.* He indicates that this freedom is due to our rational capacity of assent, contrasting it with *necessitas fati* and appropriating it to the mind (*mens*).[83] Moreover he presents the question of whether any action is "of will" (*voluntatis*) as identical to the questions (a) whether

[77] *lib. arb.* 2.18.50–2.19.53.

[78] Aetius 4.21.1–4 (LS 53H), Iamblichus, *On the Soul* in Stobaeus 1.368, 12–20 (LS 53K), Galen *PHP* 2.5.9–13 (LS 53U).

[79] 15.31: "semper est autem in nobis voluntas libera, sed non semper est bona.... Utile est posse, cum volumus."

[80] *fat.* 5.9.

[81] On the fact that the Antiochian summaries of Stoic doctrine sometimes used by Cicero are likely to be influenced by the sceptical Academy, see Striker (1997) 258. On the use, e.g., of Antiochus' *Sosus* for the presentation of Stoic epistemology in the *Academica,* see Glucker (1978) 58 n. 4 and 419, and (1995) 133 n. 74.

[82] *fat.* 11.23 and 11.25.

[83] *fat.* 9.20.

anything is in our power (*in nostra potestate*), and (b) whether assent (*assensio*) is in our power.[84] The association of these concepts is precisely what we found in Augustine.

Seneca is another likely source. As mentioned in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, Augustine's occasional reference to self-command in connection with *voluntas* suggests the influence of Seneca.

Finally, as mentioned in Section 2a of this appendix, the phrase *(liberum) arbitrium voluntatis* has a Hellenistic philosophical patrimony, but Augustine's proximate sources for it seem to have been Christian Latin writers.

[84] *fat.* 27.40; cf. *fat.* 5.9.

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Index