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Evan T. Delaney April 19, 2011

Des Hommes et Des Dieux:
Augustine's *Unde et Quomodo*

by

Evan T. Delaney

Professor Kevin Corrigan
Adviser

Classics and Philosophy

Professor Kevin Corrigan

Adviser

Professor Christine Perkell

Committee Member

Professor Richard Williamon

Committee Member

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Abstract

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In book seven of Augustine's *Confessions*, Augustine attempts to see whence and how God can exist in an incorporeal nature. As the wording shows here, his whence and how, or in Latin, *unde et quomodo*, reveal that his solution must be two-fold. However, there are many scholars who believe that his answer is rather one-fold and go on to overly underscore the impact of Platonism on Augustine's thought. It is true that the Platonic ascent in book seven allows Augustine to see Truth, but this is not sufficient. His vision is temporary and he wants to grasp Truth permanently. He needs his *unde*, Christ as found in the Scriptures. Yet scholars ignore this and suggest that Augustine's answer stems from the Platonists. They are mistaken. Augustine is wholly Augustine and on the foundation of his Christian belief, which was instilled to him by his mother at an early age, he picks and chooses whatever tools he sees fit to add to his toolbox, his *quomodo*. And even with the Platonic ascent, the question must be asked, "Who is Augustine's guide?" Surely, this guide is not found in the Neoplatonists of Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, or others. Indeed, what distinguishes Augustine from the Platonists in one crucial aspect is that he uses a completely different intermediary. In this thesis we will critique scholars who overemphasize and limit Augustine's thoughts to the realm of Platonism.

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Acknowledgements

Ψαλμὸς τῷ Ἀσάφ.

Ὁ Θεὸς ἔστη ἐν συναγωγῇ θεῶν, ἐν
μέσῳ δὲ θεοὺς διακρινεῖ. Ἕως πότε
κρίνετε ἀδικίαν, καὶ πρόσωπα ἁμαρτωλῶν
λαμβάνετε; διάψαλμα. Κρίνατε ὀρφανὸν
καὶ πτωχὸν, ταπεινὸν καὶ πένητα δικαιώσατε.
Ἐξέλεσθε πένητα, καὶ πτωχὸν ἐκ χειρὸς
ἁμαρτωλοῦ ῥύσασθε.

Οὐκ ἔγνωσαν οὐδὲ συνῆκαν, ἐν σκότει
διαπορεύονται: σαλευθήσονται πάντα τὰ
θεμέλια τῆς γῆς. Ἐγὼ εἶπα, θεοί ἐστε, καὶ
υἱοὶ ὑψίστου πάντες. Ὑμεῖς δὲ ὡς ἄνθρωποι
ἀποθνήσκετε, καὶ ὡς εἷς τῶν ἀρχόντων
πίπτετε.

Ἀνάστα ὁ Θεός, κρῖνον τὴν γῆν, ὅτι σὺ
κατακληρονομήσεις ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν.

It ought to be self-evident to whom I owe my gratitude. Nonetheless, I give thanks to all who have helped me in my growth as a human, be it mind, body, or spirit. I would also like to further extend my appreciation to the professors on my committee who showed undeniable patience and willingness as they guided me along.

It is true: no man is an island.

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Introduction

Many people attempt to make sense out of a world that appears illogical. Several desire to bring order from chaos. Some spend their whole lives contemplating in attempt to find truth that veils herself from the superficiality of the senses. Few succeed in this endeavor and even fewer embody what they uncover and henceforth articulate.

One such person who happens to be in this class of the few is the philosopher Aurelius Augustinus or Augustine in English. The question that plagued him for a great amount of time was whence and how he could see God. The goal in this thesis is to show that Augustine uncovers his whence and how in the seventh book of Augustine's *Confessions*. In the development of this stance, I will argue against those who suggest his solution is merely one-fold rather than two-fold, who posit that Augustine becomes a Platonist in book seven, and who bestow the title of Christian Platonist onto him.

Born in 354 in the town of Thagaste, modern-day Souk Ahras in Algeria, Augustine lived under the Roman Empire as a Northern African (Brown xix). Living in the colony of Roman Africa, Augustine experienced a rich flourishing culture where the realm of Rome was not separate from that of his region: bound together by the Latin language, Hellenistic culture, continual transportation provided several times per week to and from the shores of southern Italy to northern Africa, and economic interdependence, these two hemispheres – Rome and North Africa – were one (Chadwick 6-7).

However as a boy, Augustine did not grow up in the powerful towns of Carthage or the sea-trading port of Hippo. Rather, he received his primary education in his provincial town of Thagaste, an area where trading crossroads met (Chadwick 7). In this sense, he was a country boy who shared the household with a pagan father, a Catholic mother, and two siblings – a

brother and a sister (Chadwick 7). Though his father owned a few acres of land and had some maidservants, Augustine's family was far from rich and struggled to put Augustine through school (Chadwick 7). While Augustine grew up in a region that spoke Punic, his education consisted of training in Greek and Latin, where he would have to memorize lines of Virgil and Homer and be capable of picking up any Greek philosophical work and reading it competently (Chadwick 8).

After his father's death, Augustine continued to pursue his liberal arts education in Carthage. His career path lay before him: a post in some great city in Italy where his skills as a rhetorician may be put to use in either speechcraft or law. Latin flowed through his veins and his instructors constantly drilled him in grammar and recitations of whole speeches composed by Cicero and Virgil (Brown xix). His knowledge of classical Latin culture could similarly be compared to what contemporary musical conservatories have to do (Brown xx). Yet unlike today, this classical education was almost the only means of achieving a successful and secure career for those not born directly into the privileged class. In a world where books and manuscripts were rare and expensive, a person's ability to articulate himself clearly and elegantly determined his success (Chadwick 5).

Even Augustine's mother, Monica, though worried about the salvation of his soul, did not want to stifle Augustine's career and rather pushed him on and left baptism an affair only to be more adamantly pursued after he had established a profession and had grown out of his sinful behavior as a youth (Brown xx). In his teenage years, Augustine had become involved with a common-law wife who bore a son for him, Adeodatus (Brown xx). His mother, feeling that this affair would stifle his career, had the couple separate and he entered into an arranged marriage with a young girl whose family connections would ensure his establishment as perhaps even a

regional governor (Brown xx-xxi). Augustine "was all hot for honors, money, marriage" (*Conf.* VI.6.9).

And hence Augustine's professional track began to bear fruit. He had become the "officially sponsored teacher of the much sought-after public-relations skill of rhetoric in the court-city of Milan" (Brown xv). Yet his heart was smoldering and could not find rest. The world was giving him all that he thought he needed: first it had endowed him pleasure in concupiscence and his life had now progressed towards honors, money, and marriage, but the further he became puffed up in the liberal arts and rhetoric, the further he felt ever restless.

Ever since he was a child, his mother had instilled him the Christian values that there exists a God and an intermediary called Christ. Though at the time he still did not understand what this actually meant. Only in some certain nebulous sense did he deduce that "our hearts are restless till they rest in" God (*Conf.* I.1.1). "His [God's] very existence instilled in all human hearts a restless yearning, a sense of being, somehow, forever out of place. This was a sense as universal as the law of gravity, as ancient persons understood that law: that is, not as a law of attraction, so much as a desire for completeness, as fierce and as unfailing as the homing instinct of a bird; a wish to come to rest in the source of one's on being" (Brown xxi-xxii). And so Augustine searched. He found nothing but only vice in "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (*Conf.* X.30.41). In his more youthful years, he happened upon the now only fragmentary work by Cicero known as the *Hortensius* that contained an exhortation to philosophy. Now he had discovered that he "should love, and seek, and win, and hold, and embrace, not this or that philosophical school but Wisdom itself, whatever it might be" (*Conf.* III.4.8).

Thus Augustine began his philosophical pursuit for Wisdom – Truth – God. However at first, the old Latin Bible repulsed him. It was vulgar, simple, and beneath the dignity of a man educated in the verbosity of Cicero. The story of Adam and Eve appeared to be some infantile naïve myth compared to the literature of the Greeks and Romans. The Israelite patriarchs had moralities that seemed unfitting. And moreover, the two genealogies of Jesus, as presented in Matthew and Luke, were incompatible (Chadwick 12). Though he had forgotten what initially brought him even to consider reading the Bible, as he witnessed in the Hortensius, "I used that book not for the sharpening of my tongue; what won me in it was what it said, not the excellence of its phrasing" (*Conf.* III.4.7). Augustine was "so gross of mind" that he did not see that in such a humble presentation, the scriptures also contain vast complicated allegorical meanings (*Conf.* VII.1.2).

From this, Augustine looked for his *requiem* elsewhere. He hooked himself up with the religion of Mani, Manichaeism. Though connected with Christianity, Manichaeism took Christianity and developed it into something dualistic and pantheistic that would supply a solution to the question, "What is the origin of evil?" (Chadwick 13). The answer rendered in Manichaeism was such: in the beginning there were two opposing forces, the Light and the Dark, which battled each other. Unable to vanquish the Dark, the Light had been damaged and little fragments of God – the souls of all living things – were scattered into Dark realm trapped behind enemy lines. These enemy lines happened to be the bodies into which the souls of creatures were trapped. And so while the soul was good, the body was not and was the cause of all things evil and hence blame and responsibility were rendered null, as it was body, which the soul had no power over, that performed acts contrary to goodness (*Conf.* VII.2.3; Chadwick 13-14). And

along with this notion of creation put forward by the Manichees, the Manichees also placed faith in what heavenly bodies foretold – astrology.

However, several years later, in 397, severally sick and close to death, Augustine would write a work taking the reader through his life from his spiritual descent as a youth and teenager to an ascent, transcendence, and conversion as a young adult. This work would become *Confessionum Libri Tredecim – Confessions* (*in thirteen books*).

In here, Augustine unearths for his audience how he finally is able to find rest. He rejects the Manichees and astrology, proposes his own theory concerning evil, and then goes on to write a preliminary exegesis on the opening lines of *Genesis*. Books I-IX entail his autobiography and the remaining books move into more philosophical musings. He does not find the key to his dilemma though until book VII. There he holds certain statements to be true, but he does know *unde et quomodo* – "whence and how" (*Conf.* VII.1.1). In its development though, Augustine learns that he can discover the "whence" through philosophical ascent and the "how" through Christ. After debunking Manichaeism in book seven, he then finally presents the pinnacle of his conversion story in book eight when he hears a boy's or girl's voice saying, "*Tolle, lege*." He snatched up his Apostle's book and opening it, he read the first passage that fell upon his eyes, "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscence" (*Conf.* VIII.12.29). And from this, he read no more.

At the age of thirty-three, on Easter Vigil, April 23, 387, Augustine was baptized by his supporting bishop, Ambrose, and ceremonially entered into union with Christ and his Church. Augustine gave up his political career and such worldly pursuits and focused his life towards inner reflection. Though his mother was adamant in his pursuit of a career, after his conversion

she breathed a sigh of relief that Augustine had been saved and she departed the world only months later due to malaria. Ironically though, Augustine would be asked by the Catholics of Hippo to take up the reins of responsibility as their bishop in 391 and hence he entered the public world again, but this time for the glory of God and all its hardships – such as arbitration – as priest of a large port city (Brown xvi). Augustine lived through that sickness that plagued him in 397 and having divorced himself from the Classical career, though not from its eloquence, he produced a great oeuvre mixing his faculty with the pen with that of scripture and was able to come to terms not only with God, but also with the transience of the world after the fall of Rome in 410.

Book seven in Augustine's *Confessions* poses the question about how one truly sees God. From this, there are further questions that follow including how does an eternal God create a temporal world, whence does evil come, what is the validity of astrology, and so forth. In an attempt to make a bold move and mix my educational background within the humanities and sciences in this thesis, I propose that just as Isaac Newton postulated three fundamental laws of motion to describe the relationship between forces acting upon physical bodies, so too does Augustine put forward two premises that will help him fully understand the relationship between God and his creation: 1) where one finds Truth is in the mind, 2) how one reaches Truth is through the mediator, the Christ. It is important to note that Augustine does not even entertain the possibility or question whether God exists (Brown xxiv). For Augustine, this is as self-evident as that invisible physical force that bounds a person to the surface of the Earth. As Newton does not waste time asserting whether gravity exists or not, so too does Augustine not dally on what he would consider the trivialities of God's existence.

At the beginning of book seven, Augustine asserts that God is supreme and incorruptibility, but he does know whence and how this is: "I set myself to think of you as the supreme and sole and true God; and with all my heart I believed You incorruptible and inviolable and immutable, *quia nesciens unde et quomodo,* yet I saw with utter certainty that what can be corrupted is lower than what cannot be corrupted, that the inviolable is beyond question better than the violable, and that what can suffer no change is better than what can be changed" (*Conf.* VII.1.1). This "unde" and "quomodo" are the two premises proposed above, respectively, that allow him to not just know, but also understand how God is incorruptible.

By only affirming that God is incorruptible and not comprehending why he is such, Augustine can only superficially tackle at the beginning of book seven questions concerning the creation story by the Manichees, astrology, and evil. Since he does not understand and only knows, he falls short of providing his own convincing arguments on these topics and has to utilize his friends' arguments when he wishes to discredit the Manichees and deny the validity of astrology. Without his friends to assist him on the origins of evil, it becomes ever more obvious that Augustine must find grounding in his proposition that God is incorruptible. He wants to understand, but all he believes is that God is incorruptible and a misconception – that misconception being: "I could not conceive any other kind of substance than what these eyes are accustomed to see" (*Conf.* VII.1.1). He must work out the "unde" and "quomodo" to overcome this.

After these initial problems in the opening chapter of book seven, Augustine happens upon the books of Greek philosophers and discovers that the only way to see God is by turning his outward eyes inward and by using the eyes of his soul to see the incorporeal Light. And thus having presented his Platonic ascent both in chapters IX and XVII – the places where his inward

journey from the bottom of the hill to its crest occurs – Augustine demonstrates where one finds Truth.

> I was now studying the ground of my admiration for the beauty of bodies, whether celestial or of earth, and on what authority I might rightly judge of things mutable and say, "This ought to be so, that not so." Enquiring then what was the source of my judgment, when I did so judge I had discovered the immutable and true eternity of truth above my changing mind. Thus by stages I passed from bodies to the soul which uses the body for its perceiving, and from this to the soul's inner power, to which the body's senses present external things, as indeed the beasts are able; and from there I passed on to the reasoning power, to which is referred for judgment what is received from the body's senses. This too realized that it was mutable in me, and rose to its own understanding. It withdrew my thought from its habitual way, abstracting from the confused crowds of phantasms that it might find what light suffused it, when with utter certainty it cried aloud that the immutable was to be preferred to the mutable, and how it had come to know the immutable, it could not have known it as certainly preferable to the mutable. Thus in the thrust of a trembling glance my mind arrived at That Which Is. (*Conf.* VII.17.23).

However, though Augustine finds where his basis from which "God is incorruptible" originates, there is something missing to it. Just as he notes when he stumbles upon Cicero and his work *Hortensius*, these Greek philosophers do not bear the name of Christ and he wishes not to fully embrace their work even though they have seen God as well. He now sees Truth from afar but when he gazes at it, he cannot maintain his stare and must turn away. His goal now is to develop the strength so that he may not only see Truth, but that he may also embrace it. And unlike his Greek counterparts, who set up false gods and idols in an attempt to achieve these ends, he realizes for himself that it comes only through the Mediator, Christ, the pathway towards completion.

> Then indeed I saw clearly Your invisible things which are understood by the things that are made; but I lacked the strength to hold my gaze fixed, and my weakness was beaten back again so that I returned to my old habits, bearing nothing with me but a memory of delight and a desire as for something of which I had caught the fragrance but which I had not yet strength to eat. (*Conf.* VII.17.23)

> Further I read there that Your only-begotten Son was before all times and beyond all times and abides unchangebeably, co-eternal with You, and that of His fullness souls receive, that they may be blessed, and that by participation in that wisdom which abides in itself they are renewed that they may be wise. But I did not read that in due time He died for the ungodly, and that Thou didst not spare Thy only-begotten Son but delivered Him up for us all. For Thou has hid these things from the wise and hast revealed them to little ones, that those who labor and are burdened should come to Him and He should refresh them, because He is meek and humble of heart; and the meek He directs in judgment, and the gentle He teaches His ways, beholding our lowness and our trouble and forgiving all our sins. But those who wear the high boots of their sublimer doctrine do not hear Him saying, Learn of me for I am meek and humble of heart and you shall find rest for your souls; and if they know God, they have not glorified him as God or given thanks: but become vain in their thoughts; and their foolish heart is darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they become fools. (*Conf.* VII.9.14)

> So I set about finding a way to gain the strength that was necessary for enjoying You. And I could not find it until I embraced the Mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ, who is over all things, God blessed forever, who was calling unto me and saying, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and who brought into union with our nature that Food which I lacked the strength to take: for the Word was made flesh that Your Wisdom, by which You created all things, might give suck to our soul's infancy. (*Conf.* VII.18.24)

> They scorned to learn from Him, because He is meek and humble of heart. For thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them to the little ones. It is one thing to see the land of peace from the wooded mountaintop, yet not find the way to it and struggle hopelessly far from the way, with hosts of those fugitive deserters from God, under their leader the Lion and the Dragon, besetting us about and ever lying in wait; and quite another to hold to the way that leads there, a way guarded by the care of our heavenly General, where there are no deserters from the army of heaven to practice their robberies – for indeed they avoid that way as a torment. (*Conf.* VII.21.27)

Finally, Augustine has found the foundation from which all his other secondary truths may pour forth. When Augustine acknowledges that God is incorruptible, he does not know whence and how this is so. He does affirm the existence of God and that he should be wary of any philosophical texts that do not possess the name of Christ, but that still does not permit him to find the location from which he may defend an incorruptible God. What further complicates the issues is that he affirms that a substance must exist corporeally for it to exist at all. But when

he attempts to consider a corporeal God, this only leads to an oxymoron in his discussions and he cannot harmonize corporeality with God. If he were to consider God as an endless sea and creation as God's sponge, that would suggest that God fills an object that has a great volume than one with a smaller volume. Augustine cannot accept this view for he believes God must be infinite everywhere. From this, he knows that he must envision God immaterially, but since he holds that only material substances exist, this would entail that God does not exist. Thus he does not know whence and how his incorruptible God exists except for the fact that he would find it abominable to affirm any other truth. But after turning towards the philosophers, he discovers the place where God can exist as an incorporeal substance, yet still exist, and he finally finds one aspect of his foundational law – the "unde." However, fearful that he may be seduced by the philosophers, Augustine elucidates the dilemma that even though they saw Truth, they went forth to worship gods and idols, because they could not find that path and could not fathom that the "Word became flesh" – the "quomodo." Now Augustine may confidently say, "I know God is incorruptible," and I can tell you the necessary steps to uncovering this for yourself:

1) where one finds Truth is in the mind,
2) how one reaches Truth is through the mediator, the Christ.

And for Augustine, he has finally pulled his mind away from viewing God in a corporeal nature and by knowing the methodology to do this upon that one statement – God is incorruptible – the rest of book VII and his later philosophical books (X to XIII) in the *Confessions* will testify to his newfound knowledge:

> There are those who when they read or hear the words [In the beginning God created heaven and earth] picture God as a kind of man, or some corporeal mass of immense power, who by some new and sudden decision created heaven and earth apart from Himself and in some sense at a distance from Himself, heaven and earth being two great bodies, one above, one below, in which all things are contained. And when they come to God said: Be it made and it was made, they think of these words as words that had a beginning and an end, sounding in time and passing away, so that the moment they had passed away there existed immediately what they had commanded to exist. All this they imagine and much more of the same sort through their material way of thinking. Such people are still like infants with minds barely existent – yet it is as though on the utterly simple language of the Scripture their weakness is upborne as on a mother's breast: and their faith is built up unto salvation in that they see and hold as certain that God made all the natures which their senses look upon in such marvelous variety. (*Conf.* XII.27.37)

Augustine was such one of these people who held those certain truths about God, but had many misconceptions. Though Augustine does not scorn their ignorance, Augustine did not himself want to remain completely unknowing. And in book VII, he finally discovers the steps to understanding the relationship between the world of creation, which he sees with the eyes of his flesh, and God the creator, which he sees with the eyes of the soul.

Yet knowing this is not going to necessarily easily solve all the problems that are previously presented in book seven. All that Augustine has uncovered is that through his mind, he has found that God is incorporeal. But now a further question remains: what else can be unearthed through the power of the mind?

Phillip Cary in his article *Book Seven: Inner Vision as the Goal of Augustine's Life* agrees with my proposition that in book VII, Augustine's "fundamental problem is how to see God" and that "the key to everything is overcoming materialist thought" (Cary 107, 109). However, where we disagree is in the fact "a solution to this fundamental problem … leads to further problems" (Cary 107). In Cary's presentation, "subsidiary problems, such as nature and place of evil" can be solved once the question of "how to see God" is solved (Cary 107). Though Cary attributes that the Greeks permit Augustine to see God, he goes on to say that the need for Christ arises

after Augustine determines that God must be seen incorporeally (Cary 107). I argue, based on Augustine's opening statement that he understands God as incorruptible, but "nesciens unde et quomodo," the use of Greek philosophy for learning that God must be seen internally and the necessity for Christ are the two elements needed together. It is not "nesciens unde *aut* quomodo" or even a debatable "nesciens unde *vel* quomodo." *Et* is the connector and necessitates two principles, a two-fold solution, on how to see God.

However, I would concur with Cary that once a solution has been found on how to view God, solutions to subsidiary problem wholly exist. Without knowing how to see God, Augustine's problems are all subsidiary problems. Augustine cannot answer evil, because he cannot see God. And the same would unfold for astrology and presentations on the creation of the world. I would contend that once Augustine unearths his fundamental solution, all problems open the cognitive world to further possibilities, not further roadblocks. Yet going back to the previous paragraph, Augustine's solution is not one-fold, but double-fold, and this solution to the fundamental question does not result in further problems, but allows the solutions to all problems that were once seemingly subsidiary to now become solvable possibilities.

Just as Isaac Newton generated three laws that describe the relationship between the forces between physical bodies and the motions that result from these forces, so too does Augustine uncover in his seventh book of the *Confessions* two principles to allow him to see God and harmonize the properties of the invisible God with his visible creation. When Newton discovers these laws, there are no longer problems that arise (in respect to classical mechanics including phenomena such as describing how planets orbit around the Sun and how to build a rocket that reaches the Moon since all of those fall under these laws). So too is this for Augustine. Augustine can now address the Manichees, the problem of evil, the validity of

astrology, and develop his knowledge further to analyze concepts such memory, time, and creation. Yet all of these flows from his two-fold solution, just as all classical physics questions solve themselves through Newton's three laws – a three-fold solution.

However, we will soon see that many do not see Augustine's solution as two-fold. Rather, there are those who believe his answer to seeing God is only one-fold – that the Platonists solve his problem and that Christ happens just to be a side-thought or addendum onto this. Following from this, we will see how some are even bold enough to suggest that Augustine becomes a Platonist in book seven and only converts to Christianity later on. All of these positions must be discredited. I will show that Augustine's *Confessions* does not permit such a reading. In addition, due to the conflation of Augustine's use of Platonism and his background in Christianity, scholars have loosely titled Augustine as a Christian Platonist. This terminology must be criticized as well.

The goal of this thesis is to show that Augustine's solution on how to see God is two-fold in its approach. By showing this, I intend to slowly strip away the itching desire of people to attach Platonism to Augustine. While it may be intriguing to see where Augustine's philosophy and those of the Platonists converge, this does give any scholar the authority to say that Augustine is a Platonist: Augustine is an intellectual Christian or to put it more simply, Augustine is Augustine. To do this, the thesis is divided as such:

1) A discussion of Augustine's fundamental problem in the seventh book of the *Confessions* and that his solution to this is two-fold, not one fold
2) An attack on those who say Augustine converts to Platonism in book seven and then to Christianity in book eight

3) A criticism of the use of the term Christian Platonist as a way to classify Augustine

Chapter One:
A Two-Fold Solution

As mentioned in the introduction, the purpose of book seven of Augustine's *Confessions* is to discover where someone must look to see God and how to accomplish such a task. While this appears to be a daunting task, Augustine has a clear and accessible starting point:

> As a man, though so poor a man, I set myself to think of You as the supreme and sole and true God; and with all my heart I believed You incorruptible and inviolable and immutable, for though I did not see whence or how, yet I saw with utter certainty that what can be corrupted is lower than what cannot be corrupted, that the inviolable is beyond question better than the violable, and what can suffer no change is better than what can be changed. (*Confessions* VII.1.1).

Augustine believes that God ought to be incorruptible, but he does not know why this is the case. The task he sets forth in book seven then is to uncover the "whence or how" or as rendered in the Latin, *unde et quomodo*. I will set forth his story in coming to understand God as non-corporeal so that he believes not just with his heart, but acknowledges these properties concerning God through his faculty of reason. In this chapter, we will present scholars who believe the key to his enlightenment is solely the Platonists, but as the Latin shows – *unde et quomodo* – his answer has two components of equal importance. For Augustine, *unde* are the tools in his toolbox, but the *quomodo* is his guide – the guide to how he should hold the tools. We will see that when he does discover the tool of Platonic ascent in book seven, he will then make it clear to us that he does not know how to adequately use it – just as a child who picks up a hammer does not know how to use it and goes about hitting his thumb with it instead of the nails.

Yet this idea of a one-fold solution not only exists in scholarly papers, but also in a certain translation. One only also has to look at the passage cited above where *unde et quomodo* is translated as "whence or how" and not "whence and how." The translation above testifies to

the very fact that many are willing to reduce Augustine's problem to only his inability to see that immaterial substances can exist and that he only requires the Platonic ascent. But before further attacking the point, let us consider whether the translation of the phrase is merely stylist rather than philosophically suggestive.

In the English language, this rendition leaves a great deal of ambiguity. "Or" in English permits exclusivity and inclusivity. "Whence or how," could accordingly mean both "either when or how, but not both" and "either when or how, and both." However in Latin, the inclusive and the exclusive "or" have different words. In Latin, *vel* allows for the ambiguous "and/or" component while *aut* signifies "either…or, not both."

The dilemma here, however, is that Augustine specifically uses the word *et*. Augustine does not use *vel* or *aut*, but *et*. Augustine therefore does not leave the reader with the ambiguous "or" (*vel*) nor does he leave the audience with the stronger "or" (*aut*). He writes a very distinctly clear logical connector, *et*, "and," between whence and how.

In truth, few people even consider the possibility that "or" can mean "and/or." When "or" is written, it is inferred that it means "either…or, not both." Yet, why does Sheed translate "et" with a word that does not accord with the Latin? I would argue that this is an interpretation on the part of Sheed. In Latin where word placement and word choice are of utmost importance on account of the power of declensions, every word matters. This strange translation of this line in Augustine must be addressed.

The fact that Sheed translates *unde et quomodo* "whence or how" suggests that he believes Augustine's solution to seeing God is one-fold. Sheed overrides Augustine by saying that Augustine's answer in book seven does not entail two principles. Furthermore, Augustine should have merely written *unde* or *quomodo,* either one or the other, not both. Yet, why focus

upon the use of "or" here? Could it be that Sheed left it ambiguous so that Augustine may have meant that the *unde* and *quomodo* could be logically connected with *and*? Even so, this would fail to address the question of why Sheed then fails to translate it as "and" even though Augustine uses *et* and not *vel*.

The reason is that Sheed along with other individuals believes Augustine's methodology to viewing God only entails one answer: the Platonists. Whence does Augustine see that God is incorruptible? For Sheed and the others, the works of Greek philosophers, particularly those of the neo-Platonists Plotinus and his student Porphyry offer Augustine the key answer (Foley 126). These philosophers tell Augustine to turn his eyes from the outside world and focus them inward. And when asked "how" does Augustine realize that God is incorruptible, the question already has been addressed. "How" is redundant. "Where" and "how" are answered with the same solution: use the Platonists. Augustine does not need to state "whence and how." "Whence or how" suffices or more simply, "whence."

Before Augustine starts trying to understand whence and how God is incorruptible, it is important to give some further background. The doctrine that God is incorruptible was not initially a Christian doctrine (O'Donnell Online Commentaries 7.1.1). If we look throughout the works of the Christian scripture, there is little evidence that God does not change. Of the scriptures, two of the best examples are as follow:

> *Non est deus quasi homo ut mentiatur, nec ut filius hominis, ut mutetur*.
> God is not like man to waver, nor like the son of man, to be moved (Num. 23.19)
>
> *Ego enim dominus, et non mutor*.
> Indeed I am God, and I am not moved. (Malach. 3.6)

However, an important point to clarify is the limitation of the English language in giving meaning to Augustine's incorruptible God. Looking at the examples above, one can identify the verb *mutari*. It is not an active verb, but rather a passive one. "Change" in the Latin language suggests passive action, not active. God is immutable not in the fact that he cannot change, but by the fact that he cannot *be* changed (Teske 233). God remains unchanged even though he changes everything around him.

Even though Augustine did not know the Platonists who discovered in their ascent that God is incorruptible, Augustine already held that God does not change, because he believed that to be changeable would be lesser than that which cannot be changed: "yet I saw with utter certainty that what can be corrupted is lower than what cannot be corrupted" (*Conf.* VII.1.1).

The reason that Augustine knows this, but does not know whence and how this comes about is because Augustine can only see the world through his physical eyes and he further believes that anything that cannot be perceived through his eyes does not exist:

> …whatever I tried to see as not in space seemed to me to be nothing, absolutely nothing, not even a void: for if a body were taken out of its place and the place remained without any body, whether of earth or water or air or sky, it would still be an empty place, a space – occupying nothingness. (*Conf.* VII.1.1)

Thus Augustine has arrived at his dilemma. Somehow, Augustine asserts that he believes God as incorruptible, inviolable, and immutable – key concepts of Platonism – yet does not understand how God could even *be*, since this would require him to conceive of something not bodily (Teske 258). Without having read the philosophy that allows for the existence of spiritual objects, Augustine's thoughts focus upon corporeal substances. Two problems arise from this. First, objects that are corporeal are by nature subject to change and so God cannot be corporeal. However, Augustine can only conceive of existing substances as taking up space and hence

corporeal. Anything that is not corporeal does not exist, which would entail that God does not exist. Since Augustine holds God's existence to be self-evident and his only concern is to explain God's nature, he thus declares he does not know whence or how God is incorruptible (consider book two of Augustine's *De Libero Arbitrio* where Augustine's purpose is to write about *quomodo manifestum est Deum esse* focusing on God's nature, not existence; Teske 253; Brown xxiv). Second, even if Augustine feels hard-pressed about corporeality entailing God's non-existence, he still grasps to corporeality very tightly, because any spiritual conception – incorporeality – would force him to assert God's non-existence on the basis that what has existence must be a body.

At the start of book seven, Augustine has allowed these thoughts to mellow for several years. Unlike in the Eastern Church, the Western Church, and especially its African branch, did not believe in an incorporeal nature of God.

> That there was no clear doctrine of the spiritual nature of God in the African Church would seem to follow from the fact that Augustine believed for nine years that the Catholic Church held that God was in the form and shape of a human being. That is, if an intelligent man in search of the truth – and surely Augustine was such a one – could be so long "mistaken" about what the Catholic Church held, it would seem reasonable to suppose that this was due to the fact there was no doctrine of divine spirituality in the African church.
>
> There was, of course, the biblical sense of 'spirit' prior to the time of Augustine, though that sense by no means implied an immateriality such as Augustine derived from his contact with the Platonists. One must remember that Tertullian insisted that God is a body, even if he is spirit. *Quis negabit Deum corpus esse, etsi Deus spiritus est?* (*Adversus Prax.,* 7; cited by Masai, p. 18; Teske 255)

In fact, they even attributed anthropomorphic qualities to God and "popular anthropomorphism nearly became a point of schism in Egypt" when atypical leaders attempted to suggest God did not have human attributes (Griffin 103). Individuals such as Cyril and Ambrose were the exceptions, not the norm (Griffin 104). For the populace, they held that when God created man,

man was created *in* the image of God, not *according to* the image of God: that because man is man, God is man, rather than because God is spirit, there exists spirit in man (Griffin 116).

> Does not scripture say, "Let us make man in our image and likeness?" Of what sort? Clearly it is speaking of a man of flesh. For scripture says, "And God took dust from the earth and formed (*eplase*) man." It is therefore clear that the man formed (*plasomenos*) in the image of God was of flesh. How then is it foolish to say the flesh formed by God in his own image is despicable and worthless? (Ps. Justin, Res. 7 as cited by Griffin 115)

> It is this question above all that the Manichees raise with their endless chatter, and they taunt us for believing that man was made to the image and likeness of God. They look at the shape of our body and ask so infelicitously whether God has a nose and teeth and a beard and also inner organs and the other things we need… Let them know, nonetheless, that the *spiritual believers* in the Catholic teaching do not believe that God is limited by a bodily shape. When man is said to have been made to the image of God, these words refer to the interior man, where reason and intellect reside (*de Genesi contra Manichaeos* 1.17.27-28 as cited by Griffin 115; Trans. Teske).

When Augustine reads Cicero's *Hortensius*, Augustine burns for wisdom that he "should love, and seek, and win, and hold, and embrace, not this or that philosophical school but Wisdom itself, whatever it might be" and the only thing that disappoints Augustine with Cicero's work "was that the name of Christ was not there" (*Conf.* III.4.8). And thus he turns towards the scriptures bearing Christ's name, but he is appalled at the anthropomorphic nature of God stemming from the notion that God made man in God's image, the simplicity of the text, and the behavior of the patriarchs (*Conf.* III.5.9; Brown 41-42, 50). As we can see in the quotation a little below from *Conf.* VII.7.12, for Augustine, to be anthropomorphic is to be as opposed to God as possible: anthropomorphism necessitates corporeality in its most base form.

Having been repulsed by his literal reading of Genesis and the beliefs held by his African counterparts, Augustine rejects the Catholic community and falls in with a sect known as Manichaeism, which held God to be corporeal, but not as anthropomorphic (*Confessions* III.7.12). Though not altogether satisfying, the Manichees posited some of the basic questions

that got Augustine thinking. They thus, though perhaps unintentionally, were the occasion for a transformation in Augustine's thoughts when they asked questions such as:

> Whence comes evil? And is God bounded by a bodily shape and has he hair and nails? And are those [patriarchs] to be esteemed righteous who had many wives at the same time and slew men and offered sacrifices of living animals? (*Conf.* III.7.12)

Thus Augustine retreated from the scriptures unsatisfied with a literal interpretation of Genesis that would only entail:

> God should be thought of as a body… Thus, constantly immersed in the corporeal and living the life of the senses, people are unwilling to think that the soul is anything other than a body, for they fear that if it is not a body it may be nothing. Consequently, they are all the more afraid to think that God is not a body in proportion as they to think that God is nothing. (*Gen. litt.* 10.24 as cited by Griffin)

Henceforth, Augustine would spend his time with the Manichees and even persuade his friends to leave the Catholic Church and adopt Manichaeism:

> A combative critic of Catholic orthodoxy and conscious of his own intellectual superiority to members of the Church, whose bishops he held in contempt for their lack of education and critical inquiry, he converted many friends to share his Manichee beliefs (Chadwick 14).

Yet a problem still remained. Even though the Manichees rejected the notion of an anthropomorphic God, they still held to some corporeal idea. And for Augustine at the time, this made sense, but he still found no harmony in understanding God's unchanging quality. He rejected anthropomorphism, because this epitomized the concept of being capable of change – the human always subject to impulse. But even a highly abstract corporeal object left much to be desired:

> When I desired to think of my God, I could not think of Him save as a bodily magnitude, for it seemed to me that what was not such was nothing at all: this

> indeed was the principal and practically the sole cause of my inevitable error. (*Conf.* V.10.19).

Firstly, being a corporeal object - no matter how abstract - still entailed the property that it could be changed. Augustine, however, cannot yet conceive of anything that is not corporeal, because that would mean it does not exist. Secondly, even when Augustine persists and approaches attributing to God the most abstract bodily elements, he fails ever more evidently:

> I conceived of You, Life of my life, as mighty everywhere and throughout infinite space, piercing through the whole mass of the world, and spread measureless and limitless every way beyond the world, so that the earth should have You and the sky should have You and all things should have You, and that they should be bounded in You but You nowhere bounded. For as the body of the air, which is above the earth, does not hinder the sun's light from passing through it, and that light penetrates it, yet does not break it or cut it but fills it wholly: so I thought that the body not only of the sky and air and sea but of the earth also was penetrable by You and easily to be pierced in all its parts, great and small, for the receiving of Your presence, while Your secret inspiration governed inwardly and outwardly all the things You had created. This I held because I could think of nothing else. But it was false. For if it were so, a greater part of the earth would have contained a greater part of You, and a lesser a lesser; and all things should be filled with You in such a way that the body of an elephant should contain more of You than the body of a sparrow simply because it is larger and takes up so much more room; and so You would make Your parts present in the parts of the world piece by piece, little pieces in the little pieces, great masses in the great masses. That of course is not the truth of it. But You had not as yet enlightened my darkness. (*Conf.* VII.1.2).

In book five of the *Confessions*, several years into Manichaeism, Augustine still remains unhappy with their views. At the age of twenty-eight, he heads to Carthage to speak with Faustus, a major intellectual leader in the Manichee sect, but Faustus fails to put Augustine's concerns to rest. Augustine, ever mindful of the words in Cicero's *Hortensius*, continues to strive for that ultimate Wisdom and while in Rome he pursues the writings of the Academics and their skepticism. But still he is unable to see God as anything but bodily and cannot reconcile concepts such as how evil enters into the world and how "Christ" can be related to God:

> When my mind tried to find help in the Catholic faith, it was beaten back because the Catholic faith is not what I thought it was. It seemed to me more

> reverent, O my God, whom Your mercies in me glorify, to hold You infinite in all other parts even if I must confess You finite in that part where the power of evil was set against You, than to imagine You finitely contained in all Your parts in the shape of a human body. And it seemed better to believe that You had never created evil, than to believe that anything of the nature that I thought evil should be from You: in my ignorance I thought of evil not simply as some kind of substance, but actually as bodily substance, because I had not learned to think of mind save as a more subtle body, extended in space [as bodies are]. I thought of our Savior Himself, Your only-begotten Son, as brought forth for our salvation from the mass of Your most luminous substance: and I could believe nothing of him unless I could picture it in my own vain imagination. I argued that such a nature could not possibly be born of the virgin Mary, unless it were mingled with her flesh. And I could not see how that which I had thus figured to myself could be mingled and not defiled. Thus I feared to believe the Word made flesh lest I be forced to believe the Word defiled by flesh. I have no doubt that Your spiritual ones will smile at me, though kindly and lovingly, to read these confusions of my thought. But such I then was. (*Conf.* V.10.20)

One of these "spiritual ones" mentioned at the end of the above passage happened to be Ambrose whom Augustine met after receiving his professorship at Milan. Ambrose soon showed Augustine that the scriptures could be taken allegorically and figuratively, and unlike the "children" of the Catholic Church, Ambrose understood that God's nature was spiritual, i.e., not corporeal at all. Augustine, though still weary, was now able to move further and further away from Manichaeism and more towards the Catholic way.

> I came to feel, though only gradually, how truly he spoke. First I began to realize that there was a case for the things themselves, and I began to see that the Catholic faith, for which I had thought nothing could be said in the face of the Manichean objects, could be maintained on reasonable grounds: this especially after I had heard explained figuratively several passages of the Old Testament which had been a cause of death for me when taken literally…
>
> …I then bent my mind to see if I could by any clear proofs convict the Manicheans of error. If only I had been able to conceive of a substance that was spiritual, all their strong points would have been broken down and cast forth from my mind. But I could not. Concerning the body of this world, and the whole of that nature which our bodily sense can attain to, I thought again and again and made many comparisons; and I still judged that the views of so many of the philosophers were more probable. So in what I thought to be the manner of the Academics – that is to say, doubting of all things and wavering between one and other – I decided that I must leave the Manichees; for in that time of doubt, I did not think I could remain in a sect to which I now preferred certain of the philosophers. Yet I absolutely refused to entrust the care of my sick soul to the philosophers, because they were without the saving name of Christ. I determined, then, to go on as a catechumen in the Catholic Church – the church

> of my parents – and to remain in that state until some certain light should appear by which I might steer my course. (*Conf.* V.14.24-25)

And so we return to the question concerning "whence and how" Augustine determines God is incorruptible or as Sheed translates it "whence or how." Augustine represents in book seven, when he realized that he found his answer, that in order to conceive of a substance that is not corporeal, and that yet exists, he must undergo an inward ascent with the eyes of his soul and not the eyes of his flesh. He learns this is in "some books of the Platonists translated from Greek into Latin" (*Conf.* VII.9.13). He therefore must undergo a Platonic ascent.

However, Sheed in his translation and other scholars, Phillip Cary, Roland Teske, Carl Griffin and David Paulsen, have conflated this as the solution without any clarification. Again, where does Augustine learn to see God as incorruptible? The answer here is: in the works of the Platonists. How does Augustine do this? For them, the answer is again: by doing what has been outlined in the works of the Platonists. Now, in these books, it would appear that the Platonists are the supreme means of conceiving God as spiritual, yet existent. However, there is one major problem with this view, as strongly witnessed in earlier passages in book seven and in earlier books of *Confessions.* The saving name of Christ is missing from such works. The fact that these authors state that the Platonists are the key to Augustine's insight is too strong a statement, if not simple false. Rather, where Augustine finds how to do the *Platonic ascent* is with the Platonists, but how he accomplishes it is through Christ whom Augustine considers to be his true and only mediator.

Perhaps Sheed's and others' misjudgments arise from Augustine's statement, "This indeed was the principal and practically the sole cause of my inevitable error [that when he desired to think of God, he could not think of Him save as a bodily magnitude]" (*Conf.* V.10.19). Phillip Cary in his article notes that book seven is a solution to the problem of how to see God:

> The fundamental problem is how to see God, when the only things we are used to seeing are quite a different nature. Related to this are other, subsidiary problems, such as the nature and place of evil in the universe, which can be solved once there is a solution to this fundamental problem. And then, as always the solution to one problem leads to further problems. Having caught sight of God, young Augustine longs to make his vision permanent, but cannot. That is why he needs Christ, the man who, as God incarnate, is humanity's road to the divine fatherland that Augustine has just glimpsed from afar. (Cary 107)

Though Cary's interpretation of the solution is milder than that implied in Sheed's translation, it is still not satisfying. For Cary, the "pivotal event takes place when Augustine reads 'certain books of the Platonists.'" Indeed, this is most certainly a pivotal event. Furthermore, Cary writes that "the Platonists may not have known the Gospel of John, but they knew that 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'" (Cary 112). But then he goes on to observe:

> For it was not the doctrine of the Trinity that solved his problems about the nature of God, but the Platonists' notion of incorporeality, incorruptibility, unchangeability, and omnipresence, which are worked out by Plotinus with an intellectual depth and poetic beauty that Augustine would never have encountered before. (Cary 113)

For Cary, the Platonists are the one-fold or single solution. Again, the "whence and how" is redundant. According to Cary, Augustine's Platonic solution is the full answer to seeing. But this eventually leads to a further problem: the Platonists point him in the correct direction for ascertaining Truth, but they fail to tell him by what means he can reach his destination. Rather than saying, whence and how God is incorruptible, Cary would interpret Augustine to mean whence is God incorruptible and whence do I make this permanent. Cary suggests that the Platonic ascent is the major breakthrough and solution and that using Christ is merely an afterthought. If only it could be so in science where positing ideas would be the crucial element and actualizing the idea would be the easy part or an addendum: we surely would have no

problem writing out the master equation of the universe once we got over the hump that the universe is only governed by one equation rather than a multitude.

Roland Teske believes that "once he had read the books of the Platonists and had come to a grasp of God as incorporeal and immutable, he could offer reasons for holding that God is immutable and articulate what an immutable substance was" (Teske 241). Again, the emphasis is on the Platonists as the sole or major solution. Carl Griffin and David Paulsen also argue along similar lines (Griffin 118). I would argue that at a time when Augustine wished to show that his conversion was legitimate such interpretations as these bring into question whether Augustine was a Platonist merely in Christian clothing. Augustine would have certainly rejected the name Platonist and would have asserted instead that he had despoiled the Platonists of their haughty riches for the benefit of a humble God, just as the Hebrews despoiled the Egyptians of their gold when they went on their way in their exodus out of Egypt (*Conf.* VII.9.15).

Cary, Sheed, and these others believe the solution is found once Augustine uncovers the works of the Platonists. For them, the notion of needing Christ is only a problem that results from the initial solution. I argue, by contrast, that Augustine does not even have a solution until after both the Platonists and Christ are incorporated together into a broader solution. The Platonists are only half the solution, if even that. For Augustine, Christ is more than the second half: the Platonists are the whence and Christ is the how.

It is understandable why such interpretations have arisen, but it is important that these scholars' analyses be questioned. Cary argues that the Platonists have allowed Augustine to "catch sight of God," but Augustine's vision is unstable. In order to solve this, Cary says Augustine needs Christ (Cary 107). I agree with Cary on this point that Augustine has glimpsed God, but cannot continue to stare at God's truth. The controversy arises, however, when Cary

says that catching a temporary sight of God is the primary solution and that finding a way to make it permanent is a secondary solution stemming from that:

> To see the centrality of Book Seven to the *Confessions* and to Augustine's life, we can follow this three-fold progression from problems, to solutions, to more problems, then draw some conclusions, which will focus on the role of Platonism in Augustine's thought and in Christian theology generally…
>
> …the big problem is how to see God. The conceptual structure of the problem, as our author explains it, is Platonist. (Cary 108)

However, Augustine does not explain his structure of the problem as solely Platonist. Again, just as Sheed transformed Augustine's complete methodology for finding the solution from "whence and how" to simply "whence or how," so too has Cary done the same. Where does Augustine see God on Cary's account? His answer is that he must use the Platonists. How does Augustine see God? Again, his answer is that he must use the Platonists. For Cary, the problem of keeping Augustine's vision permanently fixated to God does not belong to the "whence and how," but only surfaces after using the Platonists. Thus for Cary, the structure of Augustine's thought follows as such:

1) Primary Problem: Whence (or how) do I see God? – The Platonists

2) Secondary Problem: Whence (or how) do I make this vision permanent? – Christ

My argument, by contrast, is that Augustine does not set this up as a solution, then a problem, and then a further solution. Instead, the problem is entirely whence and how do I see God:

1) Ultimate problem: Whence *and* how do I see God? – Platonists and Christ together, but Christ as the first and last real means or determinant

Augustine does not solve his problem once he uses the Platonists, because he only has answered the "whence" part of his question. When he answers the "how," then he has the full solution. For Augustine, seeing God necessitates a permanent fixing, not a temporal one. Cary and others propose that a temporary vision of the truth is, at least initially, good enough. Thus for them, Augustine's grand problem is just to see God. This is not satisfactory. Rather, his grand problem is seeing God and making sure this vision is permanent: both where to see (Platonists) and how to see permanently (Christ). Teske's argument is even stronger than Cary's in that it is not even concerned with the temporality of Augustine's vision when Augustine only uses the Platonists:

> If Augustine became certain that God was immutable prior to his contact with the *libri Platonicorum*, there is still no doubt that his reading these books and learning from them enabled him to conceive of God as incorporeal, immutable, and external. (Teske 246-247)

Again, just like Cary and Sheed, whence and how to see God as incorruptible, i.e., that God exists immaterially, Teske attributes this to the books of the Platonists. For him, just like others, the notion that Augustine wants to make this permanent is again not related to the question of seeing God.

While it may seem at first sight superficially trivial whether Augustine's primary concern was only to catch a glimpse of God first and then to try to refine this vision later on so that he could hold God permanently, this is far from the case. This is the reason Augustine says "Whence *and* how," and not just, "Whence" and not just, "How." For Augustine, catching a glimpse is not really catching anything at all. Unlike a person who may be satisfied with seeing a shooting star for a split second, Augustine wants the shooting star to stand still or to be grasped in a more permanent way so that he can analyze it and know Truth. For Augustine, knowing where to look in the sky for this flying object would only be the "whence." The "how" would

come from figuring out how to take a picture so that he could analyze and understand the intricate properties of the comet. If Augustine were just to see the object for a split second, he might be able to make some true observations about it, but most certainly he would also make some incorrect conjectures.

The same applies to seeing God. The Platonists tell Augustine that he must turn inward to see Truth. But when Augustine sees Truth (the God who exists immaterially), he cannot maintain his eyes on him, just as a person cannot continue to look at the Sun. He must determine "how" to see God permanently:

> Thus in the thrust of a trembling glance my mind arrived at That Which Is. Then indeed I saw clearly Your *invisible things which are understood by the things that are made;* but I lacked the strength to hold my gaze fixed, and my weakness was beaten back again so that I returned to my old habits, bearing nothing with me but a memory of delight and a desire as for something of which I had caught the fragrance but which I had not yet the strength to eat. (*Conf.* VII.17.23)
>
> So I set about finding a way to gain the strength that was necessary for enjoying You. (*Conf.* VII.18.24)

The first part of the passage cited above is the "whence;" the second part (as separated above) is the "how."

Augustine does not attribute to the Platonists the "whence and how" of his solution, because they only show him where to look, but they do not show him how to look. Cary and the others believe that the Platonists show him where and how to look, all wrapped up into one package, but this cannot be true. The scientist can tell a person where to look in the sky to see Pluto, but if the scientist does not tell him how to look (i.e., that the person needs a fairly expensive telescope or needs to launch a powerful rocket equipped with sophisticated instruments), the person will know where, but not how to see. The person may learn some truths

from the scientist, such as that Pluto is a celestial body moving around the Sun; but without accurate and properly calibrated machinery, this person will not discover all the truths.

This is what Augustine is after: all the truths, which stem from that one Truth, which is God. If he can only glance at Truth, he will only conceive of some principles, but not all of them. And further, by only glancing, he will also posit ignorant and false statements like those who believed in geocentrism. He wants to see God, and therefore the Platonists are not the full solution.

> Therefore You brought in my way by means of a certain man – an incredibly conceited man – some books of the Platonists translated from Greek into Latin. In them I found, though not in the very words, yet the thing itself and proved by all sorts of reasons: that *in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God: the same was in the beginning with God; all things were made by Him and without Him was made nothing that was made; in Him was life and the life was the light of men, and the light shines in darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it*…
>
> …but I did not read in those books that *He came unto His own, and His own received Him not, but to as many as received Him He gave power to be made the sons of God, to them that believed in His name* (*Conf.* VII.9.13).
>
> ---
>
> Again I found in them that the Word, God, was *born not of flesh nor of blood, nor of the will of man nor of the will of the flesh, but of God…*
>
> …but I did not find that *the Word became flesh* (*Conf.* VII.9.14).
>
> ---
>
> I found it stated, differently and in a variety of ways, that the Son *being in the form of the Father thought it not robbery to be equal with God* because by nature He was God…
>
> …but these books did not tell me that *He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man* (*Conf.* VII.9.14).

In each of these three examples (separated above for convenience), the first part contains what a glimpse of God – by using the Platonist method – can reveal to a person. However, in the second part, Augustine demonstrates the limitation of the Platonists: they knew where to see, but

not how to see. In fact, since they did not know how to see, they invented their own means of trying how to see, but in that process they failed: "but these books did not tell me; but I did not read in those books; but I did not find" (*Conf.* VII.9.13-14). Their means or "how" was also founded on using their incomplete truths, just as Augustine's. They saw "where" to see truth, but then when they used this as their "how," their results repelled Augustine:

> But those who wear the high boots of their sublimer doctrine do not hear Him saying, *Learn of me for I am meek and humble of heart and you shall find rest for your souls;* and if *they know God, they have not glorified him or given thanks: but become vain in their thoughts and their foolish heart is darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they become fools.* (*Conf.* VII.9.14)

> Again I read in these books [the Platonists'] that they had *changed the glory of Thy incorruption* into idols and divers images, *into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things* – in fact into that Egyptian food for which Esau had lost his birthright, since the people which was Your firstborn worshipped the head of a four-footed beast instead of You, turning in their heart back towards Egypt and bowing down their soul, Your image, before the image of a calf that eats hay. I found these things there and I did not feed upon them. (*Conf.* VII.9.15)

Their doctrine of inner vision allowed the Platonists to see a temporary glimpse of the Truth. Since it was only temporary, they only gathered half-truths. By using these half-truths as their "how," they then found cows that ate hay to be their icons worthy of worship. While Plotinus (*circa* 204 to 270), the founder of Neoplatonism would emphasis that self-inward contemplation could act as the intermediary, his pupil, Porphyry (*circa* 234 to 305), would soon suggest astrology could be used as an adequate guide. Following in a tradition more and more contrary to Augustine's *quomodo*, Porphyry's student, Iamblichus (*circa* 245 to 325) would suggest a theurgy, the use of pagan gods, as the acting guide in the Platonic ascent to achieve Henosis, union with the One (Fowden 116-141). Augustine will have none of this.

Perhaps there are some who may argue that Augustine already possessed the notion of Christ and thus only needed the Platonists to fulfill that other part of the solution. This may be

the reason Sheed reduced the translation from "where and how" to "where or how" since Augustine recognized already the false parts in the writings of the Platonic doctrines and "did not feed upon them" (*Conf.* VII.9.15). Indeed, in an earlier section of *Confessions*, Augustine observes, "When I desired to think of my God, I could not think of Him save as a bodily magnitude, for it seemed to me that what was not such was nothing at all: *this indeed was the principal and practically the sole cause of my inevitable error*" (*Conf.* V.9.19).

However, Augustine does not yet have a proper notion of Christ after discovering that the Platonists have the answer where to look. He only knows, taking the example from his reading of the Cicero's *Hortensius*:

> The one thing that delighted me in Cicero's exhortation was that I should love, and seek, and win, and hold, and embrace, not this or that philosophical school but Wisdom itself, whatever it might be. The book excited and inflamed me; in my ardor the only think I found lacking was that the name of Christ was not there. (*Conf.* III.4.8).

This is what stops Augustine from accepting the Platonists' idea of changing "incorruption into idols and divers images" (*Conf.* VII.9.15). However, at this point in his quest, he has yet to realize that Christ is the way to maintaining the permanence of his sight. All he knows is that "corruptible man…birds…four-footed beasts" are not the answers to the "how" (*Conf.* VII.9.15). He knows that the Platonists have shown him where, but to answer the latter part of his "whence and how," he must look elsewhere. Yet he does not immediately stumble upon Christ as the answer to "how". This is the reason "whence and how" cannot be simplified to "whence or how." Christ is not yet in the solution. If Augustine were to say "whence or how" and then said the Platonists were the sole solution, there would be no means of separating Augustine from the Platonists that he detested for their boldness:

> So I set about finding a way to gain the strength that was necessary for enjoying You. And I could not find it until I embraced the *Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who is over all things, God blessed forever,* who was calling unto me and saying, *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*; and who brought into union with our nature that Food which I lacked the strength to take: for *the Word was made flesh* that Your Wisdom, by which You created all things, might give suck to our souls' infancy. (*Conf.* VII.18.24)
>
> But I realized none of this at that time. I thought of Christ my Lord as of a man of marvelous wisdom, whom no other could possibly equal; and I saw His miraculous birth from a virgin – with the example it gave that temporal things are to be despised for the sake of immortality – as a mark of divine care for us, which surely merited for Him complete authority as our master. But the mystery contained in the truth that the Word was made flesh, I could not even faintly glimpse. (*Conf.* VII.19.25)

Furthermore, for those who claim that Augustine's method of seeing God is only through the Platonists, that temporary vision is sufficient, or that Augustine already had incorporated Christ as a mediator and only needed the Platonists, it is also important to consider the Platonic ascent itself. The Platonic ascent's archetype is presented in Diotima's ascent in Plato's *Symposium*. Notes and a full passage in Greek and English of Diotima's ascent are provided in the appendix, but a cursory presentation of the ascent consists of the following process:

1) A person first recognizes something he considers beautiful (a body, for example, and then all bodies)

2) This causes the person to fall in love with this beauty

3) This causes the person to express his love of this object

4) A guide then hears his expressions and then poses the question, "What does that beauty really consist in?"

5) This causes the person to realize a higher level of beauty (initially, soul, then souls, then laws, then observances, etc.), which he now sees as the source of the lower level of beauty.

6) This process is repeated until it reaches the realization of Beauty itself.

(*Symposium* 210a-212a)

It is crucial to focus attention on point number four of this ascent. Who is the guide? Augustine in his initial attempts says that he uses God as his guide:

> Being admonished by all this to return to myself, I entered into my own depths, with You as guide; and I was able to do it because You were my helper. (*Conf.* VII.10.16)

> I was now studying the ground of my admiration for the beauty of bodies, whether celestial or of earth, and on what authority I might rightly judge of things mutable and say, "This ought to be so, that not so." Enquiring then what was the source of my judgment, when I did so judge I had discovered the immutable and true eternity of truth above my changing mind. (*Conf.* VII.17.23)

Just like the Greeks, Augustine discovers the Beauty that is the source of everything, but he "lacked the strength" to hold his gaze fixed (*Conf.* VII.17.23). The Greeks also failed to hold their gaze in place and in their ignorant attempts to become one with the Truth, they become accustomed to worshipping mutable corporeal objects. Augustine observes this and must venture elsewhere. He must use a form of the Truth that will enable him to achieve this goal:

> For Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee. (*Conf.* I.1.1)

For Augustine, though God is Truth, God is not the sufficient guide that will allow Augustine to find the way, i.e., Augustine must choose a different component of the Trinity. He must find another form of Truth that is still Truth and will allow him to keep his vision fixed on Truth. Who will this guide be? This guide is Christ. Now he finally understands what Monica meant when she stressed the importance of Christ – he is the carpenter who will teach the apprentice.

The Platonic ascent requires a guide and though the Greeks find where to look, they do not know how and they therefore choose the incorrect guide. As Augustine realizes himself, they (just like him initially) use the wrong component of Truth of the Trinity: Father, Son, Spirit. They used the Father, but still unable to grasp Truth, Plotinus' pupils would follow the path that

only leads to pagan worship again, the thing which both Augustine and Plotinus were striving to avoid. Augustine, however, comes to understand that it is the Son that will allow him to find rest. Though each component of the Trinity is Truth and is One, Augustine identifies the Son – the Christ – as the principal one who can serve as guide.

For those who would limit Augustine's solution to seeing God as one-fold, they severally miss the mark on this point. The Platonists make the ascent, using Beauty (the Father) as their guide and in doing so they only catch rays from the Sun of Truth. They know where, but not how. Augustine, by contrast, discovers that the mediator – Christ – is the Truth that will guide him not only to see the rays, but also to see the Sun in all its power.

> I think it was Your will that I should come upon these books before I had made study of the Scriptures, that it might be impressed on my memory how they had affected me: so that, when later I should have become responsive to You through Your Books with my wounds healed by the care of Your fingers, I might be able to discern the difference that there is between presumption and confession, between those who see what the goal is but do not see the way, and [those who see] the Way which leads to that country of the blessedness, which we are meant not only to know but to dwell in. (*Conf.* VII.20.26)

> It is one thing to see the land of peace from a wooded mountaintop, yet not find the way to it and struggle hopelessly far from the way, with hosts of those fugitive deserters from God, under their leader the Lion and the Dragon, besetting us about and ever lying in wait; and quite another to hold to the way that leads there, a way guarded by the care of our heavenly General, where there are no deserters from the army of heaven to practice their robberies – for indeed they avoid that way as a torment. (*Conf.* VII.21.27)

Again, Cary might well be interpreted as saying that there is no need for Christ, but only Platonists:

> For it was not the doctrine of the Trinity that solved his problems about the nature of God, but the Platonists' notion of incorporeality, incorruptibility, unchangeability, and omnipresence, which are worked out by Plotinus with an intellectual depth and poetic beauty that Augustine would never have encountered before. (Cary 113)

The progression of the Platonists can be simplified as follows:

1) Plotinus holds *unde* as Platonic ascent and *quomodo* as the One, the Ultimate, the Father (self-reflection and meditation).

2) Unsatisfied, Porphyry suggests that perhaps the intermediary for the *quomodo* is astrology.

3) Unsatisfied still, Iamblichus suggests that a return to pagan gods can facilitate the *quomodo* so that the person in his ascent arrives at Henosis.

Augustine though, will incorporate the Platonic ascent into his *unde*, but his *quomodo* remains Christian:

1) Augustine first holds *unde* as Platonic ascent and *quomodo* as God, the One, the Almighty.

2) This fails, and so his *quomodo* becomes the second part of the Trinity, *Christ*.

It has been noted in this chapter that Augustine's solution to seeing God is not one-fold, but two-fold in four major points:

1) The Latin does not suggest his answer is one-fold (unlike those who propose that "nesciens unde et quomodo" ought to be translated as, "I did not know whence or how," the connector is *et*, not *vel* or *aut*).

2) If his solution were one-fold (Platonic solely), Augustine has demonstrated that he would attain only a transient glimpse at the Truth and thus only partial truths; however, Augustine is in pursuit of the Truth and therefore a two-fold solution is necessary.

3) There would be no difference between Augustine's philosophy and that of the Platonists: for it would entail that Augustine either adopt self-reflection, astrology, or pagan gods as his intermediary. As we have seen, this is far from the case.

4) Continuing from point three, Augustine's guide is not Beauty itself, but rather Christ. Augustine's guide, though Truth, is different in aspect from the Platonists' notion of Truth, insofar as Augustine's Truth became flesh and humbled itself.

To see God permanently is the difference between Augustine's solution to seeing God and that of the Platonists. The Platonists need only themselves, but Augustine needs Christ. Though those scholars cited above and throughout this chapter believe that the "whence and how" of Augustine's seeing God only or primarily entails the Platonists, Peter Brown in his introduction to *Confessions* differs from this view and proposes one that more closely shares mine:

> Augustine never doubted that such men had seen God. They had experienced a truth that cut across all religions. But to do justice to that momentary glimpse, to make the lightning flash of realization of the presence of God stand still was a different matter. (Brown xxvi).

They had seen where to look, but how to make God's presence "stand still" required something not found in their philosophy. Indeed, because Augustine will use Christ as his mediator rather than some abstract concept, he happens upon a unique philosophy different from that of the Platonists. He recognizes that worshipping four-footed beasts is not the solution that follows from grasping that ultimate Truth. Had his solution been only one-fold, he would have been a Platonist himself, but he is not. His answer to seeing God requires two parts and his philosophy reflects this. He is not a Platonist, as some are tempted to call him. Rather, he is a Christian, who places great emphasis on his need for Christ in his pursuit of eternal rest.

CHAPTER TWO:
On the Development of Augustine's *Unde et Quomodo*

> Now that I had read the books of the Platonists and had been set by them towards the search for a truth that is incorporeal, I came to see Your *invisible things which are understood by the things that are made.* I was at a standstill, yet, I *felt* what through the darkness of my mind I was not able to actually see; I was certain that You are and that You are infinite, but not as being diffused through space whether finite or infinite: that You truly are ever the same, not in any part or by any motion different or otherwise; and I knew that all other things are from You from the simple fact that they are at all…
>
> …of these things I was utterly certain, yet I had not the strength to enjoy You. I talked away as if I knew a great deal; but if I had not sought the way to You in Christ our Savior, I would have come not to instruction but to destruction. (*Confessions* VII.20.26)

From this passage and the prior chapter, it should be apparent that Augustine does not rely solely on the Platonists to understand God: namely, from where and in what way is God incorruptible. The Platonists gave him insight into where he must look to find immaterial substances – in his mind – but the Platonists do not tell him how to possess it. Augustine saw Truth off in the horizon, but questions remained on how to choose the right highway route to reach the end of this rainbow. He finds that Christ is the path and had he chosen any other way, he would have been led to destruction (*Confessions* VII.20.26).

Yet, there are those who attempt to de-emphasize the Christian element in Augustine's thought in book seven of *Confessions*. Some reduce Augustine's solution to seeing God immaterially as merely one-fold: Platonic. These people fail to see the necessary component in the Platonic ascent: who is Augustine's guide? Or rather, what is his belief system? This is his *quomodo*. By assuming that the Platonists answer all of Augustine's concerns, these scholars run the risk of saying that Augustine only needs Neoplatonism to answer all his concerns concerning the nature of God. While those authors cited in my first chapter do not go as far to say that Neoplatonism answers all those questions, some have taken book seven to an extreme, arguing

that Augustine becomes a Neoplatonist in book seven and then a Christian in book eight. They have assumed the one-fold answer for how Augustine comes to understand God and they take this to be fully his *unde* and his *quomodo*. For them, not only does Augustine adopt the teachings of the Neoplatonists into his knowledge base (into his *unde*), but he also incorporates them into his faith (into his *quomodo*).

In the Dover Thrift Editions of Augustine's *Confessions,* Albert Outler, professor of theology who taught at Duke, Yale, and then at the Southern Methodist University, gave the following summaries as introductions to books sevens and eight:

Book Seven:

> **The conversion to Neoplatonism.** Augustine traces his growing disenchantment with the Manichean conceptions of God and evil and the dawning understanding of God's incorruptibility. But his thought is still bound by his materialistic notions of reality. He rejects astrology and turns to the study of Neoplatonism. There follows an analysis of the differences between Platonism and Christianity and a remarkable account of his appropriation of Platonian wisdom and his experience of a Platonian ecstasy. From this, he comes finally to the diligent study of the Bible, especially the writings of the apostle Paul. His pilgrimage is drawing toward its goal, as he begins to know Jesus Christ and to be drawn to him in hesitant faith. (Outler 175)

Book Eight:

> **Conversion to Christ.** Augustine is deeply impressed by Simplicianus' story of the conversion to Christ of the famous orator and philosopher, Marius Victorinus. He is stirred to emulate him, but finds himself still enchained by his incontinence and preoccupation with worldly affairs. He is then visited by a court official, Ponticianus, who tells him and Alypius the stories of the conversion of Anthony and also of two imperial "secret service agents." These stories throw him into a violent turmoil, in which his divided will struggles against himself. He almost succeeds in making the decision for continence, but is still held back. Finally, a child's song, overheard by chance, sends him to the Bible; a text from Paul resolves the crisis; the conversion is a fact. Alypius also makes his decision, and the two inform the rejoicing Monica. (Outler 209)

This, as we have argued, is a distortion of Augustine's *Confessions*, but there are also others who have suffered the same fallacy. Though the authority of this source is questionable, James Kiefer writes that "the second crisis was that he became a neo-Platonist" (James Kiefer's Christian Biographies). Colin Starnes quotes a certain Charles Boyer who has a hard time

deciding whether Augustine is a Christian or a Neoplatonist or whether Christianity allowed Augustine to become a Neoplatonist or vice versa:

> It is true that he [Augustine] became a Christian because he was a Neo-Platonist. It would be truer to say that he became a Neo-Platonist because he was a Christian. (Starnes 280)

And then in the work, *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, the issue arises again in respect to Augustine's Cassiciacum writings where Cavadini poses the question, "In particular, was Augustine's conversion in 386 to Neoplatonism rather than to Christianity?" (Cavadini 138).

In this chapter, we will give a critique of the misconception that Augustine became a Neoplatonist in book seven of *Confessions.* We will explore the problem of evil that plagues Augustine throughout the *Confessions* and how he finally solves it in book seven. In book seven at first, Augustine will present his friend's criticism of the Manichean theory, and this will give him the initial impetus to reject Manichaeism. However, the use of friends' arguments instead of his own is very unsatisfying. We will thus show how Augustine comes to his own rejection of the Manichean notion of evil by observing the change over time of Augustine's *unde* and *quomodo* throughout the work of *Confessions*. We will now turn our attention to the third book when he happens upon *Hortensius* and continue onward in chronological order – noting key events – up until we reach his incorporating of Neoplatonism into his *unde* and his incorporating of Scriptures where Christ is found into his *quomodo.* Again, as a result of Augustine's quest for *unde et quomodo* God is incorruptible, we will see again that just as Manichaeism fails to achieve Augustine's goal, so too do the pagan philosophers fail to succeed in giving him fuller insight into God's permanence, so that he may justly get a deeper insight into Truth. The complete answer to the *unde et quomodo* in book seven is not merely the Platonists, but the

empowering of his reason by the Platonists (*unde*) and his attempt to define the limits of this power by Christ (*quomodo*).

> The result is not an eclectic mix of Christianity and Platonism or even a synthesis of the two but a theology that takes some of the best elements from classical thought and develops them in unprecedented directions. (Foley 332)

Thus from book seven, we will show that Augustine does not become a Neoplatonist, but rather a Christian who happens to employ some of the tools of Neoplatonism when it best suits him. Were his *quomodo* Neoplatonic, it would be correct to call him a Neoplatonist. But, it is not. His *quomodo* always seeks something that bears the name of Christ. And in book seven, Augustine finds that the answer lies in the Scriptures. In book seven, he becomes a Christian. Before arriving at book seven however, we will discuss Augustine's development in both his *unde* and *quomodo*. For the *unde*, initially, he will see that he must seek Truth after reading *Hortensius*. For *quomodo*, he seeks Christ and finds at first an answer in Manichaeism: he becomes a Manichee. Ultimately he will see many shortcomings in his *unde* and *quomodo* in the books leading up to book seven. And it will be in book seven where his *unde* incorporates the Platonic element of the inward ascent and his *quomodo* becomes Christian.

> Now I had read many works of the philosophers and retained a great deal in my memory, and I compared certain of these things with the long winded fables of the Manichees. What the philosophers taught seemed to me the more probable, though their power was limited to making judgment of this world and they could not pierce through to its Lord…
>
> …much that they [the philosophers] say of the created universe is true, but they do not religiously seek the Truth, the architect of the created universe; so that they either do not find Him, or if they find Him and know Him to be God, they do not honor him as God or give Him thanks, but become vain in their imaginings and profess themselves to be wise, attributing to themselves what is Yours and at the same time in a kind of perverse blindness attributing their own qualities to You – so that they load with their falsehoods You who are the Truth, and *changing the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of creeping*

> *things, and changing the truth of God into a lie, they worship and serve the creature rather than the creator…*
>
> …all the same I remembered many truths that they had spoken of the created world itself, and I saw their theories justified by numbers and the order of time and the visible evidence of the stars. I compared all this with what Manes had said, for he wrote at great length upon such matters and quite wildly: but I did not find in him any explanation of the solstices or the equinoxes of the sun and moon; nor any of such things as I had learnt in the books of worldly philosophy. I was commanded to believe [what Manes wrote], yet it did not harmonize with the principle I had arrived at by mathematics and indeed by my own eyes, but was far otherwise. (*Conf.* V.3.3-5).

The problem with the philosophers is that, though they see the Truth, it is only temporary, and so in their attempts to further define the Truth and find the way to it, they transform Truth into lies and worship the "creature rather than the creator" (*Conf.* V.3.4). However, it is important to note that the strength of Augustine's argument is not that the philosophers believe in pagan images, but rather that they use an incorrect path to achieve a permanent Truth. Their Truth is not Christ and so they fall away from the correct road and happen upon pagan images, temporal icons. Who is the philosophers' guide? The way they attempt to ascend the mountain relies on themselves and not on a redeemer. Indeed, the great philosophers, such as Socrates and Diogenes, had little interest in the ritual and pagan practices of cities and this happened to be one of the charges against Socrates in Plato's *Apology*: he denied the city's gods. When Augustine attacks the powerful Platonists, Plotinus and his student Porphyry, his charges against them will not so much be that they glorify "corruptible substances" (for indeed they emphasize the superiority of the incorporeal soul over the corporeal body), but limitations in their answers (Chadwick 20). The problem with these philosophers is that though they knew where to look, they did not know how to look. They could not accept that the "how" (the guide) rested in a Truth that humbled itself in the flesh. And so, they express Truth in a limited fashion and do not give it full justice or scope.

On the other end, the issue with the Manichees is that they chose the wrong guide altogether: Manes, the founder of Manichaeism. After Augustine read Cicero's *Hortensius*, he understood that he must seek Wisdom, but he wondered where he ought to pursue it (*Conf.* III.4.8-5.9). He knew that he should use reason, but he then had to seek out who should be the guide or the thing upon which he could establish his entire belief system. He looked towards the Scriptures to see if the answer might lie there, but he did not find it there, because he read the scriptures literally. He then turned towards the Manichees who offered a sect of Christianity that attempted to conform to reason and their literal interpretation of selected passages in the Bible. Insisting that the Bible must be read literally, they rejected the Old Testament for its morally ambivalent Patriarchs and denounced the anthropomorphic attributes given to God by the African Catholic Church (*Conf.* III.4.12). Yet Augustine would soon find that using the Manichees as his *quomodo* would not be a suitable bedrock.

In book seven of *Confessions*, we uncover the stages of Augustine's transformation in respect to *quomodo* from Manichean to Christian. The fundamental question that presents itself before the reader is who is the intermediary for Augustine. Reason is always at work, but what controls it? Does Mani control it? No. Does philosophy control it? No. For Augustine, it is Christ – Christ as found in the Scriptures. From the arguments presented in the first chapter of this thesis, it would appear as though many scholars find Augustine's transformation in book seven to only be Platonic. Perhaps, they do not believe he is a transformed Christian until book eight when he hears the words, "*Tolle, lege*" and then opens the Scriptures and decides to have himself baptized into the Church (*Conf.* VIII.12.29; *Conf.* IX.6.14). This is a mistake. It may be that his Christian transformation is not complete until his baptism, but even this interpretation is strange since Augustine will continue to venture down that path for the rest of his life: his Christian

search starts in book seven and it does not stop after he is baptized, but becomes ever more aroused.

Rather, I argue that the philosophers advance his ability to reason, just as a student's mathematical abilities increase when he progresses from arithmetic to calculus. However, just because a person incorporates calculus into his toolbox, this does not mean that he becomes a believer in a "calculus faith," per se. This is the same here. Plotinus does not control his *quomodo*, but rather gives more calculative power to his *unde*. Neoplatonism for Augustine is just a tool as far as he is concerned. How could one say Augustine converts himself to a tool, as if one could say a student becomes converted to his algebra? He despoils the Platonists and incorporates them as a tool in his reasoning and by realizing that the Scriptures should be his guide, he becomes a Christian. But before we discuss how all this happens at the end of book seven, let us commence at the scene when Augustine happens upon Cicero's *Hortensius*.

After having read Cicero's *Hortensius*, Augustine learns that he "should love, and seek, and win, and hold, and embrace, not this or that philosophical school but Wisdom itself, whatever it might be" (*Conf.* III.4.8). Who is going to be his guide to achieve this? The most interesting fact is that his guide must bear the name of Christ. Why this is so has no grounding in any reasoning aspect, but rather in the fact that his mother instilled this necessity into him when he was born:

> The book excited and inflamed me; in my ardor the only thing I found lacking was that the name of Christ was not there. For with my mother's milk my infant heart had drunk in, and still held deep down in it, that name according to Your mercy, O Lord, the name of Your Son, my Savior; and whatever lacked that name, no matter how learned and excellently written and true, could not win me wholly. (*Conf.* III.4.8)

Thus, concerning *Hortensius*, Augustine rejected the thought that this would become his *quomodo*, but there was no conflict in having this assumed into his *unde*. His reasoning power increased at this point in that he needed to embrace Wisdom, but it did not alter the fact that he had to embrace it through a method that affirmed Christ.

And so, his immediate inclination was to turn to the Sacred Scriptures in which Christ's name was contained most fully:

> So I resolved to make study of the Sacred Scriptures and find what kind of books they were. But what I came upon was something not grasped by the proud, nor revealed either to children, something utterly humble in the hearing but sublime in the doing, and shrouded deep in mystery. And I was not of the nature to enter into it or bend my neck to follow it. When I first read those Scriptures, I did not feel in the least what I have just said; they seemed to me unworthy to be compared with the majesty of Cicero. My conceit was repelled by their simplicity, and I had not the mind to penetrate into their depths. They were indeed of a nature to grow in Your little ones. But I could not bear to be a little one; I was only swollen with pride, but to myself I seemed a very big man. (*Conf.* III.5.9).

However, he is disappointed to find that these writings are utterly simple. There is no beauty in them as there is in the rhetoric of the great writers, and he finds the people who followed these Christian texts to be uneducated fools (Chadwick 14). Not only does Augustine find the text mediocre, but he also cannot fathom that his surrounding African community treats God as if he were some bearded man sitting on a throne, with Jesus being another bodily mass attempting to implore him (Teske 238-239). In addition, those same scriptures did not enlighten his mind into the uncovering of the source of evil. This question was a great problem for monotheistic religions (Lieu 149). Finally, he could not come to terms with the fact that the patriarchs of the Old Testament behaved so disgracefully (Lieu 131). At that present moment, he would have to reject the scriptures as a viable option for a guide.

Thus he fell in with a sect known as Manichaeism, which could answer his questions concerning evil, which rejected the Patriarchs, which denied the anthropomorphic nature of God, and which still bore the name of Christ, though this Christ differed drastically from that of the Catholic Christ. The Manichees actually believed in three Jesuses: Jesus of Light, Jesus the Messiah, and Jesus *patabilis* (Lieu 126). The Jesus of Light was the guardian angel of Mani and was the one who revealed to Adam that the good soul was trapped inside the evil body. Jesus the Messiah was a prophet and a forerunner to Mani and was completely divine. This Jesus was not born from a human and his death on the cross was not salvific, but only served as a metaphor to what all human souls should strive for: complete abandonment of the evil body. The Jesus *patabilis* – suffering Jesus – was Jesus, the light, suspended on a Cross of Light, a symbolization of the entrapment of the light particles in the world of darkness (Lieu 126-127). For Augustine at the time, this representation satisfied him since it possessed some concept, no matter how misconceived or might have been, of Christ. Augustine had finally found the guide he needed, but it was a false guide, who would not guide him to Truth, but to destruction. If the Manichees were around today, despite the proof of heliocentrism, these Manichees would be like those individuals who would point to the sky and say, "Behold, look how the stars are fixed and how the planets and Sun wander through the cosmos; indeed, we are at the center of all and everything revolves around us." And in addition, the Manichees would then say, "Look how the celestial objects move about in the sky" and further guide the person to believe that these objects portend the future to come: they pretend that they are leading a person to truth by claiming they possess the name of Christ, but all they produce are lies:

> I fell in with a sect of men talking high-sounded nonsense, carnal and wordy men. The snares of the devil were in their mouths, to trap souls with an arrangement of the syllables of the names of God the Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, our Comforter. These names

> were always on their lips, but only as sound and tongue noise; for their heart was empty of true meaning. They cried out "Truth, truth;" they were forever uttering the word to me, but the thing was nowhere in them; indeed they spoke falsehood not only of You, who are truly Truth, but also of the elements of this world, Your creatures. (*Conf.* III.6.10)

> But I did not know that other reality which truly is; and through my own sharpness I let myself be taken in by fools, who deceived me with such questions as: Whence comes evil? And is God bounded by a bodily shape and has he hair and nails? And are those [patriarchs] to be esteemed righteous who had many wives at the same time and slew men and offered sacrifices of living animals? (*Conf.* III.7.12)

According to Samuel Lieu in his book *Manichaeism,* Manichaeism appealed to Augustine in six ways: in its critical appeal, sectarian appeal, aesthetic appeal, affinity for astrology, ascetical appeal, and dualistic appeal (Lieu 117-153). For the sake of brevity, we will focus on Manichaeism's critical and dualistic appeal to Augustine.

The Manichees preached that the writings of the scriptures ought to be interpreted literally, just as the writings of their founder, Mani, insisted (Lieu 152). Due to this, Augustine connected with the Manichees when they denounced Catholic Christianity that held that Christians must embrace both the Old Testament and New Testament of the Bible. When Catholics embraced the Old Testament, the Manichees attacked them by saying that the Catholics were merely putting "a piece of new cloth onto an old garment" (Lieu 120-121). For the Manichees, the Old Testament contradicted the New and they found the sexual mores of the patriarchs of the Old Testament to be in complete violation of the New: "David coveted the wife of one of his generals and Solomon was polygamous. Hosea married a prostitute under the command of God, and Moses was a murderer" (Lieu 121). If this were not enough to reject the Catholic beliefs, Augustine also could not reconcile the anthropomorphic qualities that Catholics in his community gave to God. As discussed in the previous chapter, Augustine's African environment contained people who believed God had a human form; moreover, for them to

believe of God as non-human or purely spiritual was foreign. Thus, Mani denied the authority of almost the entire Old Testament and only took fragments from the New Testament that were not tainted with Jewish elements (Chadwick 13). The scriptures had been doctored so that the Manichees avoided literal interpretations that contradicted what Jesus said or that gave God human-elements – they had basically made for themselves a new Bible.

If that were not enough, Augustine felt at ease when the Manichees discussed whence evil entered into the world. For them, the forces of good and evil existed together co-eternally (Lieu 149). They addressed this dual nature of human existence by Paul's pronouncement: "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Romans 7:19). Augustine proposed, by contrast:

> Where then is evil, and what is its source, and how has it crept into the creation? What is its root, what is its seed? Can it be that it is wholly without being? But why should we fear and be on guard against what is not? Or if our fear of it is groundless, then our very fear is itself an evil thing. For by it the heart is driven and tormented for no cause; and that evil is all the worse, if there is nothing to fear yet we do fear. Thus either there is evil which we fear, or the fact that we fear is evil. (*Conf.* VII.5.7)

The Manichees would counter, saying that evil exists alongside God and that in the beginning, God and Evil had a great cosmic battle. Pieces of God were trapped behind the enemy lines in the Evil substance, and this became the human predicament where there existed two souls struggling within each human being: the good or soul of God against the bad or soul of evil (also known as the material body) (Chadwick 13, Lieu 150). Thus, when a person did wrong, it was not the God component in the human that did it, but rather the evil substance. Just as there was struggle between good and evil in the cosmic order, so too was there a struggle between the two souls trapped inside the human. Lieu explains this as follows:

> In one of Augustine's homilies, we have an excellent illustration of how a Manichaean preacher could capitalize on a mundane situation to make a theological point on the evil nature of creation. A Catholic was once greatly troubled by flies and confessed to a Manichaean who chanced upon him that he could not tolerate flies and hated them exceedingly. The Manichaean asked him, 'Who made them?' Since he was suffering intensely from the flies, the Catholic dared not say, 'God made them', even though as a Catholic this was expected of him. The Manichaean, who was clearly working through a stock of prepared questions, immediately asked, 'If God did not make them, who made them?' 'To tell you the truth, I believe the Devil made the flies.' The Manichaean came out with another prepared question, 'If the Devil made the flies, as you seem to me to be saying since you are thinking more along the right lines, who made the bee which is slightly larger than the fly?'. The bemused Catholic had little choice but to admit the Devil also made the bee. From the bee the Manichaean led him to the locust, from the locust to the lizard and from the lizard to the bird, sheep, cow, elephant finally man. He even managed to persuade him that it was the Devil who made man. 'Poor fellow', remarked Augustine, 'being troubled with flies he had himself become a fly as the name Beelzebub means "Lord of the Flies".' (Lieu 151; *in Joh. Evang. Tact.* I, 14).

Hence the Manichees for the moment provided ideal solutions for Augustine concerning the origins of evil, the problems of scripture, and the views of God's pseudo-human nature. So influential were the Manichees and so compelling were their arguments to Augustine that he stayed within the sect as a Hearer for roughly nine years and even convinced his friends to convert to this sect (Lieu 118). Yet while the Manichees were a quick fix for Augustine, something held him back from totally diving into Manichaeism and becoming one of the Elect. Perhaps it was the fact that the members of the Elect had to be absolutely celibate (for as Augustine shows his readers in the first six books of *Confessions*, this was one state he could not achieve) (Chadwick 12). However, perhaps the thorn in his side arose from his problems with attempting to harmonize his reasoning power with his Manichee guide – Mani who claimed to be the Apostle of God (Chadwick 14).

The problem lay in the study of the heavens, because while others had predicted the movements of the bodies fairly well, Mani had devised a system that could never coincide with undeniable mathematics. And, since Mani's writings had to be taken literally and there was no way to address them allegorically, Augustine had reached a roadblock. The works of the

astronomers had been assumed into his *unde* power, but his *quomodo* power could not resolve the dissonance:

> Manes had dared to set himself up as teacher, source, guide, and leader of all whom he could convince in these matters, so that those who followed him believed that they were following no mere man but Your Holy Spirit: once he was caught out in error, surely such madness could be seen only as detestable and utterly to be rejected? But I had not as yet clearly discovered whether the changes in the length of days and nights, and the alternation of night and day, and the eclipses of sun and moon, and other things of which I read in the books of the astronomers, could be explained along his lines: for if they could, even though it might still remain unproven whether the things were so or not, yet I was prepared to trust rather in his authority on account of his reputation for sanctity. (*Conf.* V.5.9)

These astronomers would be like those Platonists in book seven. They would increase Augustine's reasoning ability. For the astronomers would point from far away and say, "Look, there is Saturn off in the distance" and surely Augustine could not deny it. But then when he would take up the cloak of the Manichees and ask Mani, "Now that I see Saturn, tell me more about it." But when Mani would show Augustine the charts on how to calculate its position in the sky, the charts would tell him Saturn ought to be somewhere else: could it be that his great teacher was a false prophet?

Fearing that this was what the Manichee sect was doing to him, he met a great leader of the Manichees called Faustus. However he soon found that people thought Faustus wise "simply because they liked his speaking" (*Conf.* V.6.10). He was now utterly in despair, because there was no possible way to justify the works of his guide, which had to be taken literally, with the findings of the astronomers and the philosophers.

> For their books are packed with long-winded nonsense about the sky and the stars and the sun and the moon; and I now saw that he could not with any profundity show me, as I desired, as against the mathematical explanations I had read elsewhere, if the reality was still as the books of Manes stated it, or if at least some explanation equally good could be drawn from them. (*Conf.* V.7.12)

Thus Augustine was now realizing that the Manichees could no longer serve as his guide. Reason had told him 2 + 2 = 4, but the writings of the Manichees told him 2 + 2 = 5. If this were the case today, where people would claim that the Bible must be interpreted literally, then though reason would show the universe was not created in seven days, yet they would still claim that it was created in seven days, Augustine would have surely rejected them likewise.

However, Augustine stayed attached by a thread to the Manichean faith, because of those three questions that plagued him for which the Manichees still had respectable solutions. Nonetheless, when Augustine finally arrived at Milan to accept his teaching position, he happened upon Ambrose. Ambrose showed him the errors of the masses of the Catholic faith that believed God to be anthropomorphic. Unlike the Manichees, Ambrose demonstrated that the passages that seemed bizarre, if read literally, were meant to be taken allegorically and in a spiritual sense. Augustine now thought that his guide might lie somewhere within the Catholic faith and so he broke connections with the Manichean group:

> I decided I must leave the Manichees; for in that time of doubt, I did not think I could remain in a sect to which I now preferred certain of the philosophers. Yet I absolutely refused to entrust the care of my sick soul to the philosophers, because they were without the saving name of Christ. I determined, then, to go on as a catechumen in the Catholic Church – the church of my parents – and to remain in that state until some certain light should appear by which I might steer my course. (*Conf.* V.14.25)

Augustine would assume these philosophers also into his *unde*, but he would not dare to allow them to be his guide *quomodo*.

Finally, we come to the beginning of book seven. No longer embracing Manichaeism, Augustine is in search of an advancement in his *unde* and a new guide *quomodo*. Ambrose has already planted a seed in his mind that certain passages ought to be taken allegorically and spiritually, but where will he find the mental power to do this – where is this tool? He has also

entered the Catholic faith as a skeptical catechumen, hoping that perhaps here he will find the guide bearing the name of Christ.

Since we have already discussed in chapter one that Augustine's *unde* incorporates the Platonists and his *quomodo* is Christ, we will now address how Augustine finally handles the issue of evil. The Manichee guide was able to answer these questions, but was unable to propose a method to reconcile mathematics with Mani's and his followers' words of advice. We must now see whether Augustine's new guide can overthrow the Manichean guide concerning the origin of evil.

At the start of book seven, when Augustine tackles the issue of how evil entered the world through a dualistic creation story, his *unde* is very limited and only permits him to see things materially. His *quomodo* at the moment, having rejected the Manichee guide, is floating somewhere in Christ, though he has no idea where to place Christ (*Conf.* VII.19.25). Will his Christ be some corporeal mass, the three Christs of the Manichees, the Christ found in the Scriptures, or something else? In this time of ignorance, the only way Augustine can deny the Manichean notion of creation and their origin of evil is to present Nebridius' argument:

> What would that imaginary brood of Darkness, which the Manichees were wont to set up as an opposing substance, have done against You if You had refused to fight with it? For if the answer was that it would have done You some damage, that would have been to make You violable and subject to corruption. But if the answer was that it could in no way have harmed You, then they would show no reason for Your fighting with it. But it was precisely the result of Your fighting that some part or member of You, some offspring of Your substance, was mingled with those contrary powers, those natures not created by You; and was so far corrupted by them and changed for the worse as to be turned from beatitude into misery and to need assistance to deliver it and make it clean. This was the human soul. (*Conf.* VII.2.3)

During this time when Augustine held God to be incorruptible, but did not know whence and how, this argument seemed to be sufficient. Just as a person who would hold the sky to be blue,

but not know how it was blue (because he had no knowledge of science in this topic), might deny a person who declared the sky is pink, so too would Augustine deny these Manichees, who dared to say God is corruptible, even though he has yet to know how God possessed this property.

Augustine, however, finally comes upon the books of the Platonists and sees how it is possible to envision a substance that exists immaterially (see chapter one). They have given him the calculus to uncovering and finally seeing where to look in order to see Truth. In order to do this, Augustine must use the eyes of his mind: just as the eyes of the body see the physical world, so the eyes of the mind see the immaterial objects (memories, etc.) that do not require a corporeal stimulus (O'Daly 23). He then arrives at the insight that in the beginning, there was only one substance, i.e., God, an incorruptible incorporeal substance (*Conf.* VII.7.11).

The question that might be posed at this point is how do the *libri Platonicorum* give Augustine the reasoning power to see God. Does his newly acquired reasoning-calculus allow him to know how to integrate a chicken and take the derivative of water (do not worry if you do not understand this last statement – it is a physics inside joke)? Not exactly, but it does allow him to perceive of immaterial substance as actually having existence (*Conf.* VII.9.13). As discussed in detail in the previous chapter, the Platonists allow Augustine to conceive of an immaterial substance that exists (*Conf.* VII.9.13). Prior to this, he could only conceive of God as some endless sea out of which creation, as a sponge, arose. Thus, God filled all the parts of the sponge, yet Augustine did not find this satisfying, as he could not account for how evil entered into his sea-sponge analogy, and he would have to admit that objects with greater volumes would contain more of God (*Conf.* VII.5.7; *Conf.* VII.1.2). Thus, he knew he had to conceive of God spiritually as Ambrose had suggested, but until he read the books of the Platonists, he could not believe that anything his eyes could not see, could exist (*Conf.* VI.5.7). The Platonists showed him that it was

possible and that he needed to use the eyes of mind. His *unde* had now progressed from the *Hortensius* to the astronomers to the philosophers to Ambrose and, now, to a specific branch of philosophy, the Platonists.

But that is all the books of the Platonists do. They do not turn Augustine into a Platonist or Neoplatonist, as many are apt to say. It is even too strong a statement to assert that Augustine is a "Christian Neoplatonist." He still holds that he must find something that bears the name of Christ. And he does. Thanks to Ambrose also informing him in book five that the Scriptures can be read allegorically, he can now re-approach them (*Conf.* V.14.25). He will uncover a Truth that shares many components with the Platonists, but this does not mean the Scriptures are Platonic or that Augustine is Christianizing the Platonists. In fact, and in practice, he will also show where they differ. Yet, just because the Scriptures share many traits with Platonism does not mean they should be called Platonic. Indeed, Augustine noted that the Truth was so strong, it even revealed portions of itself to these Platonists (*Conf.* VII.9.13-14). Yet, Augustine's *quomodo* does not become Platonism or Neoplatonism, but rather Christianity: he learns where Christ fits into the big picture, not in the three Christs of the Manichees, but the Christ of the Sacred Scriptures.

> Yet I think it was Your will that I should come upon these books before I had made study of the Scriptures, that it might be impressed on my memory how they had affected me: so that, when later I should have become responsive to You through Your Books with my wounds healed by the care of Your fingers, I might be able to discern the difference that there is between presumption and confession, between those who see what the goal is but do not see the way, and [those who see] the Way which leads to that country of blessedness, which we are meant not only to know but to dwell in. (*Conf.* VII.20.26)

Having finally come to his ultimate goals in terms of *unde* and *quomodo*, he will show how the Platonists have partial truths, but also, beyond this, how he will venture to seek and possess the complete Truth. This does not mean Augustine took Neoplatonism and put a Christian spin on it.

Rather, Christianity already contained elements that, once seen through the viewing glass of the Platonic ascent and through immaterial existence, reveal similarities: he is not Christianizing Neoplatonism, but rather showing how some of the elements of Neoplatonism reveal themselves in Christianity, because these Truths anchor the very foundations of anyone who is able to conceive of immaterial existence.

Before continuing onto Augustine's thoughts concerning the origins of evil, let us first make a summary of Augustine's intellectual journey from the start of reading Cicero's *Hortensius* to the discovery that he needs Christ as found in scriptures. His *unde* progresses from the knowledge gained in *Hortensius* to the knowledge found in the works of other philosophers and astronomers to Ambrose and then, finally, to books of the Platonists. His *quomodo*, ultimately grounded in the need that it must contain aspects of Christ, moves from rejecting the scriptures to accepting Manichaeism to rejecting Manichaeism to finally accepting Scriptures. Notice nowhere here does Neoplatonism end up in his *quomodo*. The *quomodo* in truth is the realm where a person can be called a Neoplatonist or an atheist or a Christian and so forth. But if it is only the tools that Augustine pillages from the Neoplatonists or from some other philosophical school, this does not suggest Augustine converts to their beliefs, but rather that their knowledge harmonizes with his beliefs and can thus be incorporated into his *unde*. Augustine does become a Manichee at one point in his life, but having eventually fled from the Manichees, he finds strength in the Catholic faith.

If we return to book seven, Augustine has utilized Nebridius' arguments to reject the notion that there always existed two substances, good and evil, and that from the struggle between these two substances, there has always been a battle between them that still occurs in the human being. The human soul – part of the God substance – struggles with the bodily soul –

part of the Evil substance. Decret puts it in the following way and then quotes a passage from Augustine's *De Duabas Animabus*:

> Pour résumer le manichéisme en deux dogmes qui lui semblent également essentiels, l'auteur [Augustin] établit un parallèle entre l'affirmation du dualisme des Principes antagonistes d'une part et, d'autre part, la croyance des deux « âmes » :
>
> « Je compte sur l'assistance de Dieu pour que ce livre, avec la piété et la bonne volonté des lecteurs, serve non seulement contre une mais contre toutes les fausses idées perverses. Toutefois, il vise particulièrement ceux qui tiennent qu'il existe deux Natures ou Substances, ayant chacune son Principe propre et en lutte l'une avec l'autre. Mécontents de certaines réalités contingentes et, par contre, attirés par certains autres, ils n'admettent pas que Dieu soit l'auteur de celles qui leur déplaisent, mais ils veulent qu'il soit l'auteur de celles en lesquelles ils se complaisent. Empêtrés dans les liens de la chair, incapables de vaincre leurs préjugés, ils tiennent que, pour un seul corps, il y a deux âmes (*duas animas esse in uno corpore*) : l'une issue d Dieu et qui, par nature, est ce qu'est Dieu lui-même ; l'autre de la race des Ténèbres. » (Decret 324-325)

Thus for the Manichees, the human holds two souls within and the fight between the good soul and bad soul within causes humans to do evil when the evil component overcomes the good component. Nebridius asks: if God is incorruptible, how could the Manichees dare to say that pieces of God were ripped away and trapped within the Evil world when God fought Evil? And if God is most sovereign, why would God even choose to fight, if he could not be harmed? But it was the fact that the Manichees said that he did fight that meant that they held that God became corrupted. Without knowing whence and how God was incorruptible, this would have given Augustine good enough reason to reject the Manichean theory of two co-eternal and co-existent substances as the cause of evil in the world.

And now that Augustine has acquired a new *unde* and *quomodo*, let us see how he deals with this Manichean theory without relying on Nebridius' argument. He will conclude that everything God makes is good, but there is a hierarchy. All things are good, but some things are better than others. Everything belongs in its proper realm in creation. Badness is a lack of

goodness, a privation, caused by the fact that all created things are capable of being corrupted. However, they are still good and could only be fully bad if they are fully corrupted, so that they would now be incorruptible in the antithetical sense of God – absolute evil. In conclusion, evil is not a substance: it does not exist – it is nothingness. That which we call "evil" is more in the sense of things that do not harmonize and are outside their proper order. The mosquito is good and the skin on your arm is good, but when a mosquito lands on your arm and bites you, a disharmony arises, because the mosquito's mouth should not be inserted in your skin and thus we call that evil, even though in truth this is a misnomer: for it is a disharmony. In addition, when the mosquito leaves a hole in your skin from biting you, your skin is still good, but it does suffer a privation: it has been corrupted.

> And it became clear to me that corruptible things are good: if they were supremely good they could not be corrupted, but also if they were not good at all they could not be corrupted: if they were supremely good they would be incorruptible, if they were in no way good there would be nothing in them that might corrupt. For corruption damages; and unless it diminished goodness, it would not damage. Thus either corruption does no damage, which is impossible or – and this is the certain proof of it – all things that are corrupted are deprived some goodness. But if they were deprived of all goodness, they would be totally without being. For if they might still be and yet could no longer be corrupted, they would be better than in their first state, because they would abide henceforth incorruptibly. What could be more monstrous than to say that things could be made better by losing their goodness? If they were deprived of all goodness, they would be altogether nothing: therefore as long as they are, they are good. Thus whatsoever things are, are good; and that origin I sought is not a substance, because if it were a substance, that is to say, the highest goodness; or it would be a corruptible substance, which would not be corruptible unless it were good. Thus I saw and clearly realized that You have made all things good, and that there are no substances not made by You. And because all the things You have made are not equal, they have a goodness [over and above] as a totality: because they are good individually, and they are very good all together, for our God has made all things very good. (*Conf.* VII.12.18)

> To You, then evil is utterly not – and not only to You, but to Your whole creation likewise, evil is not: because there is nothing over and above Your creation that could break in or derange that order that You imposed upon it. But in certain of its parts there are some things which we call evil because they do not harmonize with other things; yet these same things do harmonize with still others and thus are good; and in themselves they are good. All these things which do not harmonize with one another, do suit well with that lower part of creation which we call the earth, which has its cloudy and windy sky in some way apt to it. God forbid that I should say: "I wish that these things were not";

> because even if I saw only them, though I should want better things, yet even for them alone I should praise You. (*Conf.* VII.13.19)

With the powerful view that evil is non-existence, Augustine defeats the notions of Manichaeism. This is as far as book seven of *Confessions* takes it. But let us go further. With Augustine's new *unde* and *quomodo* finally settled, established, and allowed to ferment, he will go on to write further works on the subject.

Again, in these works, there is the clear view that everything God makes is good, but based on a degree of measure, number, and order, some things are better than others (Mann 44). In his work *On the City of God*, a response to the sack of Rome in 410, he again asserts that corrupted gold is better than uncorrupted silver, yet both are good. The soul is above the body and a runaway horse is still better than a stationary stone and a most depraved soul is still better than the noblest corporeal thing, light (Mann 44). Yet again, how does evil arise? Or even better yet, how does sin arise? The Manichees were able to give their dualism theory to answer this, but Augustine has only given us a notion that disharmony gives us an understanding of how we perceive evil. But he will answer the question. Namely, to use a good in an evil way is evil. And it is the will whence this arises. Why does it arise from the will? This is a most difficult question that Augustine's answer may leave some unsatisfied. For Augustine, as it is silly to ask why God willed to make the heavens and earth (for to say there was a cause prior to God's will would acknowledge something greater than God according to the causal principle), in a similar fashion, why ask why do humans sin (since sin does not come from God – the creator of all – it is nothing and thus how can anything be known about something that does not exist)? Both stem from a working of nothingness – they have no cause. Rather, it is best to focus on the human will. Just as it can compel the soul to love God freely, so it has been given the option to love God's

creation and incorrectly believe God's creatures to be gods (money, power, etc.) rather than God himself (Mann 45-46).

> As I have said, therefore, sin is not a desire for naturally evil things, but an abandonment of better things. And this itself is evil, not that nature which the sinner uses evilly. For evil is to use a good evilly. (*De natura boni contra Manichaeos* 36 as cited by Mann)

> But perhaps you are going to ask: since the will is moved when it turns away from an immutable good to a mutable good, from whence does this movement arise? It [the movement] is actually evil, even though a free will is to be counted among the good things, since without it no one can lively rightly. For if that movement, that is, the will's turning away from the Lord God, is without doubt a sin, how can we say that God is the author of sin? Thus that movement will not be from God. From whence then will it come? If I respond thus to your querying – that I do not know – perhaps you will be disappointed – but nevertheless I would respond truly. For that which is nothing cannot be known. (*De libero arbitrio* 2.20.54 as cited by Mann)

It should be apparent that Augustine has successfully destroyed any notion that there exists both Good and Evil in the world. But perhaps it is best to not only take apart the theory of two-eternal substances, but also the notion of two souls in one body. However, since the Manichees held that there exist two eternal substances and this happened to be the foundation of the two conflicting wills in the body, this argument ought to be already voided. Nevertheless, let us fully address Augustine's thoughts. He has plausibly shown that God happens to be the only eternally existent substance and that Evil is nothingness. And in the passages cited above, it is the conflict in the will that causes a person to choose evilly. Yet this conflict in will is not due to a struggle of two opposing forces, but rather to something more intrinsic.

Paula Frederiksen, in her article *The Divided Will*, argues how the conflict of the will originally stems from original sin and, having inherited this sin, our will is further conflicted by habit. Her primary defense can be found in the following pass from Augustine's *contra Fortunatum*:

> I say that there was the free exercise of will in that man who was first formed… But after he freely sinned, we who descend from his stock were plunged into necessity… For today in our actions, before we are implicated by any habit, we have free choice… But when by that liberty we have done something [evil]… and the pleasure of that deed has taken hold on the mind, the mind by its own habit is so implicated that it cannot afterwards conquer what it has fashioned for itself. (*contra Fortunatum* 22 as cited by Frederiksen).

Thus the "sin of Adam, which stands in causal relationship to current sinning" and "how man feels: habit – feelings with a past" exert "a gravitational pull on moral choice" (Frederiksen 212). In a sense the notion of the two souls in Manichaeism is very similar to the fractured single soul in Augustine's thoughts. However, the conflict of souls in Manichaeism arose from a cosmic struggle, while Augustine's broken soul arises from human choices in terms of history and psychology (original sin and habit from pleasure, respectively) (Frederiksen 214).

In his work *de Genesi ad literam,* Augustine realizes that God had made Adam and Eve both fully in soul and in flesh and that both the soul and body were good. Thus, nothing was sullied in human sexual intercourse, since God commanded the couple to be fruitful and multiply and beget children. Yet after the fall, the relationship between soul and body became discombobulated. While sexual intercourse prior to the fall would have solely been initially a movement of the will, after the fall, the body would now fight with the will so that sexual intercourse would no longer be a movement of the will, but a disordered movement of will and body: now the possibility was there where – in confusion – the body could trump the soul and the longing to have children would be suppressed or replaced by a desire to solely satisfy bodily lust (Frederiksen 215). Thus again, while both the soul and the body are good, since the soul is above the body, the fact that the body attempts to have power over the soul in this way showing confusion in the order of hierarchy attests to conflict in a person.

> The soul possesses a kind of natural appetite for managing the body. By reason of this appetite it is somehow hindered from going on with all its force to the

> highest heaven, so long as it is not joined to the body, for it is in managing the body that this appetite is satisfied… And when the soul … again receives this body [transformed]… it will have the perfect measure of its being; obeying and commanding, vivified and vivifying with such wonderful ease that what was once its burden will be its glory. (*de Genesi ad literam* 12.35 as cited by Frederiksen)

Hence, we have finally worked through Augustine's thoughts concerning evil stemming from the origins of the world and the soul. Through the use of a newly empowered *unde* and *quomodo*, we find answers that gravely criticize the theory of the Manichees: that there exists a Good and an Evil and due to a cosmic battle, parts of the Good have been trapped within the realm of the Evil and so in bodies, a struggle still surges against the Good soul and the Evil soul, and this is the reason why there is evil and why humans do evil. Augustine learns that since he can now conceive of God as immaterially and existent and of the Scriptures as the way to fully understand this, he does not need to use a sponge-sea analogy anymore. Rather, he sees that whatever God creates is good and that whatever God does not create does not exist. Thus since God does not create evil, it does not exist. Rather, evil is the antithesis of God, so that while God is the incorporeal being, evil is incorporeal non-being. All that God creates is good, but there is a hierarchy so that some things are better than others: the soul is better than the body; gold is better than silver. Yet while creatures are good, they are corporeal and capable of being corrupted – capable of suffering a privation. However, they are still good in the sense that it is only when they have been fully corrupted that they then become incorruptible nothings that are no longer good, but evil in the sense that they no longer exist.

Now the evil that people are accustomed to speak of is more a contention than nothingness. When a human who is good comes into a store, which is good, and holds up the store, which is good, with a gun, which is good, and demands money, which is good, there is a disaccord, which is in this sense bad. Now the question might arise, where does this disharmony

arise in a person? It happens because there is a conflict in the will stemming from original sin and habit that results in confusion where a person cannot choose the correct order and his body rules his soul. The person, for the bodily lust of money, enters the store and demands money: he ignores his soul's command center, which desires not money and knows that God ought to be the goal, not these lustful desires.

Now that we have presented Augustine's arguments concerning the origin of evil, we must ask: how does this relate to Plotinus, the founder of Neo-Platonism? In *Ennead 1.8 On What Are and Whence Comes Evils*, Plotinus will discuss many ideas that are similar to those of Augustine, but many that are also different. We will now introduce short summaries and citations of chapters 2 – 14 from *Ennead* 1.8 that attempt to capture Plotinus' conception of evil.

In chapter 2, Plotinus asserts that evil does not exist and that there is no existence of evil in the Good (also known as God or the One), Intellect (Mind), or Soul:

> Evil is nowhere here, and if things had stopped here there would not have been any evil, only a First and the second and third goods. "All things are around the King of all, and That is the cause of all good and beautiful things, and all things belong to That, and the second things are around the Second and the third around the Third."

In chapter 3, he argues that evil has no form and is analogous to the world's non-existence: rather, anything that can be perceived by the senses is pseudo-existent:

> Non-being here does not mean absolute non-being but only something other than being; not non-being in the same way as the movement and rest which affect being, but like an image of being or something still more non-existent. The whole world of sense is non-existent in this way, and also all sense-experience and whatever is posterior or incidental to this, or its principle, or one of the elements which go to make up the whole which is of this non-existent kind.

In chapter 4, he argues the body is evil, though not absolute evil, and that the soul is not evil for only things of matter are evil:

> The nature of bodies, in so far as it participates in matter, will be an evil, not the primal evil. For bodies have a sort of form which is not true form, and they are deprived of life, and in their disorderly motion they destroy each other, and they hinder the soul in its proper activity, and they evade reality in their continual flow, being secondary evil. The soul is not in itself evil, nor is it all evil.

In chapter 5, he argues that matter is not absolute evil, but that it is deficient and non-being. Yet he then adds that matter can transform substances into absolute deficiency, which is evil.

> For matter has not even being – if it had it would by this means have a share in good; when we say it "is" we are just using the same word for two different things, and the true way of speaking is to say, it "is not." Deficiency, then, involves being not good, but absolute deficiency evil; great deficiency involves the possibility of falling into evil and is already an evil itself.

In chapter 6, he says that according to Socrates, we must fly away from evil not by leaving the earth, but by leaving wickedness: matter.

> For "flight," he [Socrates] says, is not going away from earth but being on earth "just and holy with the help of wisdom"; what he means is that we must fly from wickedness.

In chapter 7, he goes on to argue that evil exists, but not in the sense of being; rather, it is necessary that there be an existing non-existence.

> Now it is necessary that what comes after the First should exist, and therefore that the Last should exist; and this is matter, which possesses nothing at all of the Good. And in this way too evil is necessary.

In chapter 8, he gives an example of how matter, the antithesis of form, corrupts goodness, which is form.

> Essential fire does not burn, nor do any other forms existing by themselves do what they are said to do when they come to exist in matter. For matter masters what is imaged in it and corrupts and destroys it by applying its own nature

> which is contrary to form, not bringing cold to hot but putting its own formlessness to the form of heat and its shapelessness to shape and its excess and defect to that which is measured, till it has made the form belong to matter and no longer to itself; just as when animals feed that which is taken in is no longer as it came but becomes dog's blood and everything doggish, and all the juices become like those of the animal which receives them. If then the body is the cause of evils, matter would be in this way too the cause of evils.

In chapter 9, he says we see evil and know its absolute deficiency by leaving the eye of the intellect and moving back out toward the eyes of the body so that matter can judge matter, for it is impossible for light to see darkness, but only darkness can see its like.

> Leaving the light is so that it may see the darkness, since with the light it cannot see it; but without something it cannot see, but only not see – that I may be able to see in the way it is possible to see darkness; so intellect, leaving its own light in itself and as it were going outside itself and coming to what is not is own, by not bringing its own with it experiences something contrary to itself, that it may see its own contrary.

In chapter 10, he then argues that matter is evil because it does not have any quality:

> So it is rightly said to be both without quality and evil; for it is not called evil because it has, but rather because it has not quality; so that perhaps it would not have been evil if it was a form instead of a nature opposed to form.

In chapter 11, he rejects the notion that evil is fully privation:

> But if the privation is privation of a form which ought to be present, if the privation in the soul is a privation of good and produces vice in the soul corresponding to its own definition, soul then has no good in it; so then it has no life in it, though it is still soul. So then soul will be soulless, if it has not even any life in it; so though it is still a soul it will not be a soul. But it has life by its own definition so it does not have the privation of good from itself.

In chapter 12, Plotinus rejects the notion that evil is partial privation, since his quest is to find primary evil and this would only result in a secondary evil:

> In this case, if it is has some good and is deprived of some, it will be in a mixed state and the evil will not be undiluted, and we have not yet found primary,

> undiluted evil: and the soul will have good in its very substance, but evil as some kind of accident.

In chapter 13, he goes on to argue that full contemplation and descending into vice (matter) leads to the full death of the soul: it becomes absolute deficiency.

> So just as when one goes up from virtue one comes to the beautiful and the good, when one goes down from vice one comes to absolute evil, taking vice as the starting-point. One will contemplate it with the contemplation which belongs to absolute evil, and participate in it when one becomes it: one enters altogether into "the region of unlikeness" when one sinks and has gone falling into the mud of darkness… so it dies, as far as the soul can die, and its death, while it is still plunged in the body, is to sink in matter and be filled with it, and, when it has gone out of the body, to lie in matter till it raises itself and somehow manages to look away from the mud; this is "going to Hades and falling asleep there."

And in chapter 14, finally, he argues that soul and matter occupy the same place, but that if soul does not remain in command of matter and flee from it, matter will infest it and fill it with weakness and vice:

> There is matter in reality and there is soul in reality, and one single place for both of them. For there are not two separate places for matter and for the soul, - on earth, for instance, for matter and in the air for the soul: the soul's separate place is its not being in matter; and this means not being united to matter; and this means that not one single thing comes into being from it and matter; and this means that it is not in matter as a substratum; and this is being separate. But there are many powers of soul, and it has a beginning, a middle and an end; and matter is there, and begs it and, we may say, bothers it and wants to come right inside. "All the place is holy," and there is nothing which is without a share of soul. So matter spreads itself out under soul and is illumined, and cannot grasp the source from which its light comes: that source cannot endure matter though it is there, because its evil makes it unable to see. Matter darkens the illumination, the light from that source, by mixture with itself, and weakens it by itself offering it the opportunity of generation and the reason for coming to matter; for it would not have come to what was not present. This is the fall of the soul, to come in this way to matter and to become weak, because all its powers do not come into action; matter hinders them from coming by occupying the place which soul holds and producing a kind of cramped condition, and making evil what it has got hold of by a sort of theft – until soul manages to escape back to its higher state. So matter is the cause of the soul's weakness and vice: it is then itself evil before soul and is primary evil. Even if soul had produced matter, being affected in some way, and had become evil by communicating with it, matter would have been the cause by its presence: soul would not have come to it unless its presence had given soul the occasion of coming to birth.

Having now read through an analysis of both Augustine's concept of the origin of evil and a presentation of Plotinus', it should be apparent where they are the same and where they differ. The foundational break is though both hold evil to be a non-existence, Plotinus believes evil has the capability of transforming goodness into nothingness, while Augustine holds evil as completely powerless and only a consequence resulting from complete privation. The question thus must be asked, "Does Augustine ever become a Neoplatonist?" As argued above, Augustine's *quomodo* is never Neoplatonism, but Christianity. Augustine only goes through two conversions in *Confessions*, his conversion to Manichaeism and then to Christianity. His *unde* allows him though to pick and choose whatever corresponds with his *quomodo*. The reason he accepts the notion of the Platonic ascent is not because he is a Neoplatonist, but because his Christian faith acknowledges it as a viable tool. The same can be said with anything else. Whatever is Truth, he can pick and choose, be it from the Neoplatonists, the Stoics, the Donatists, etc.

Augustine agrees with Plotinus that there is some sort of hierarchy in creation: there is the One, the Mind, and the Soul. The One is above the Mind and the Mind is above the Soul. And then there is Matter, which is below all of these three. The One is perfect good, incorruptible being, and then there is Mind, which is good but not perfectly good and then Soul, which is also good but still lesser good (*Ennead* 1.8.2; Chadwick 20). Augustine has no problem incorporating this into his Christian beliefs, but then Plotinus makes himself distinct by saying that matter, such as the body, is an evil that corrupts the soul. Matter has an intrinsic evil to it, which A. H. Armstrong notes that Plotinus borrows from Plato's *Timaeus* 41B2-4:

> If the matter universe is never to be dissolved, then matter-evil is a permanent element in our mortal life, from which we cannot escape by getting into a superior part of the universe but only by a radical inner detachment from the

> body. (Armstrong 296-297 – this note is found at the bottom of the cited pages in his translation of Plotinus: *Ennead* I)

Even though the Soul has the power to place Form (the blueprint) onto matter, matter can turn around and corrupt the Soul and kill it (Chadwick 20). Here we see that Plotinus holds also the notion of a single soul and of evil as a non-existent being.

Yet Plotinus goes too far for Augustine. Augustine believes everything that exists is good. The fact that evil does not exist means that it does not have being. For Plotinus, evil is an existing non-existence (in that it has the power to deprive existence from existing things), while for Augustine, evil is more simply non-existence without any power (*Ennead* 1.8.7; *Conf.* VII.12.18). Matter, which has form imposed onto it, such as the human body, is good, just like the soul, but it needs to know that it is a lesser good than the soul. Indeed, the soul for Augustine must realize that it is superior to the body, and disorder only arises when the soul listens to the body instead of the other way around. But it is not matter that can corrupt, as Plotinus would suggest, but, as Augustine will posit, rather the will which chooses to permit this matter to overcome the soul. And unlike Plotinus, the struggle in the will of a human does not arise from matter, for it is good, but rather in original sin and habit, which have confused the will. And again differing from Plotinus, Augustine holds that at the day of resurrection, the body perfected will be united with the soul in complete harmony free from the human condition of sin and addiction: the soul will not be detached from the body.

In sum, those who say in book seven that Augustine becomes a Neoplatonist or only needs the Platonists to see the truth - that god is incorruptible – are therefore mistaken. He wants to see Truth. Perhaps it is difficult to understand what he means by whence or how, but let me put into simpler language. He is trying to find *where to see* Truth and *how to understand* that Truth. The *unde* (where) are his tools of reasoning, while his *quomodo* (how) is his guide – his

belief. If he only sees Truth, what does that mean? It means nothing. It should be stressed again that the *quomodo* is Augustine's belief system. When the term "conversion" is used, it can only be used in reference to *quomodo*. Thus as discussed in this chapter, there are only two times he undergoes conversion: once to the Manichees and then to Christianity. He never converts to Neoplatonism. Rather, he only takes and chooses from the books of the Platonists the concepts that he finds suitable and these go into his *unde*. He takes their Platonic ascent, their concept of the One, their concept of the single soul, their concept of the hierarchy in creation, and much more, but does this make Augustine a Neoplatonist? Far from it. He is a Christian, but this does not forbid him from agreeing with people who are not Christians. The fact that he also has severe disagreements with Plotinus and gives different answers concerning evil should also be convincing enough and truly testify that he is not a Neoplatonist.

> It is a misreading to say that in Book 7 Augustine becomes a neo-Platonist. What he *says* is that in the midst of all his philosophizing – Platonic, neo-Platonic, and idiosyncratic – the specific tests put in front of him brought him new light and new frustration, and thus had the effect of driving him towards scriptural authority, where, in Book 8, the real resolution of his difficulties would be worked out. Book 7 teaches, in the end, that intellectual enlightenment, contrary to all Augustine's youthful expectations, is not sufficient. There is no suggestion, anywhere in A. or in any of the modern commentators, that he ever took his 'Platonism' so far as to indulge in theurgy. The only possible liturgy for him now was Christianity; the ascent of the mind was non-sectarian in that important, even crucial, sense. But in one significant way, the Platonic pattern may have influenced his expectations of Christianity in a way that also goes unattended. The function of theurgy is to bring about the presence of the God, visibly. (O'Donnell 415)

Now, we have overturned the notion that the books of the Platonists solved all of Augustine's problems in book seven of *Confessions* as well as the misconception that Augustine somehow converts to Neoplatonism. But the final stage of this thesis lies in the next chapter. There we will show good reason to reject those who attach adjectives to Augustine's Christianity, especially the ones who call Augustine by the ever-popular term, "Christian

Neoplatonist" and further demonstrate the distance between the Platonists and Augustine when we address Augustine's treatment of time.

CHAPTER THREE:
Two Analogies and Finding an Appropriate Title for Augustine

In book seven of Augustine's *Confessions*, Augustine wishes to see God, but he wants to know *unde et quomodo*. In chapter one of this thesis, I criticized those who suggest that Augustine needs only the Platonists to accomplish this task. The problem with this view is that it presents only half the solution, namely the *unde* or, more specifically, the tool component of Augustine's solution. These scholars would permit Augustine to possess the hammer, but not specifically how to hold and properly use the hammer. And so without a guide, his *quomodo*, Augustine is left to hammer nails crookedly and never straight. Following this in chapter two, I argued against those who suggest Augustine actually becomes a Platonist in book seven and then a Christian in book eight. These scholars dare to suggest that Augustine's answer to seeing God is not only by the tool of Platonism, but also through the Neoplatonic belief system. Despite the fact that Augustine clearly states that he does not trust anything that does not bear the name of Christ and denounces the Platonists for their desire to use pagan icons as guides, these scholars imply that Augustine converts to and partakes in the very practices he rejects. In this final chapter, though, I shall critique those who attach clarifiers to Augustine's Christianity: namely, those who call Augustine a Christian Platonist or Christian Neoplatonist. From my analysis of book seven, such a designation seems to be a very appropriate choice at first. However, I will argue that it is still not a correct one.

The term, "Christian Platonist" can be interpreted in two ways. The first way is that it could mean Augustine is fully Christian and fully Platonist, in that his *unde* and *quomodo* incorporate wholly these two systems. The second way is given by Sheldon-Williams in two forms:

> A Christian Platonist may be either a Platonist who requires to substantiate his speculations by a faith which transcends them, or a Christian who thinks of his faith, and desires to expound it, in terms intelligible to Platonists. (Sheldon-Williams 425)

In the former, the *unde* is Christianity, while the *quomodo* is Platonism, and in the latter, it is the reverse. Though Sheldon-Williams argues that Augustine follows the former interpretation, my last two chapters have suggested he takes the latter approach where his *unde* is Platonism and his *quomodo* is Christianity (Sheldon-Williams 425). Nevertheless, ignoring these nuances, I will demonstrate in this chapter that taking the term "Christian Platonist" in the first way only results in pure contradiction, while taking it in the second way does not give justice to Augustine.

Concerning the first way, I cite two passages that hold that Augustine is both a Christian and a Platonist:

> Augustine is not a Christian who simply borrows elements from Platonism, as though from some external source, to expound his Christian doctrine. The doctrine he expounds, as he finds it in the Scriptures and in his Christian predecessors, is for him unrecognizable and unthinkable in abstract separation from those modes of Platonic speculation which, long before his time, belonged already to the Christian *intellectus*. Nor is it possible, in Augustine, to distinguish between a Platonic intellectuality and a Christian moral inspiration; for him, as indeed for pagan Platonists, and for Christian Platonists before him, the intellectual and the moral are inextricably related, and his problems with pagan Platonism are surely as much intellectual as moral. Nor is there, for Augustine, any proto-scholastic division from theology: Christian *sapientia* is one, and is at once both Christian and Platonic. Intellectually and morally, philosophically and theologically, Augustine is both Platonist and Christian. (Crouse 110)

> The first stage in Augustine's thought is found in his early 'philosophic' works. Augustine is a Christian, but he also considers himself a Platonist, and the Christian and Platonist aspects of his thought seem to him in nearly complete harmony. True religion has finally appeared; true philosophy has finally appeared; and true religion is true philosophy. (Cranz 299)

Here are two people who believe that Augustine's methods not only in book seven of *Confessions*, but also generally, entail a process that mixes Platonism and Christianity in such a

way that the *unde et quomodo* can no longer be distinguished. For them, whether attempting to see God or further inquiring into the Truth, Augustine incorporates the two almost non-exclusively.

I hope my first two chapters have been sufficient to show that such an interpretation is wrong and is a plain contradiction. But for the sake of demonstration, instead of re-referring back to the texts and my arguments concerning Augustine's pursuits of *unde et quomodo*, I will provide two rather tangible analogies here.

Consider the hypothetical situation where Augustine and the Platonists are arguing about the movements of the heavenly bodies in space. Let us say that Augustine believes in heliocentrism – Augustine does not fully trust anything that does not bear the belief that the Sun is at the center of the solar system, while the Platonists believe in geocentrism – that the Earth is at the center. However, Augustine is having a difficult time trying to have his belief system work, because he holds that orbits have to be circular (compare this to his belief that only things that he can see, exist, and thus he cannot conceive of anything that exists immaterially and hence cannot work out God's incorruptibility). Thus he has built circles upon circles, yet his model of the solar system still cannot adequately predict the motions of the planets and Moon. Yet, the Platonists, being the more enlightened individuals and having transcended the bounds of circular orbits, show that it possible to conceive of elliptical orbits (compare this to the Platonic ascent where immaterial substances can be conceived to exist). Augustine, happening upon the books of these Platonists positing an elliptical theory, now discovers the notion of ellipses and incorporates this into his heliocentric system and all his worries melt away and he is able to predict the motions of the heavens and in a much more elegant way than that of his Platonic

counterparts (compare to the Platonists who, in their attempt to reach transcendence, fall into the habit of worshipping pagan images and believing in astrology).

Now, just because Augustine adopts the notion of elliptical orbits, does that make Augustine a Platonist? No. And in fact, if one were to call Augustine a Platonist in this situation, one would have to affirm that he was both a believer in heliocentrism and geocentrism – a completely utter contradiction. In this analogy, elliptical orbits are his *unde* and heliocentrism is his *quomodo*.

But if that analogy is not enough, let us drive home the point further with another one. Consider a simplistic concept of the evolution of humans. There are many people who misrepresent the theory and say foolish things, such as that man evolved from the chimps or apes or however you would like to consider it. Yet those who are faithful to the theory will say that humans, chimps, apes, and all the other primates evolved from a common source. That is the same here concerning Augustine's Christianity and the Platonists. They also evolved from a common source. Augustine's Christianity did not flow out of Platonism, but rather these two stem from the spring known as Truth and both have a desire to return to that source. Of course, humans share many characteristics with other primates by the fact that our genomes contain over ninety percent of the same code; yet, we are undeniably distinct. Again, Augustine saw how close Platonism was to Christianity, but that did not mean he did not hold them distinct: change a few components in an ape's genome and you are sure to happen upon man – the same is true for Platonism.

> "If these men [the Platonists] could have had this life over again with us… they would have become Christians, with the change of a few words and statements" (*De Vera Religione* VII as cited on the bottom of page 304 of *City of God*).

Hence to call Augustine a Platonist and a Christian in such a sense as proposed by those scholars above only renders absurdities. While the Platonists may be given the name *Veritas platonicorum*, Christians bear the nomenclature *Veritas christianorum*, a species superior to that of the Platonists in the eyes of Augustine.

> I saw One Face, and I learned to rejoice with trembling. I found that whatever truth I had read in the Platonists was said here with praise of Your grace. (*Confessions* VII.21.27)

Having dispelled this first proposed way of being a Christian Platonist, let us now turn our focus to the more interesting second way where the term, "Christian Platonist" can be interpreted in a means that suggests Augustine's *unde* is the Platonists and his *quomodo* is Christ in the Scriptures. If you read through the first two chapters of this thesis, you may be tempted to agree with this interpretation, but I ask that you restrain yourself from doing this. In book seven, Augustine's *unde* is not the Platonists, but rather tools he despoils from them, namely the Platonic ascent. And going through chapter two and my comparison between Augustine's treatment of evil versus Plotinus', you may come to realize that Augustine does grab more tools out of the Platonists' toolbox: not only the Platonic ascent, but also how evil fits into God's creation (of course, just as with their treatment of the Platonic ascent, there are also differences in their understanding of evil). Yet to call Augustine a Christian Platonist or, even more specifically, a Christian Neoplatonist, as Stanford's Encyclopedia of Philosophy would like to put it, is too strong and specific.

In fact, there are multiple tools that Augustine incorporates into his *unde* before he happens on the *libri platonicorum*. In book three of *Confessions*, he reads Cicero's *Hortensius* and takes it to heart that he should possess Wisdom, whatever it may be. In book four, though he initially applied them to God incorrectly, he incorporates Aristotle's *Categories* into his mind. In

book five, he discusses philosophers' and astronomers' mathematical works from which he learned a great deal concerning the motions in the sky and how Ambrose introduced him to the method of reading the texts figuratively. Without each of these developments in Augustine's *unde*, Augustine might never have arrived at the events that occur in book seven. Yet why do we then not call Augustine a Ciceronian Aristotelian Philosophical Astronomical Ambrosian Neoplatonic Christian? Why do we call him a Christian Platonist? Perhaps one may argue to give Augustine such a title would be overkill (and indeed, I would concur). But then why limit him to the Platonist?

Maybe we might suggest that we ought to call him a Christian Platonist because he reaches the pinnacle of his *unde* at book seven when he finally sees God. But I would argue that this is not true. His *unde* continues to shift and he picks and chooses from whatever he believes is Truth and can incorporate into his holistic *unde et quomodo* system to even better understand not only God, but His creation.

The best evidence that I can offer on this occurs in book eleven of *Confessions* when Augustine attempts to give a definition to time. O'Daly, in discussing Augustine's measurement of time in book eleven, states that Augustine's explication does not follow Platonically, but rather is more similar to Stoic and Aristotelian principles (O'Daly 152-153). Simo Knuuttila also puts great emphasis on comparing Augustine's analysis of time with that of Aristotle (Knuuttila 103-115).

But before I go into details about the similarities and differences of Augustine's treatment with others, allow me to give a brief introduction to Augustine's discourse on time in book eleven. The fundamental question Augustine poses in book eleven concerns the very essence of time:

> At no time then had You not made anything, for time itself You made. And no time is co-eternal with You, for You stand changeless; whereas if time stood changeless, it would not be time. What then is time? Is there any short and easy answer to that? Who can put the answer into words or even see it in the mind? Yet what commoner or more familiar word do we use in speech than time? Obviously when we use it, we know what we mean, just as when we hear another use it, we know what he means. What then *is* time? If no one asks me, I know; if I want to explain it to a questioner, I do not know. But at any rate this much I dare affirm I know: that if nothing passed there would be no past time; if nothing were approaching, there would be no future time; if nothing were, there would be no present time. (*Confessions* XI.14.17)

From here, we learn some crucial facts. Augustine believes time came into existence when the world was made: time is also part of creation. And though he understands time in a certain way, he cannot give a concrete definition of it.

By the end of book eleven, he still does not arrive at a concrete definition of time. The only thing that he is able to give is an operational definition: time is that which we measure. Just as if a person were asked what is temperature, the most typical response would be that quantity which is measured by a thermometer, so too time is that which is measure by motion of some arbitrary constant. Yet, these motions are not time itself, but just ways to measure it. Augustine cannot come to terms with the fact that time always seems to be passing: the past is that which has gone out of existence, the present immediately passes into non-existence and is dimensionless without extension, and the future is that which is yet to exist. And though people may use the Sun's seeming trajectory across the sky to denote a day is twenty-four hours, this unit is arbitrary since even if the Sun were to halt in the sky, time would still pass.

> But the two times, past and future, how can they *be*, since the past is no more and the future is not yet? On the other hand, if the present were always present and never flowed away into the past, it would not be time at all, but eternity. But if the present is only time, because it flows away into the past, how can we say it *is*? For it is, only because it will cease to be. Thus we can affirm that time *is* only in that it tends towards not-being. (*Confessions* XI.14.17)

> If the movement of the sun through one complete circuit were the day, then it would be a day even if the sun sped through its course in a space of time equal

> to an hour. If the time the sun now takes to complete its circuit is the day, then it would be a day if between one sunrise and the next there were only the space of an hour: the sun would have to go round twenty-four times to make one day. But if to constitute a day there is needed both the movement of the sun through one circuit and the time the sun now takes, then you would not have a day if the sun completed its whole circuit in an hour, nor again if the sun stood still and as much time passed as the sun normally takes to complete its journey from one morning to the next. But I shall not at the moment pursue the question of what it is that we call day. I shall continue to seek what time is, by which we measure the sun's journey: so that we should say that it had gone round in half its accustomed time, if it went round in a space of time equivalent to twelve hours. And comparing its normal time with this twelve-hour time, we should say that the latter was single, the former double; yet the sun would in the one case have made its journey from east to east in the shorter time, in the other in the longer [so that time is something independent of the sun's movement]. Let no one tell me that the movement of the heavenly bodies is time: when at the prayer of a man the sun stood still that he might complete his victory in battle, the sun stood still but time moved on. The battle was continued for the necessary length of time and was finished. (*Confessions* XI.23.30)

While Augustine's discussion is fascinating, there is nothing new here in his treatment of time. In book four of Aristotle's *Physics*, Aristotle also addresses the fact that we apply a standardized unit to measure the whole and count how many units make up that whole. For Aristotle, a circular motion is one of the most convenient ways to establish this arbitrary unit and, though this celestial motion can be used as a universal clock, any other motion can be used to measure time and thus time is not the same as motion (*Physics* 4.13.220b18-24; 14, 223b13-20; Knuuttila 110). Additionally, the notion of the past and future not existing is also found in Aristotle's writings (*Physics* 4.10; O'Daly 155).

Yet the treatment of time's movement from future into past is different in Augustine and Aristotle. For Augustine, some scholars hold that he conceives of time as an indivisible unit, while for Aristotle, time is continuous, like a flowing river (Barolini 121). This notion of a river comes from Plutarch's criticism of the Stoics who share an idea similar to that of Aristotle:

> The conception of time for them, then, is like clutching water, which falls away and slips through one's grasp the tighter one squeezes it (*comm. not.* 1082A as cited by O'Daly).

Augustine, however, responds:

> Let us consider, then, O human soul, whether present time can be long: for it has been given you to feel and measure time's space. What will you answer me? Are the present hundred years a long time? But first see whether a hundred years *can* be present. If it is the first year of the hundred, then that year is present, but the other ninety-nine are still in the future, and so as yet are not: if we are in the second year, then one year is past, one year is present, the rest future. Thus whichever year of our hundred-year period we choose as present, those before it have passed away, those after it are still to come. Thus a hundred years cannot be present. (*Confessions* XI.15.19)

He continues this discussion, going from a hundred years, to a year, to a day, to an hour, and then he comes up with the thought that perhaps there is an indivisible moment of time that may have a minimum extension, like a 'time-atom':

> If we conceive of some point of time which cannot be divided into even the minutest parts of moments, that is the only point that can be called present (*Confessions* XI.15.20).

However, O'Daly is quick to note that even this is not an original idea since the concept could possibly come from the Epicureans (O'Daly 154). Regardless, Augustine does not stick to this idea, but immediately refutes it and returns to Aristotle and the Stoics, who possess the river analogy – the present has no length and thus actuality continues to flow from actuality to actuality:

> If we conceive of some point of time which cannot be divided into even the minutest parts of moments, that is the only point that can be called present: and that point flees at such lightning speed from being future to being past, that it has no extent of duration at all. For if it were so extended, it would be divisible into past and future: the present has no length. (*Confessions* XI.15.20)

The reason Augustine abandons his conception that time possibly possesses an indivisible unit is that in his work *De Civitate Dei*, he could never figure out a way to reconcile the moment of

death, for he held that the soul instantaneously left the body and did not linger even for an iota (*De Civitate Dei* 13.9-11; Knuuttila 112).

Thus, as we have shown so far, Augustine has incorporated many ideas not stemming primarily from the Platonists, but instead from the Stoics, Aristotle, and maybe even the Epicureans. Though one may argue that Augustine never specifically states he read the books of the Stoics, as he did the books of the Platonists, there is nothing to say he did not happen upon them in one aspect or another. As we see in the *Confessions*, he has a knack for leaving out information (such as the names of people he meets) and does not even specify which of the Platonic works he read.

Continuing on, Augustine then suggests humans measure time in the mind and that it is language that has confounded the notion of time. Rather, past, present, and future exist presently in the mind so that it is the present of past things, present things, and future things. However, again, this theory can be traced again back to the Stoics who also criticize the ambiguities of language and suggest when somebody observes a wound on a person, it is not that the person 'has been wounded,' but rather 'is having-been wounded' (O'Daly 156-157). In addition, Aristotle and the Stoics also attributed time to something incorporeal (O'Daly 157). Again, the point that I attempting to drive home here is that Augustine is primarily drawing ideas from the Stoics and Aristotle when he gives his treatment of time in book eleven. Were we to skip over book seven completely, we would hardly be tempted to call Augustine a Christian Platonist.

Yet, where Augustine differs from these philosophers is in the way he establishes a connection between his mind and the three present natures of time (O'Daly 161). For Augustine, it is through memory that the human grasps time so that the past is in the memory, the present is

attention, and the future is expectation, so that a person knows how long a song will be or has been, based on what he has sung, is singing, and is yet to sing.

> Perhaps it would be more correct to say: there are three times, a present of things past, a present of things present, a present of things future. For these three exist in the mind, and I find them nowhere else: the present of things past is memory, the present of things present is sight, the present of things future is expectation. If we are allowed to speak thus, I see and admit there are three times, that three times truly are (*Confessions* XI.20.26).
>
> Thus it seems to me that time is certainly extendedness – but I do not know what it is extendedness of: probably of the mind itself (*Confessions* XI.26.33).
>
> It is in you, O my mind, that I measure time. Do not bring against me, do not bring against yourself the disorderly throng of your impressions. In you, I say, I measure time. What I measure is the impress produced in you by things as they pass and abiding in you when they have passed: and it is present. I do not measure the things themselves whose passage produced the impress; it is the impress that I measure when I measure time. Thus either that is what time is, or I am not measuring time at all (*Confessions* XI.27.36)
>
> Suppose that I am about to recite a psalm that I know. Before I begin, my expectation is directed to the whole of it; but when I have begun, so much of it as I pluck off and drop away into the past becomes matter for my memory; and whole energy of the action is divided between my memory, in regard to what I have said, and my expectation, in regard to what I am still to say. But there is a present act of attention, by which what was future passes on its way to becoming past. The further I go in my recitation, the more my expectation is diminished and my memory lengthened, until the whole of my expectation is used up when the action is completed and has passed wholly into my memory. And what is true of the whole psalm, is true for each part of the whole, and for each syllable: and likewise for any longer action, of which the canticle may be only a part: indeed it is the same for the whole life of man, of which all a man's actions are parts: and likewise for the whole history of the human race, of which all the lives of all men are parts (*Conf.* XI.28.38).

Thus in this sense, not only does Augustine come up with the memory's ability to measure time, but he also redeems himself in the sense that time is not a river, as the Stoics and Aristotle claim, but is divisible into parts, made intelligible by the mind. Again, Augustine has plundered certain elements in these philosophers' thoughts to incorporate into his *unde*. Of course, his *quomodo* is still ever present: so it is important again that people do not go off writing papers about how Augustine is wholly Christian and Stoic or that he was converted to Stoicism in book eleven of the *Confessions*. Still wishing to find a link to the fact that man is in the image of God,

Augustine presents time in a sense that relates the nature of God's timelessness yet time's division in God's creation to the human being's mind's ability to contain past, present, and future outside of time, yet checked by the realization that things pass out of existence as also witnessed by the mind.

From a quick overview of book eleven of *Confessions*, we see in what aspects Augustine's *unde* has evolved since his encounter with the books of the Platonists in book seven. In this section, the underlying question is what ought to be the qualifying adjective attached to his Christian *quomodo*. Should it be *Platonist,* since he stresses how crucial Platonists were in helping him seeing how immaterial substances can exist? Before the analysis of book eleven, I proposed that it should not, since he has a great deal of other instruments incorporated into his *unde* before he is ready to open his eyes to the Platonic works. And now, having gone through Augustine's discussion of time, we see that Augustine does not use the Platonists as the ultimate tool in his *unde*. In truth, their presence in book eleven is almost non-existent; indeed the concepts posited by Aristotle and the Stoics dominate his *unde* development here. Should he be called a Christian Platonist in book seven and Christian Aristotelian Stoic in book eleven? I would argue such categorizations of Augustine are extremely immature and the identifier attached to his name should not limit his *unde*. His toolbox is extremely multifaceted. Perhaps we may call him a Christian Pluralist. Of course, such a liberal proposition opens up its own new Pandora's box. So let us give him a liberating, yet diplomatic title: Christian Intellectual.

CONCLUSION

Augustine's *Confessions* can fittingly be called an autobiographical work. It is most likely that many have not given as much focus to two seemingly innocent words as I have, but it is incredible that this *unde et quomodo* can paint such a vivid picture of Augustine's intellectual development. What is his belief, his *quomodo*? What is his *unde*, his toolbox? Ever since his mother planted the seed inside him that insisted that he find where Christ fits into the grand scheme combined with Cicero's *Hortensius*' call to seek, he sought. He juggled with the Scriptures, then with the Manichees, and then finally had a homecoming when he came to realization that it was not 'where is he is, you are,' but rather, 'where you are, there he will be' (*Conf.* III.11.20).

Augustine's solution to seeing God was not only through discovering a means that showed him where he must look to witness the existence of incorporeal substances, but also by uncovering Christ in the humble Scriptures and using Him as his guide. As we have shown throughout this thesis, there have been many who have confused Augustine's *unde et quomodo* with some believing he only needs the Platonists to solve his problems, others saying he converts to Platonism at one point in his life, and others who limit Augustine's mental prowess. We have critiqued them thoroughly and pointed out where they have missed the mark.

Yet something interesting to ponder is how these misreadings and misrepresentations fit into a grander scope. I am sure Augustine would have found it quite amusing that people would label him as a Christian Platonist several centuries later or even declare that he perhaps never truly became a Christian, but rather just took Neoplatonism in a distinct direction. As Augustine's witnesses, we are like gods who attempt to impose order and establish a hierarchy not only on how Augustine thinks, but also on how the world works, and how we can understand

it more fully. But yet, we are men nonetheless, who become confused at many points in our lives and, as Augustine puts it, forget sometimes that the soul must rule the body in a harmonious relationship. How ironically satisfying it is to compare these scholars' mix-ups in their attempts to understand Augustine's thoughts with Augustine's own notions that humans are quite confused themselves from the very start.

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Appendix

Latin Block Quotes of Passages Cited from *Confessions*

The following section contains block quotes from Augustine's Confessions used in the thesis, but in the original language. The quotes are listed in the order that they are cited in the thesis. The page number in which they appear in the thesis is also given in the parentheses after the semicolon.

quaerens enim unde approbarem pulchritudinem corporum, sive caelestium sive terrestrium, et quid mihi praesto esset integre de mutabilibus iudicanti et dicenti, 'hoc ita esset debet, illud non ita' -- hoc ergo quaerens, unde iudicarem cum ita iudicarem, inveneram incommutabilem et veram veritatis aeternitatem supra mentem meam commutabilem. atque ita gradatim a corporibus ad sentientem per corpus animam atque inde ad eius interiorem vim, cui sensus corporis exteriora nuntiaret, et quousque possunt bestiae, atque inde rursus ad ratiocinantem potentiam ad quam refertur iudicandum quod sumitur a sensibus corporis. quae se quoque in me comperiens mutabilem erexit se ad intellegentiam suam et abduxit cogitationem a consuetudine, subtrahens se contradicentibus turbis phantasmatum, ut inveniret quo lumine aspergeretur, cum sine ulla dubitatione clamaret incommutabile praeferendum esse mutabili unde nosset ipsum incommutabile (quod nisi aliquo modo nosset, nullo modo illud mutabili certa praeponeret), et pervenit ad id quod est in ictu trepidantis aspectus (*Conf.* VII.17.23; 8).

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tunc vero invisibilia tua per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspexi, sed aciem figere non evalui, et repercussa infirmitate redditus solitis non mecum ferebam nisi amantem memoriam et quasi olefacta desiderantem quae comedere nondum possem (*Conf.* VII.17.23; 8).

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quod enim ante omnia tempora et supra omnia tempora incommutabiliter manet unigenitus filius tuus coaeternus tibi, et quia de plenitudine eius accipiunt animae ut beatae sint, et quia participatione manentis in se sapientiae renovantur ut sapientes sint, est ibi; quod autem secundum tempus pro impiis mortuus est, et filio tuo unico non pepercisti, sed pro nobis omnibus tradidisti eum, non est ibi. abscondisti enim haec a sapientibus et revelasti ea parvulis, ut venirent ad eum laborantes et onerati et reficeret eos, quoniam mitis est et humilis corde, et diriget mites in iudicio et docet mansuetos vias suas, videns humilitatem nostram et laborem nostrum et dimittens omnia peccata nostra. qui autem cothurno tamquam doctrinae sublimioris elati non audiunt dicentem, 'discite a me quoniam mitis sum et humilis corde, et invenietis requiem animabus vestris,' etsi cognoscunt deum, non sicut deum glorificant aut gratias agunt, sed evanescunt in cogitationibus suis et obscuratur insipiens cor eorum; dicentes se esse sapientes stulti facti sunt (*Conf.* VII.9.14; 9).

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et quaerebam viam comparandi roboris quod esset idoneum ad fruendum te, nec inveniebam donec amplecterer mediatorem dei et hominum, hominem Christum Iesum, qui est super omnia deus benedictus in saecula, vocantem et dicentem, 'ego sum via et veritas et vita,' et cibum, cui capiendo invalidus eram, miscentem carni, quoniam verbum caro factum est ut infantiae nostrae lactesceret sapientia tua, per quam creasti omnia (*Conf.* VII.18.24; 9).

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dedignantur ab eo discere quoniam mitis est et humilis corde. abscondisti enim haec a sapientibus et prudentibus et revelasti ea parvulis. et aliud est de silvestri cacumine videre patriam pacis et iter ad eam non invenire et frustra conari per invia circum obsidentibus et insidiantibus fugitivis desertoribus cum principe suo leone et dracone, et aliud tenere viam illuc ducentem cura caelestis imperatoris munitam, ubi non latrocinantur qui caelestem militiam deseruerunt; vitant enim eam sicut supplicium (*Conf.* VII.21.27; 9).

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alii enim cum haec verba legunt vel audiunt, cogitant deum, quasi hominem aut quasi aliquam molem immensa praeditam potestate novo quodam et repentino placito extra se ipsam tamquam locis distantibus, fecisse caelum et terram, duo magna corpora supra et infra, quibus omnia continerentur, et cum audiunt, 'dixit deus: fiat illud, et factum est illud,' cogitant verba coepta et finita, sonantia temporibus atque transeuntia, post quorum transitum statim existere quod iussum est ut existeret, et si quid forte aliud hoc modo ex familiaritate carnis opinantur. in quibus adhuc parvulis animalibus, dum isto humillimo genere verborum tamquam materno sinu eorum gestatur infirmitas, salubriter aedificatur fides, qua certum habeant et teneant deum fecisse omnes naturas quas eorum sensus mirabili varietate circumspicit (*Conf.* XII.27.37; 11).

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et conabar cogitare te, homo et talis homo, summum et solum et verum deum, et te incorruptibilem et inviolabilem et incommutabilem totis medullis credebam, quia nesciens unde et quomodo, plane tamen videbam et certus eram id quod corrumpi potest deterius esse quam id quod non potest, et quod violari non potest incunctanter praeponebam violabili, et quod nullam patitur mutationem melius esse quam id quod mutari potest (*Conf.* VII.1.1; 15).

…quoniam quidquid privabam spatiis talibus nihil mihi esse videbatur, sed prorsus nihil, ne inane quidem, tamquam si corpus auferatur loco et maneat locus omni corpore vacuatus et terreno et humido et aerio et caelesti, sed tamen sit locus inanis tamquam spatiosum nihil (*Conf.* VII.1.1; 18).

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unde malum, et utrum forma corporea deus finiretur et haberet capillos et ungues, et utrum iusti existimandi essent qui haberent uxores multas simul et occiderent homines et sacrificarent de animalibus (*Conf.* III.7.12; 21).

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et quoniam cum de deo meo cogitare vellem, cogitare nisi moles corporum non noveram (neque enim videbatur mihi esse quicquam quod tale non esset), ea maxima et prope sola causa erat inevitabilis erroris mei (*Conf.* V.10.19; 21).

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ita etiam te, vita vitae meae, grandem per infinita spatia undique cogitabam penetrare totam mundi molem et extra eam quaquaversum per immensa sine termine, ut haberet te terra, haberet caelum, haberent omnia et illa finirentur in te, tu autem nusquam. sicut autem luci solis non obsisteret aeris corpus, aeris huius qui supra terram est, quominus per eum traiceretur penetrans eum, non dirrumpendo aut concidendo sed implendo eum totum, sic tibi putabam non solum caeli et aeris et maris sed etiam terrae corpus pervium et ex omnibus maximis minimisque partibus penetrabile ad capiendam praesentiam tuam, occulta inspiratione intrinsecus et extrinsecus administrantem omnia quae creasti. ita suspicabar, quia cogitare aliud non poteram; nam falsum erat. illo enim modo maior pars terrae maiorem tui partem haberet et minorem minor, atque ita te plena essent omnia ut amplius tui caperet elephanti corpus quam passeris, quo esset isto grandius grandioremque occuparet locum, atque ita frustatim partibus mundi magnis magnas, brevibus breves partes tuas prasesentes faceres. non est autem ita, sed nondum inluminaveras tenebras meas (*Conf.* VII.1.2; 22).

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cum enim conaretur animus meus recurrere in catholicam fidem, repercutiebar, quia non erat catholica fides quam esse arbitrabar. et magis pius mihi videbar, si te, deus meus, cui confitentur ex me miserationes tuae, vel ex ceteris partibus infinitum crederem, quamvis ex una, qua tibi moles mali opponebatur, cogerer finitum fateri, quam si ex omnibus partibus in corporis humani forma te opinarer finiri. et melius mihi videbar credere nullum malum te creasse (quod mihi nescienti non solum aliqua substantia sed etiam corporea videbatur, quia et mentem cogitare non noveram nisi eam subtile corpus esse, quod tamen per loci spatia diffunderetur) quam credere abs te esse qualem putabam naturam mali. ipsumque salvatorem nostrum, unigenitum tuum, tamquam de massa lucidissimae molis tuae porrectum ad nostram salutem ita putabam, ut aliud de illo non crederem nisi quod possem vanitate imaginari. talem itaque naturam eius nasci non posse de Maria virgine arbitrabar, nisi carni concerneretur. concerni autem et non inquinari non videbam, quod mihi tale figurabam. metuebam itaque credere in carne natum, ne credere cogerer ex carne inquinatum. nunc spiritales tui blande et amanter ridebunt me, si has confessiones meas legerint, sed tamen talis eram (*Conf.* V.10.20; 23).

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pariter intrabat et quam vere diceret, gradatim quidem. nam primo etiam ipsa defendi posse mihi iam coeperunt videri, et fidem catholicam, pro qua nihil posse dici adversus oppugnantes manichaeos putaveram, iam non impudenter adseri existimabam, maxime audito uno atque altero et saepius aenigmate soluto de scriptis veteribus, ubi, cum ad litteram acciperem, occidebar…

…tum vero fortiter intendi animum, si quo modo possem certis aliquibus documentis manichaeos convincere falsitatis. quod si possem spiritalem substantiam cogitare, statim machinamenta illa omnia solverentur et abicerentur ex animo meo: sed non poteram. verum tamen de ipso mundi huius corpore omnique natura quam sensus carnis attingeret multo probabiliora plerosque sensisse philosophos magis magisque considerans atque comparans iudicabam. itaque academicorum more, sicut existimantur, dubitans de omnibus atque inter omnia fluctuans, manichaeos quidem relinquendos esse decrevi, non arbitrans eo ipso tempore dubitationis meae in illa secta mihi permanendum esse cui iam nonnullos philosophos praeponebam. quibus tamen philosophis, quod sine salutari nomine Christi essent, curationem languoris animae meae committere

omnino recusabam. statui ergo tamdiu esse catechumenus in catholica ecclesia mihi a parentibus commendata, donec aliquid certi eluceret quo cursum dirigerem (*Conf.* V.14.24-25; 23).

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et pervenit ad id quod est in ictu trepidantis aspectus. tunc vero invisibilia tua per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspexi, sed aciem figere non evalui, et repercussa infirmitate redditus solitis non mecum ferebam nisi amantem memoriam et quasi olefacta desiderantem quae comedere nondum possem (*Conf.* VII.17.23; 29).

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et quaerebam viam comparandi roboris quod esset idoneum ad fruendum te (*Conf.* VII.18.24; 29).

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procurasti mihi per quendam hominem immanissimo typho turgidum quosdam platonicorum libros ex graeca lingua in latinam versos, et ibi legi, non quidem his verbis sed hoc idem omnino multis et multiplicibus suaderi rationibus, quod in principio erat verbum et verbum erat apud deum et deus erat verbum. hoc erat in principio apud deum. omnia per ipsum facta sunt, et sine ipso factum est nihil. quod factum est in eo vita est, et vita erat lux hominum; et lux in tenebris lucet, et tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt…

…quia vero in sua propria venit et sui eum non receperunt, quotquot autem receperunt eum, dedit eis potestatem filios dei fieri credentibus in nomine eius, non ibi legi (*Conf.* VII.9.13; 30).

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item legi ibi quia verbum, deus, non ex carne, non ex sanguine non ex voluntate viri neque ex voluntate carnis, sed ex deo natus est…

…sed quia verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis, non ibi legi (*Conf.* VII.9.14; 30).

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indagavi quippe in illis litteris varie dictum et multis modis quod sit filius in forma patris, non rapinam arbitratus esse aequalis deo, quia naturaliter idipsum est…

…sed quia semet ipsum exinanivit formam servi accipiens, in similitudinem hominum factus et habitu inventus ut homo…non habent illi libri (*Conf.* VII.9.14; 30).

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qui autem cothurno tamquam doctrinae sublimioris elati non audiunt dicentem, 'discite a me quoniam mitis sum et humilis corde, et invenietis requiem animabus vestris,' etsi cognoscunt deum, non sicut deum glorificant aut gratias agunt, sed evanescunt in cogitationibus suis et obscuratur insipiens cor eorum; dicentes se esse sapientes stulti facti sunt (*Conf.* VII.9.14; 30).

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et ideo legebam ibi etiam immutatam gloriam incorruptionis tuae in idola et varia simulacra, in similitudinem imaginis corruptibilis hominis et volucrum et quadrupedum et serpentium, videlicet Aegyptium cibum quo Esau perdidit primogenita sua, quoniam caput quadrupedis pro te honoravit populus primogenitus, conversus corde in Aegyptum et curvans imaginem tuam, animam suam, ante imaginem vituli manducantis faenum. inveni haec ibi et non manducavi (*Conf.* VII.9.15; 30).

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hoc tamen solo delectabar in illa exhortatione, quod non illam aut illam sectam, sed ipsam quaecumque esset sapientiam ut diligerem et quarererem et adsequerer et tenerem atque amplexarer fortiter, excitabar sermone illo et accendebar et ardebam, et hoc solum me in tanta flagrantia refrangebat, quod nomen Christi non erat ibi (*Conf.* III.4.8; 32).

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et quaerebam viam comparandi roboris quod esset idoneum ad fruendum te, nec inveniebam donec amplecterer mediatorem dei et hominum, hominem Christum Iesum, qui est super omnia deus benedictus in saecula, vocantem et dicentem, 'ego sum via et veritas et vita,' et cibum, cui capiendo invalidus eram, miscentem carni, quoniam verbum caro factum est ut infantiae nostrae lactesceret sapientia tua, per quam creasti omnia (*Conf.* VII.18.24; 33).

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ego vero aliud putabam tantumque sentiebam de domino Christo meo, quantum de excellentis sapientiae viro cui nullus posset aequari, praesertim quia mirabiliter natus ex virgine, ad exemplum contemnendorum temporalium prae adipiscenda immortalitate, divina pro nobis cura tantam auctoritatem magisterii meruisse videbatur. quid autem sacramenti haberet verbum caro factum, ne suspicari quidem poteram
(*Conf.* VII.19.25; 33).

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et inde admonitus redire ad memet ipsum, intravi in intima mea duce te, et potui, quoniam factus es adiutor meus (*Conf.* VII.10.16; 33).

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quaerens enim unde approbarem pulchritudinem corporum, sive caelestium sive terrestrium, et quid mihi praesto esset integre de mutabilibus iudicanti et dicenti, 'hoc ita esset debet, illud non ita' -- hoc ergo quaerens, unde iudicarem cum ita iudicarem, inveneram incommutabilem et veram veritatis aeternitatem supra mentem meam commutabilem (*Conf.* VII.17.23; 34).

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quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te (*Conf.* I.1.1; 34).

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in quos me propterea, priusquam scripturas tuas considerarem, credo voluisti incurrere, ut imprimeretur memoriae meae quomodo ex eis affectus essem et, cum postea in libris tuis mansuefactus essem et curantibus digitis tuis contrectarentur vulnera mea, discernerem atque distinguerem quid interesset inter praesumptionem et confessionem, inter videntes quo eundum sit nec videntes qua, et viam ducentem ad beatificam patriam non tantum cernendam sed et habitandam (*Conf.* VII.20.26;35).

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et aliud est de silvestri cacumine videre patriam pacis et iter ad eam non invenire et frustra conari per invia circum obsidentibus et insidiantibus fugitivis desertoribus cum principe suo leone et dracone, et aliud tenere viam illuc ducentem cura caelestis imperatoris munitam, ubi non latrocinantur qui caelestem militiam deseruerunt; vitant enim eam sicut supplicium (*Conf.* VII.21.27; 35).

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sed tunc, lectis platonicorum illis libris, posteaquam inde admonitus quaerere incorpoream veritatem, invisibilia tua per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspexi et repulsus sensi quid per tenebras animae meae contemplari non sinerer, certus esse te et infinitum esse nec tamen per locos finitos infinitosve diffundi et vere te esse, qui semper idem ipse esses, ex nulla parte nulloque motu alter aut aliter, cetera vero ex te esse omnia, hoc solo firmissimo documento quia sunt…

…certus quidem in istis eram, nimis tamen infirmus ad fruendum te. garriebam plane quasi peritus et, nisi in Christo, salvatore nostro, viam tuam quaererem, non peritus sed periturus essem (*Conf.* VII.20.26; 38).

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et quoniam multa philosophorum legeram memoriaeque mandata retinebam, ex eis quaedam comparabam illis manichaeorum longis fabulis, et mihi probabiliora ista videbantur quae dixerunt illi qui tantum potuerunt valere ut possent aestimare saeculum, quamquam eius dominum minime invenerint…

…et multa vera de creatura dicunt et veritatem, creaturae artificem, non pie quaerunt, et ideo non inveniunt, aut si inveniunt, cognoscentes deum non sicut deum honorant aut gratias agunt, et evanescunt in cogitationibus suis, et dicunt se esse sapientes sibi tribuendo quae tua sunt, ac per hoc student perversissima caecitate etiam tibi tribuere quae sua sunt, mendacia scilicet in te conferentes, qui veritas es, et immutantes gloriam incorrupti dei in similitudinem imaginis corruptibilis hominis et volucrum et quadrupedum et serpentium, et convertunt veritatem tuam in mendacium, et colunt et serviunt creaturae potius quam creatori…

…multa tamen ab eis ex ipsa creatura vera dicta retinebam, et occurrebat mihi ratio per numeros et ordinem temporum et visibiles attestationes siderum, et conferebam cum dictis Manichaei, quae de his rebus multa scripsit copiosissime delirans, et non mihi occurrebat ratio nec solistitiorum et aequinoctiorum nec defectuum luminarium nec quidquid tale in libris saecularis sapientiae didiceram. ibi autem credere iubebar, et ad illas rationes numeris et oculis meis exploratas non occurrebat, et longe diversum erat (*Conf.* V.3.3-5; 41-42).

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excitabar sermone illo et accendebar et ardebam, et hoc solum me in tanta flagrantia refrangebat, quod nomen Christi non erat ibi, quoniam hoc nomen secundum misericordiam tuam, domine, hoc nomen salvatoris mei, filii tui, in ipso adhuc lacte matris tenerum cor meum pie biberat et alte retinebat, et quidquid sine hoc nomine fuisset, quamvis litteratum et expolitum et veridicum, non me totum rapiebat (*Conf.* III.4.8; 44).

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itaque institui animum intendere in scripturas sanctas et videre quales essent. et ecce video rem non compertam superbis neque nudatam pueris, sed incessu humilem, successu excelsam et velatam mysteriis. et non eram ego talis ut intrare in eam possem aut inclinare cervicem ad eius gressus. non enim sicut modo loquor, ita sensi, cum attendi ad illam scripturam, sed visa est mihi indigna quam tullianae dignitati compararem. tumor enim meus refugiebat modum eius et acies mea non penetrabat interiora eius. verum autem illa erat quae cresceret cum parvulis, sed ego dedignabar esse parvulus et turgidus fastu mihi grandis videbar (*Conf.* III.5.9; 45).

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itaque incidi in homines superbe delirantes, carnales nimis et loquaces, in quorum ore laquei diaboli et viscum confectum commixtione syllabarum nominis tui et domini Iesu Christi et paracleti consolatoris nostri spiritus sancti. haec nomina non recedebant de ore eorum, sed tenus sono et strepitu linguae; ceterum cor inane veri. et dicebant, 'veritas et veritas,' et multum eam dicebant mihi, et nusquam erat in eis, sed falsa loquebantur, non de te tantum, qui vere veritas es, sed etiam de istis elementis huius mundi, creatura tua (*Conf.* III.6.10; 47)

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nesciebam enim aliud vere quod est, et quasi acutule movebar ut suffragarer stultis deceptoribus, cum a me quaererent unde malum, et utrum forma corporea deus finiretur et haberet capillos et ungues, et utrum iusti existimandi essent qui haberent uxores multas simul et occiderent homines et sacrificarent de animalibus (*Conf.* III.7.12; 47).

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ubi ergo malum et unde et qua huc inrepsit? quae radix eius et quod semen eius? an omnino non est? cur ergo timemus et cavemus quod non est? aut si inaniter timemus, certe vel timor ipse malum est, quo incassum stimulatur et excruciatur cor, et tanto gravius malum, quanto non est, quod timeamus, et timemus. idcirco aut est malum quod timemus, aut hoc malum est quia timemus (*Conf.* VII.5.7; 48).

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in illo autem qui doctor, qui auctor, qui dux et princeps eorum quibus illa suaderet, ita fieri ausus est, ut qui eum sequerentur non quemlibet hominem sed spiritum tuum sanctum se sequi arbitrarentur, quis tantam dementiam, sicubi falsa dixisse convinceretur, non detestandam longeque abiciendam esse

iudicaret? sed tamen nondum liquido compereram utrum etiam secundum eius verba vicissitudines longiorum et breviorum dierum atque noctium et ipsius noctis et diei et deliquia luminum et si quid eius modi in aliis libris legeram posset exponi, ut, si forte posset, incertum quidem mihi fieret utrum ita se res haberet an ita, sed ad fidem meam illius auctoritatem propter creditam sanctitatem praeponerem (*Conf.* V.5.9; 50).

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libri quippe eorum pleni sunt longissimis fabulis de caelo et sideribus et sole et luna; quae mihi eum, quod utique cupiebam, conlatis numerorum rationibus quas alibi ego legeram, utrum potius ita essent ut Manichaei libris continebantur, an certe vel par etiam inde ratio redderetur, subtiliter explicare posse iam non arbitrabar (*Conf.* V.7.12; 50).

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manichaeos quidem relinquendos esse decrevi, non arbitrans eo ipso tempore dubitationis meae in illa secta mihi permanendum esse cui iam nonnullos philosophos praeponebam. quibus tamen philosophis, quod sine salutari nomine Christi essent, curationem languoris animae meae committere omnino recusabam. statui ergo tamdiu esse catechumenus in catholica ecclesia mihi a parentibus commendata, donec aliquid certi eluceret quo cursum dirigerem (*Conf.* V.14.25; 51).

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quid erat tibi factura nescio qua gens tenebrarum, quam ex adversa mole solent opponere, si tu cum ea pugnare noluisses? si enim responderetur aliquid fuisse nocituram, violabilis tu et corruptibilis fores. si autem nihil ea nocere potuisse diceretur, nulla afferretur causa pugnandi, et ita pugnandi ut quaedam portio tua et membrum tuum vel proles de ipsa substantia tua misceretur adversis potestatibus et non a te creatis naturis, atque in tantum ab eis corrumperetur et commutaretur in deterius ut a beatitudine in miseriam verteretur et indigeret auxilio quo erui purgarique posset, et hanc esse animam (*Conf.* VII.2.3; 52).

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in quos me propterea, priusquam scripturas tuas considerarem, credo voluisti incurrere, ut imprimeretur memoriae meae quomodo ex eis affectus essem et, cum postea in libris tuis mansuefactus essem et curantibus digitis tuis contrectarentur vulnera mea, discernerem atque distinguerem quid interesset inter praesumptionem et confessionem, inter videntes quo eundum sit nec videntes qua, et viam ducentem ad beatificam patriam non tantum cernendam sed et habitandam (*Conf.* VII.20.26; 54).

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et manifestatum est mihi quoniam bona sunt quae corrumpuntur, quae neque si summa bona essent neque nisi bona essent corrumpi possent; quia si summa bona essent, incorruptibilia essent, si autem nulla bona essent, quid in eis corrumperetur non esset. nocet enim corruptio et, nisi bonum minueret, non noceret. aut igitur nihil nocet corruptio, quod fieri non potest, aut, quod certissimum est, omnia quae corrumpuntur privantur bono. si autem omni bono privabuntur, omnino non erunt. si enim erunt et corrumpi iam non poterunt, meliora erunt, quia incorruptibiliter permanebunt. et quid monstrosius quam ea

dicere omni bono amisso facta meliora? ergo si omni bono privabuntur, omnino nulla erunt: ergo quamdiu sunt, bona sunt. ergo quaecumque sunt, bona sunt, malumque illud quod quaerebam unde esset non est substantia, quia si substantia esset, bonum esset. aut enim esset incorruptibilis substantia, magnum utique bonum, aut substantia corruptibilis esset, quae nisi bona esset, corrumpi non posset. itaque vidi et manifestatum est mihi quia omnia bona tu fecisti et prorsus nullae substantiae sunt quas tu non fecisti. et quoniam non aequalia omnia fecisti, ideo sunt omnia, quia singula bona sunt, et simul omnia valde bona, quoniam fecit deus noster omnia bona valde (*Conf.* VII.12.18; 57).

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et tibi omnino non est malum, non solum tibi sed nec universae creaturae tuae, quia extra non est aliquid quod inrumpat et corrumpat ordinem quem imposuisti ei. in partibus autem eius quaedam quibusdam quia non conveniunt, mala putantur; et eadem ipsa conveniunt aliis et bona sunt et in semet ipsis bona sunt. et omnia haec, quae sibimet invicem non conveniunt, conveniunt inferiori parti rerum, quam terram dicimus, habentem caelum suum nubilosum atque ventosum congruum sibi. et absit iam ut dicerem, 'non essent ista,' quia etsi sola ista cernerem, desiderarem quidem meliora, sed iam etiam de solis istis laudare te deberem (*Conf.* VII.13.19; 57-58).

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et apparuit mihi una facies eloquiorum castorum, et exultare cum tremore didici. et coepi et inveni, quidquid illac verum legeram, hac cum commendatione gratiae tuae dici (*Conf.* VII.21.27; 74).

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nullo ergo tempore non feceras aliquid, quia ipsum tempus tu feceras. et nulla tempora tibi coaeterna sunt, quia tu permanes. at illa si permanerent, non essent tempora. quid est enim tempus? quis hoc facile breviterque explicaverit? quis hoc ad verbum de illo proferendum vel cogitatione comprehenderit? quid autem familiarius et notius in loquendo commemoramus quam tempus? et intellegimus utique cum id loquimur, intellegimus etiam cum alio loquente id audimus. quid est ergo tempus? si nemo ex me quaerat, scio; si quaerenti explicare velim, nescio. fidenter tamen dico scire me quod, si nihil praeteriret, non esset praeteritum tempus, et si nihil adveniret, non esset futurum tempus, et si nihil esset, non esset praesens tempus (*Conf.* XI.14.17; 76).

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duo ergo illa tempora, praeteritum et futurum, quomodo sunt, quando et praeteritum iam non est et futurum nondum est? praesens autem si semper esset praesens nec in praeteritum transiret, non iam esset tempus, sed aeternitas. si ergo praesens, ut tempus sit, ideo fit, quia in praeteritum transit, quomodo et hoc esse dicimus, cui causa, ut sit, illa est, quia non erit, ut scilicet non vere dicamus tempus esse, nisi quia tendit non esse? (*Conf.* XI.14.17; 76).

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si enim primum dies esset, dies ergo esset, etiamsi tanto spatio temporis sol cursum illum peregisset, quantum est horae unius. si secundum, non ergo esset dies, si ab ortu solis usque in ortum alterum tam brevis mora esset quam est horae unius, sed viciens et quater circuiret sol ut expleret diem. si utrumque, nec

ille appellaretur dies, si horae spatio sol totum suum gyrum circuiret, nec ille, si sole cessante tantum temporis praeteriret, quanto peragere sol totum ambitum de mane in mane adsolet. non itaque nunc quaeram quid sit illud quod vocatur dies, sed quid sit tempus, quo metientes solis circuitum diceremus eum dimidio spatio temporis peractum minus quam solet, si tanto spatio temporis peractus esset, quanto peraguntur horae duodecim, et utrumque tempus comparantes diceremus illud simplum, hoc duplum, etiamsi aliquando illo simplo, aliquando isto duplo sol ab oriente usque orientem circuiret. nemo ergo mihi dicat caelestium corporum motus esse tempora, quia et cuiusdam voto cum sol stetisset, ut victoriosum proelium perageret, sol stabat, sed tempus ibat. per suum quippe spatium temporis, quod ei sufficeret, illa pugna gesta atque finita est (*Conf.* XI.23.30; 76-77).

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videamus ergo, anima humana, utrum praesens tempus possit esse longum, datum enim tibi est sentire moras atque metiri. quid respondebis mihi? an centum anni praesentes longum tempus est? vide prius utrum possint praesentes esse centum anni. si enim primus eorum annus agitur, ipse praesens est, nonaginta vero et novem futuri sunt et ideo nondum sunt. si autem secundus annus agitur, iam unus est praeteritus, alter praesens, ceteri futuri. atque ita mediorum quemlibet centenarii huius numeri annum praesentem posuerimus. ante illum praeteriti erunt, post illum futuri. quocirca centum anni praesentes esse non poterunt (*Conf.* XI.15.19; 78).

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si quid intellegitur temporis, quod in nullas iam vel minutissimas momentorum partes dividi possit, id solum est quod praesens dicatur (*Conf.* XI.15.20; 78).

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si quid intellegitur temporis, quod in nullas iam vel minutissimas momentorum partes dividi possit, id solum est quod praesens dicatur; quod tamen ita raptim a futuro in praeteritum transvolat, ut nulla morula extendatur (*Conf.* XI.15.20; 78).

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sed fortasse proprie diceretur, 'tempora sunt tria, praesens de praeteritis, praesens de praesentibus, praesens de futuris.' sunt enim haec in anima tria quaedam et alibi ea non video, praesens de praeteritis memoria, praesens de praesentibus contuitus, praesens de futuris expectatio. si haec permittimur dicere, tria tempora video fateorque, tria sunt (*Conf.* XI.20.26; 80).

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inde mihi visum est nihil esse aliud tempus quam distentionem; sed cuius rei, nescio, et mirum, si non ipsius animi (*Conf.* XI.26.33; 80).

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in te, anime meus, tempora metior. noli mihi obstrepere, quod est; noli tibi obstrepere turbis affectionum tuarum. in te, inquam, tempora metior. affectionem quam res praetereuntes in te faciunt et, cum illae praeterierint, manet, ipsam metior praesentem, non ea quae praeterierunt ut fieret; ipsam

metior, cum tempora metior. ergo aut ipsa sunt tempora, aut non tempora metior (*Conf.* XI.27.36; 80).

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dicturus sum canticum quod novi. antequam incipiam, in totum expectatio mea tenditur, cum autem coepero, quantum ex illa in praeteritum decerpsero, tenditur et memoria mea, atque distenditur vita huius actionis meae in memoriam propter quod dixi et in expectationem propter quod dicturus sum. praesens tamen adest attentio mea, per quam traicitur quod erat futurum ut fiat praeteritum. quod quanto magis agitur et agitur, tanto breviata expectatione prolongatur memoria, donec tota expectatio consumatur, cum tota illa actio finita transierit in memoriam. et quod in toto cantico, hoc in singulis particulis eius fit atque in singulis syllabis eius, hoc in actione longiore, cuius forte particula est illud canticum, hoc in tota vita hominis, cuius partes sunt omnes actiones hominis, hoc in toto saeculo filiorum hominum, cuius partes sunt omnes vitae hominum (*Conf.* XI.28.38; 80).

Diotima's Speech Concerning the Ascent in Attic Greek

ταῦτα μὲν οὖν τὰ ἐρωτικὰ ἴσως, ὦ Σώκρατες, κἂν σὺ μυηθείης· τὰ δὲ τέλεα καὶ ἐποπτικά, ὧν ἕνεκα καὶ ταῦτα ἔστιν, (210a) ἐάν τις ὀρθῶς μετίῃ, οὐκ οἶδ' εἰ οἷός τ' ἂν εἴης. ἐρῶ μὲν οὖν, ἔφη, ἐγὼ καὶ προθυμίας οὐδὲν ἀπολείψω· πειρῶ δὲ ἕπεσθαι, ἂν οἷός τε ᾖς.

δεῖ γάρ, ἔφη, τὸν ὀρθῶς ἰόντα ἐπὶ τοῦτο τὸ πρᾶγμα ἄρχεσθαι μὲν νέον ὄντα ἰέναι ἐπὶ τὰ καλὰ σώματα, καὶ πρῶτον μέν, ἐὰν ὀρθῶς ἡγῆται ὁ ἡγούμενος, ἑνὸς αὐτὸν σώματος ἐρᾶν καὶ ἐνταῦθα γεννᾶν λόγους καλούς, ἔπειτα δὲ αὐτὸν κατανοῆσαι ὅτι τὸ κάλλος (210b) τὸ ἐπὶ ὁτῳοῦν σώματι τῷ ἐπὶ ἑτέρῳ σώματι ἀδελφόν ἐστι, καὶ εἰ δεῖ διώκειν τὸ ἐπ' εἴδει καλόν, πολλὴ ἄνοια μὴ οὐχ ἕν τε καὶ ταὐτὸν ἡγεῖσθαι τὸ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς σώμασι κάλλος·

τοῦτο δ' ἐννοήσαντα καταστῆναι πάντων τῶν καλῶν σωμάτων ἐραστήν, ἑνὸς δὲ τὸ σφόδρα τοῦτο χαλάσαι καταφρονήσαντα καὶ σμικρὸν ἡγησάμενον· μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τὸ ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς κάλλος τιμιώτερον ἡγήσασθαι τοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι, ὥστε καὶ ἐὰν ἐπιεικὴς ὢν τὴν ψυχήν τις κἂν σμικρὸν ἄνθος (210c) ἔχῃ, ἐξαρκεῖν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐρᾶν καὶ κήδεσθαι καὶ τίκτειν λόγους τοιούτους καὶ ζητεῖν, οἵτινες ποιήσουσι βελτίους τοὺς νέους, ἵνα ἀναγκασθῇ αὖ θεάσασθαι τὸ ἐν τοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασι καὶ τοῖς νόμοις καλὸν καὶ τοῦτ' ἰδεῖν ὅτι πᾶν αὐτὸ αὑτῷ συγγενές ἐστιν, ἵνα τὸ περὶ τὸ σῶμα καλὸν σμικρόν τι ἡγήσηται εἶναι·

μετὰ δὲ τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα ἐπὶ τὰς ἐπιστήμας ἀγαγεῖν, ἵνα ἴδῃ αὖ ἐπιστημῶν κάλλος, καὶ βλέπων πρὸς (210d) πολὺ ἤδη τὸ καλὸν μηκέτι τὸ παρ' ἑνί, ὥσπερ οἰκέτης, ἀγαπῶν παιδαρίου κάλλος ἢ ἀνθρώπου τινὸς ἢ ἐπιτηδεύματος ἑνός, δουλεύων φαῦλος ᾖ καὶ σμικρολόγος, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ πέλαγος τετραμμένος τοῦ καλοῦ καὶ θεωρῶν πολλοὺς καὶ καλοὺς λόγους καὶ μεγαλοπρεπεῖς τίκτῃ καὶ διανοήματα ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ ἀφθόνῳ, ἕως ἂν ἐνταῦθα ῥωσθεὶς καὶ αὐξηθεὶς κατίδῃ τινὰ ἐπιστήμην μίαν τοιαύτην, ἥ ἐστι καλοῦ (210e) τοιοῦδε.

πειρῶ δέ μοι, ἔφη, τὸν νοῦν προσέχειν ὡς οἷόν τε μάλιστα. ὃς γὰρ ἂν μέχρι ἐνταῦθα πρὸς τὰ ἐρωτικὰ παιδαγωγηθῇ, θεώμενος ἐφεξῆς τε καὶ ὀρθῶς τὰ καλά, πρὸς τέλος ἤδη ἰὼν τῶν ἐρωτικῶν ἐξαίφνης κατόψεταί τι θαυμαστὸν τὴν φύσιν καλόν, τοῦτο ἐκεῖνο, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὗ δὴ ἕνεκεν καὶ οἱ ἔμπροσθεν πάντες πόνοι ἦσαν, πρῶτον μὲν (211a) ἀεὶ ὂν καὶ οὔτε γιγνόμενον οὔτε ἀπολλύμενον, οὔτε αὐξανόμενον οὔτε φθίνον, ἔπειτα οὐ τῇ μὲν καλόν, τῇ δ' αἰσχρόν, οὐδὲ τοτὲ μέν, τοτὲ δὲ οὔ, οὐδὲ πρὸς μὲν τὸ καλόν, πρὸς δὲ τὸ αἰσχρόν, οὐδ' ἔνθα μὲν καλόν, ἔνθα δὲ αἰσχρόν, ὡς τισὶ μὲν ὂν καλόν, τισὶ δὲ αἰσχρόν· οὐδ' αὖ φαντασθήσεται αὐτῷ τὸ καλὸν οἷον πρόσωπόν τι οὐδὲ χεῖρες οὐδὲ ἄλλο οὐδὲν ὧν σῶμα μετέχει, οὐδέ τις λόγος οὐδέ τις

ἐπιστήμη, οὐδέ που ὂν ἐν ἑτέρῳ τινι, οἷον ἐν ζῴῳ ἢ ἐν γῇ ἢ ἐν οὐρανῷ (211b) ἢ ἔν τῳ ἄλλῳ, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ καθ' αὑτὸ μεθ' αὑτοῦ μονοειδὲς ἀεὶ ὄν, τὰ δὲ ἄλλα πάντα καλὰ ἐκείνου μετέχοντα τρόπον τινὰ τοιοῦτον, οἷον γιγνομένων τε τῶν ἄλλων καὶ ἀπολλυμένων μηδὲν ἐκεῖνο μήτε τι πλέον μήτε ἔλαττον γίγνεσθαι μηδὲ πάσχειν μηδέν.

ὅταν δή τις ἀπὸ τῶνδε διὰ τὸ ὀρθῶς παιδεραστεῖν ἐπανιὼν ἐκεῖνο τὸ καλὸν ἄρχηται καθορᾶν, σχεδὸν ἄν τι ἅπτοιτο τοῦ τέλους. τοῦτο γὰρ δή ἐστι τὸ ὀρθῶς ἐπὶ (211c) τὰ ἐρωτικὰ ἰέναι ἢ ὑπ' ἄλλου ἄγεσθαι, ἀρχόμενον ἀπὸ τῶνδε τῶν καλῶν ἐκείνου ἕνεκα τοῦ καλοῦ ἀεὶ ἐπανιέναι, ὥσπερ ἐπαναβασμοῖς χρώμενον, ἀπὸ ἑνὸς ἐπὶ δύο καὶ ἀπὸ δυοῖν ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ καλὰ σώματα, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν καλῶν σωμάτων ἐπὶ τὰ καλὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων ἐπὶ τὰ καλὰ μαθήματα, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν μαθημάτων ἐπ' ἐκεῖνο τὸ μάθημα τελευτῆσαι, ὅ ἐστιν οὐκ ἄλλου ἢ αὐτοῦ ἐκείνου τοῦ καλοῦ μάθημα, καὶ γνῷ αὐτὸ τελευτῶν ὃ ἔστι (211d) καλόν.

ἐνταῦθα τοῦ βίου, ὦ φίλε Σώκρατες, ἔφη ἡ Μαντινικὴ ξένη, εἴπερ που ἄλλοθι, βιωτὸν ἀνθρώπῳ, θεωμένῳ αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν. ὃ ἐάν ποτε ἴδῃς, οὐ κατὰ χρυσίον τε καὶ ἐσθῆτα καὶ τοὺς καλοὺς παῖδάς τε καὶ νεανίσκους δόξει σοι εἶναι, οὓς νῦν ὁρῶν ἐκπέπληξαι καὶ ἕτοιμος εἶ καὶ σὺ καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοί, ὁρῶντες τὰ παιδικὰ καὶ συνόντες ἀεὶ αὐτοῖς, εἴ πως οἷόν τ' ἦν, μήτ' ἐσθίειν μήτε πίνειν, ἀλλὰ θεᾶσθαι μόνον καὶ συνεῖναι.

τί δῆτα, ἔφη, οἰόμεθα, εἴ τῳ γένοιτο (211e) αὐτὸ τὸ καλὸν ἰδεῖν εἰλικρινές, καθαρόν, ἄμεικτον, ἀλλὰ μὴ ἀνάπλεων σαρκῶν τε ἀνθρωπίνων καὶ χρωμάτων καὶ ἄλλης πολλῆς φλυαρίας θνητῆς, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον καλὸν δύναιτο μονοειδὲς κατιδεῖν; ἆρ' οἴει, ἔφη, φαῦλον βίον (212a) γίγνεσθαι ἐκεῖσε βλέποντος ἀνθρώπου καὶ ἐκεῖνο ᾧ δεῖ θεωμένου καὶ συνόντος αὐτῷ; ἢ οὐκ ἐνθυμῇ, ἔφη, ὅτι ἐνταῦθα αὐτῷ μοναχοῦ γενήσεται, ὁρῶντι ᾧ ὁρατὸν τὸ καλόν, τίκτειν οὐκ εἴδωλα ἀρετῆς, ἅτε οὐκ εἰδώλου ἐφαπτομένῳ, ἀλλὰ ἀληθῆ, ἅτε τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ἐφαπτομένῳ· τεκόντι δὲ ἀρετὴν ἀληθῆ καὶ θρεψαμένῳ ὑπάρχει θεοφιλεῖ γενέσθαι, καὶ εἴπέρ τῳ ἄλλῳ ἀνθρώπων ἀθανάτῳ καὶ ἐκείνῳ;

Diotima's Speech Concerning the Ascent in English Translation

The following translation of the Greek cited above – from roughly 210a to 212a of Plato's Symposium concerning the Platonic ascent – is provided by Benjamin Jowett. It has been substantially revised by Hayden Pelliccia.

" 'These are the lesser mysteries of love,' she said, 'into which you also, Socrates, may be initiated; to the greater and more hidden ones which are the crown of these, (210a) and to which, if you pursue them in a right spirit, they will lead, I know not whether you will be able to attain. But I will do my utmost to inform you, and do you follow if you can. For he who would proceed aright in this matter should begin in youth to visit beautiful bodies; and first, if he be guided by his instructor aright, to love one such body only, and in it he should engender beautiful thoughts; and soon he will of himself perceive that the beauty of one body is akin to the beauty of another; (210b) and then, if beauty of appearance is his pursuit, how foolish would he be not to recognize that the beauty present in all bodily forms is one and the same!

And when he perceives this he will abate his violent love of the one, which he will despise and deem a small thing, and will become a lover of all beautiful bodily forms; in the next stage he will consider the beauty of the soul is more honorable than the beauty of the body, so that someone even of slight beauty, but virtuous in soul satisfies him, (210c) and he loves and cares for him, and brings to birth arguments of the kind to improve the young, until he is compelled to contemplate and see the beauty of institutions and laws, and to understand that the beauty of them all is of one family, and that personal beauty is a trifle; and after laws and institutions he will go on to the sciences, that he may see their beauty (210d), being not servilely in love with the beauty of one youth or man or institution, himself a slave, man and small-minded, but drawing toward and contemplating the vast sea of beauty, he will create many fair and noble thoughts and notions in boundless love of wisdom; until at last the vision is revealed to him of a single science, which is the science of beauty everywhere. (210e) To this I will proceed; please give me your very best attention.

" 'He who has been instructed thus far in the things of love, and who has learned to see the beautiful in due order and succession, when he comes toward the end will suddenly have a vision (211a) of wondrous beauty (and this Socrates, is the final cause of all our former toils) – a beauty that in the first place is everlasting, not growing and decaying, or waxing and waning; secondly, not beautiful in one point of view and ugly in another, or at one time or in one relation or at one place beautiful, at another time or in another relation or at another place ugly, as if beautiful to some and ugly to others, nor will beauty appear to him in the likeness of a face or hands or any other part of the bodily frame, or in any form of expression or knowledge, or existing in any other being, as for example, in an animal or in heaven, or in earth, or in any other place; (211b) but beauty will be revealed to him to be absolute, separate, simple, and everlasting, which without diminution and without increase, or any change, is imparted to the ever-growing and perishing beauties of all other things.

He who, ascending from these by means of proper and correct pederastic love, begins to perceive *that* beauty is not far from the end. And the correct order of going, or being led by another, (211c) to the things of love is to begin from the beauties of earth and mount ever upward for the sake of that other beauty, using these as steps only, and from one going on to two, and from two

to all beautiful bodies, and from beautiful bodies to beautiful practices, and from beautiful practices to beautiful notions, until from beautiful notions he arrives at the notion of absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is.

(211d) This, my dear Socrates,' said the stranger from Mantineia, 'is that life above all others which man should live, in the contemplation of beauty absolute; a beauty that, if you once beheld it, you would see not to be like that of gold, and garments, and beautiful boys and youths, whose presence now entrances you; and you and many a one would be content to live seeing them only and conversing with them, without food or drink, if that were possible – you only want to look at them and to be with them.

But what if man had eyes to see the true beauty – the divine beauty, I mean (211e), pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of human flesh and complexion and all the other vanities of mortal life – do you think it an ignoble life for a person to be gazing *there* and contemplating *that* with the suitable instrument, the mind's eye, and consorting with *that*? (212a) Do you not perceive that *there* alone will it happen to him, when he sees the beautiful with that instrument with which it must be seen, to give birth not to images of virtue, since he is not laying hold of an image, but to her true progeny, since he has hold of true virtue? And is it not possible for him, by giving birth to and nourishing true virtue, to become the beloved of God, and to become, if any of humankind does, immortal?'

Diotima's Ascent, Notes, and Questions

The following is a more in-depth outline of the Platonic ascent superficially outlined in the first chapter of this thesis. These are lecture notes from Richard Patterson, professor of philosophy at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. I have redacted them where necessary to facilitate reading and comprehension of key concepts.

Simple scheme of movement from lowest beauty to highest: the Beauty

Eros for beauty of a single body --> Eros for bodily beauty in general --> Eros for beauty of psyche, soul, spirit --> Eros for beauty of practices, institutions, constitutions --> Eros for beauty of all branches, types of learning or understanding --> Eros for beauty of the understanding of beauty --> Eros for Beauty itself

This leaves out some factors that are essential for understanding how one makes the ascent – the role of reason (*logos*), the relationship between the beauties of different levels, and the "guide." Not all factors are expressly mentioned at each level (Diotima is the Priestess of a mystery religion, not a professor of theology or philosophy). These are included in the fuller schema below, which follows a simple, repeated pattern.

Questions to ask:

1) What is Eros? Is it Love? Is it Desire?
2) Why does Eros generate *logos*, and what sort of *logos* might this be?
3) What is the role of the guide (mentioned four times by Diotima)?
4) Are the beauties of different levels really different from one another? Are they all somehow the same beauty, or perhaps different expressions of the same beauty? If so, how is that possible?

Diotima's Ascent: The Basic (and repeated) Process

1. Apprehension of some beauty. This causes…

2. Eros for that beauty. This causes…

3. Creation of *logoi* (i.e., speeches) praising the beauty of the object of one's Eros.

4. The guide or teacher focuses on those logoi reflectively, and especially on the question, "What does that beauty really consist in?" This causes…

5. Apprehension of the next higher level of beauty, which one now sees not just as beautiful, but also as the source of the beauty of the previous level.

6. Repeat the process until you get to apprehension of Beauty Itself.

A Complete Breakdown of the Ascent

Higher numbers indicate a higher level of beauty and Eros, where B7 indicates Beauty itself and B1 signifies a beauty, but beauty in its lowest form. Read the list from bottom to top.

27. Eros (E7) for <-----> B7 (Beauty Itself = Beauty of Beauty Itself)
26. Apprehension of B7 causes…
25. Logos about B6 which, with the guidance of the lover's "guide", culminates in insight into B6 as expression of beauty of Beauty Itself (B7)
24. Eros E6 for B6 is cause of…
23. Eros (E6) for <-----> B6
22. Apprehension of B6 is cause of…
21. Logos about B5 culminating in insight into B5 as the expression of the beauty of the understanding of beauty (B6)
20. Eros E5 for B5 is cause of…
19. Eros (E5) for <-----> B5
18. Apprehension of B5 is cause of…
17. Logos about B4 culminating in insight that B4 is expression of B5, the beauty or kinds of learning or understanding
16. Eros E4 for B4 cause…
15. Eros (E4) for <-----> Beauty of practices, constitutions… (B4)
14. Apprehension of B4 is cause of…
13. Logos about B3 culminating in insight into nature of B3 as really the expression of a still higher beauty, that of practices, customs, institutions, constitutions (B4)
12. Eros (E3) for B3 is cause of…
11. Eros (E3) <-----> for B3
10. Apprehension of B3 is cause of…
9. Logos (with guide) about B2, culminating in insight into nature of B2 as the expression of spiritual beauty (B3)
8. Eros (E2) for (B2) is cause of…
7. Eros (E2) for <-----> Bodily beauty in general (B2)
6. Apprehension of B2 is cause of…
5. Logos (L1) about B1, conducted with the lover's "guide," culminates in insight into (perception of) nature of B1 as merely one instance of Bodily beauty in general (B2)
4. Eros (E1) for B1 is *Aitia* (cause of) Logos
3. Eros (E1) for <-----> Beauty (B1) of single body
2. Initial perception of B1 is *Aitia…* (the cause of…, i.e., causes)
1. Perception of beauty (B1) of some specific body

Concerning the Initial Steps in the Ascent (i.e., especially levels one and two)

Notice that at each level we have an *erastes* (lover or desirer), a *beloved*, a *guide* or *teacher,* and *noble discourse* (or *philosophical discourse* or *logos* of a sort that will improve the young).

Love or desire sets everything in motion. It motivates the production of (giving birth to) logos (although the teacher will help focus the logos on the topic of what makes the beautiful beloved so attractive); the logos produced at each level will reveal to the lover that what he or she really loved all along was not the beauty of the current level, but the beauty of the next higher sort of object. The logos reveals this by showing that the current beloved is beautiful because it exemplifies a beauty that, properly speaking, belongs to the next higher object. This process repeats itself at each level, until we reach the top – Beauty Itself, which is the source of all those lower manifestations of beauty, and which does not depend on any further (higher) source for its own existence as beauty itself.

Level One: "Correct" Love of Bodily Beauty

This is perhaps the most difficult level to understand. Most of us will probably start out by thinking of bodily beauty as something independent of spiritual beauty. But to see how the ascent works here we must realize that in Plato's view, bodily beauty stems from spiritual beauty (where spirit includes intellect, emotion, and moral qualities). This is clear enough in some cases: the beauty of a graceful, or dignified, or noble carriage or demeanor flows from an inner grace, dignity, or nobility. Indeed, the outer beauty which we see just *is* the expression of an inner beauty. We could extend this line of thought to the beauty of bodily movements in dance, or in sacred ritual, or even in situations of danger (as in war). (See passages from *Republic, Charmides, Laws, et. al,* which support this view.)

But what, you might ask, of simple bodily beauty: well proportioned limbs or whatever? Even here Plato would say (and does say in the *Republic* 410a; cf. *Sophist* 265c) that these beauties are the result of, and an embodiment of, the beauty of the intelligent conception of the divine creator.

There is more to be said about this, but we should be able now to get beyond the simplistic idea of bodily beauty as involving simply "a pretty face"or "nice pecs," and of these as unconnected to any spiritual beauty.

Thus the idea is that the lover who approaches bodily beauty "correctly" will be stimulated to praise the beauty of the beloved – to say how and why it is so beautiful. By providing a bit of guidance, the teacher will steer the logos thus produced into constructive channels, and away from infatuated gushing about the beloved. This constructive logos will reveal that the supposedly bodily beauty (e.g., Socrates' gait during the retreat at Delium, Socrates' restrained behavior when Alcibiades tries to seduce him, etc.) are beautiful only because they reflect a spiritual beauty. This moves the lover to level two, since he or she now sees that the truly beautiful object of loves was not, strictly speaking, bodily, but spiritual.

Further Notes on the Ascent Passage in Plato's *Symposium*

Diotima does not explain how one manages to get from a given rung of the "ladder of love" to the next rung. But it is quite possible that at each rung the same process is repeated, moving the lover up one level each time, until the top is reached.

Remembering, then, that at each step the process is facilitated by a leader or teacher (Diotima mentions this at various points, but does not dwell on it), we might suppose that:

1) The lover praises the beloved by proclaiming the beloved's beauty.

This reflects a natural human impulse which Plato illustrates elsewhere (in the *Lysis*), and ties in closely with the *Symposium*'s speeches praising what is beautiful, whether that is identified with Eros itself (as by most of the speakers) or with the beauty that Eros lacks and desires to possess (as asserted by Diotima and exemplified in Alcibiades' praise of Socrates).

2) The teacher – or, it could be, a sufficiently reflective and critical lover working alone – directs this praise of the beauty of the beloved towards reflection on the true nature and origin of the beloved's beauty.

This reflects Socrates' insistence (in opposition to the practice of the previous speakers) that praise should be based on the truth about the object of praise, even if it need not present the whole truth, and also would employ the same kind of "dialectical" investigation that Socrates practices elsewhere in Plato's works in an attempt to get at the truth.

3) On investigation, the lover discovers that what made the beloved so attractive was not precisely what he had thought: he now realizes that it was the beauty of something else – something present in the initial beloved, or embodies by the initial beloved – that aroused his desire. This "something else" is, of course, the next object in the series, the beauty at the next higher level of the ladder.

This means that the lover was all along desiring that higher object, so that no transfer of love to a new object need take place. Rather, there is a revelation to the lover of the true identity of the beloved.

4) (parallel to 1) above) The lover now wishes to praise the beloved for its beauty.

5) (parallel to 2) above) The teacher turns this impulse toward a more reflective logos (account, discussion) of the beauty of the beloved.

6) (parallel to 3) above) The lover realizes that the beauty of the beloved actually consists in the presence in the beloved of the beauty of something else.

Notice that at each stage the lover takes the beloved to be the supreme beauty. It is the fact that he truly falls in love with it that fuels the desire to praise it, hence the desire to discover what is truly beautiful about it, and hence leads to the discovery that what he really loved was the next higher object all along – or so it seems until he begins to reflect on this.

Notice also that this means all beauty everywhere must be in some significant sense the same, and all Eros for beauty would seem therefore to be in some important way the same, since it will be the presence of the highest beauty in all the lower beauties that make them beautiful. This fits

well with the Platonic idea that all beautiful things (other than Beauty Itself) are beautiful because they *participate* in Beauty itself.

Finally, this means that we must return to specific levels of the ladder and show, step-by-step, how the beauty perceived at each level (except for the very top) – of bodies, souls, laws and practices, branches of understanding, the understanding of Beauty itself – can plausibly be identified with the beauty (or goodness, since these seem to consist in the same thing) of the next higher item. Specifically, the beauty of beautiful souls is really the beauty of the beautiful laws and practices immanent in those souls; the beauty of beautiful laws and practices really is the beauty of the various kinds of wisdom embodied in them; the beauty of various kinds of learning or wisdom really is, in every case, the beauty of understanding what is truly beautiful – i.e., good (beneficial and advantageous).

The most difficult step to justify is probably that from beautiful bodies to beautiful souls. How is it possible to see bodily beauty as "really" being psychic beauty (i.e., the beauty of intelligence, say, or of what we might call moral beauty)? The key, naturally, is to ask ourselves what bodily beauty consists in, and to avoid accepting too hastily and superficially an answer – even if that answer may seem obvious.

Using Art as Analogy

Below are three images picture that attempt to capture the analogy given in chapter three that everything was born out of a common source: Truth.

For the first image, the question remains about which *quomodo* will allow a successful return to that Source. See how the Platonists enter into the realm of Truth, but for Augustine, it is only through Christ that humans can become one with God, That Which Is. The dots along the path to Truth represent new tools incorporated in Augustine's *unde*.

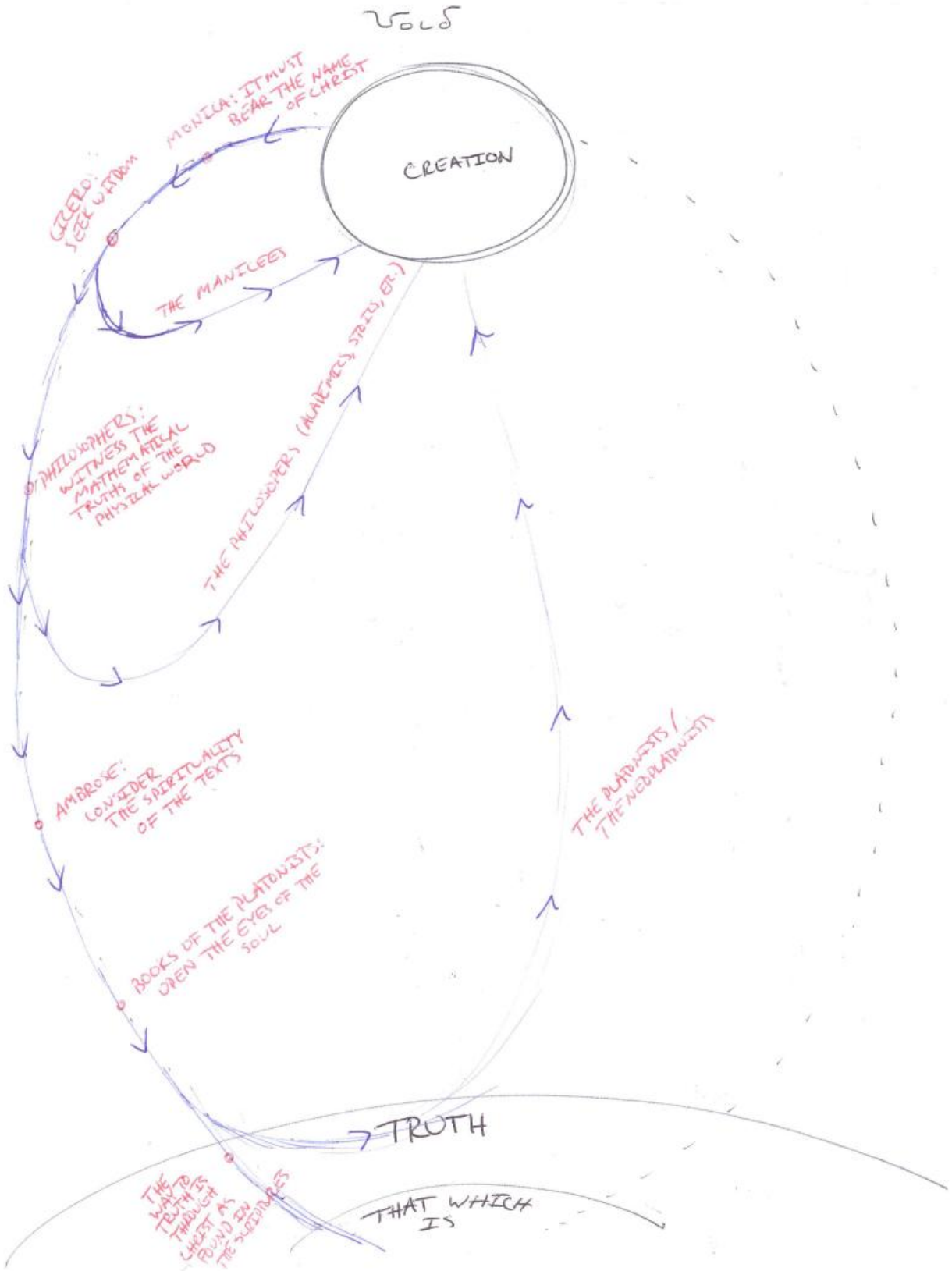
In the second image, we attempt to move further away from a Platonic notion and arrive at an image that depicts a suggestion of what it really might mean when order and hierarchy are properly established between soul and body and human and Truth. This image comes from John Freccero's article concerning the last lines of Dante's *Divine Comedy*:

> As the geometer intently seeks
> to square the circle, but he cannot reach,
> through thought on thought, the principle he needs,
> so I searched the strange sight: I wished to see
> the way in which our human effigy
> suited the circle and found place in it –
> and my own wings were far too weak for that.
> But then my mind was struck by light that flashed
> and, with this light, received what it had asked.
> Here force failed my high fantasy; but my
> desire and will were moved already – like
> a wheel revolving uniformly – by
> the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.
> (*Paradiso* XXXIII: 133-145).

Unlike the unmoved mover of the Platonists, this depiction demonstrates motion in two ways: one that is unchanging (circular) and one that does move linearly forward (for it is a wheel) (Freccero 19). Augustine is not a static figure and such an image helps to symbolically depict the condition Augustine seeks even though Augustine predates Dante by over eight centuries.

However, as the third image attempts to show, the question remains whether a person will reach the idealized state in the second image. Depicted is a galaxy and we are floating on the outskirts. Yet despite this, we still continue to circle that Source, which loves us and wants to draw us inward. And our desire is there. Yet will we have the 'will' to abandon the outer circle and move inward? The Platonists do well in this endeavor and move into the galactic bulge of Truth. But when they attempt to possess it as they journey into the accretion disk, they are instead blown out through the galactic poles and fail. In this analogy, only Augustine, with Christ as his intermediary, will succeed in crossing the event horizon and becoming one with That Which Is.

In the end though, it is important to realize that these are just materialistic attempts at depicting Augustine's immaterial pursuits. In this sense, though they may help, these pictures are still limited, but may still serve as helpful instruments in our attempt to understand Augustine's thoughts.


GOD
CREATION
MONICA: IT MUST BEAR THE NAME OF CHRIST
AUGUSTINE: SEEK WISDOM
THE MANICHEES
PHILOSOPHERS: WITNESS THE MATHEMATICAL TRUTHS OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD
THE PHILOSOPHERS (ALCHEMISTS, STOICS, ETC.)
AMBROSE: CONSIDER THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE TEXTS
BOOKS OF THE PLATONISTS: OPEN THE EYES OF THE SOUL
THE PLATONISTS / THE NEOPLATONISTS
TRUTH
THE WAY TO TRUTH IS THROUGH CHRIST AS FOUND IN THE SCRIPTURES
THAT WHICH IS

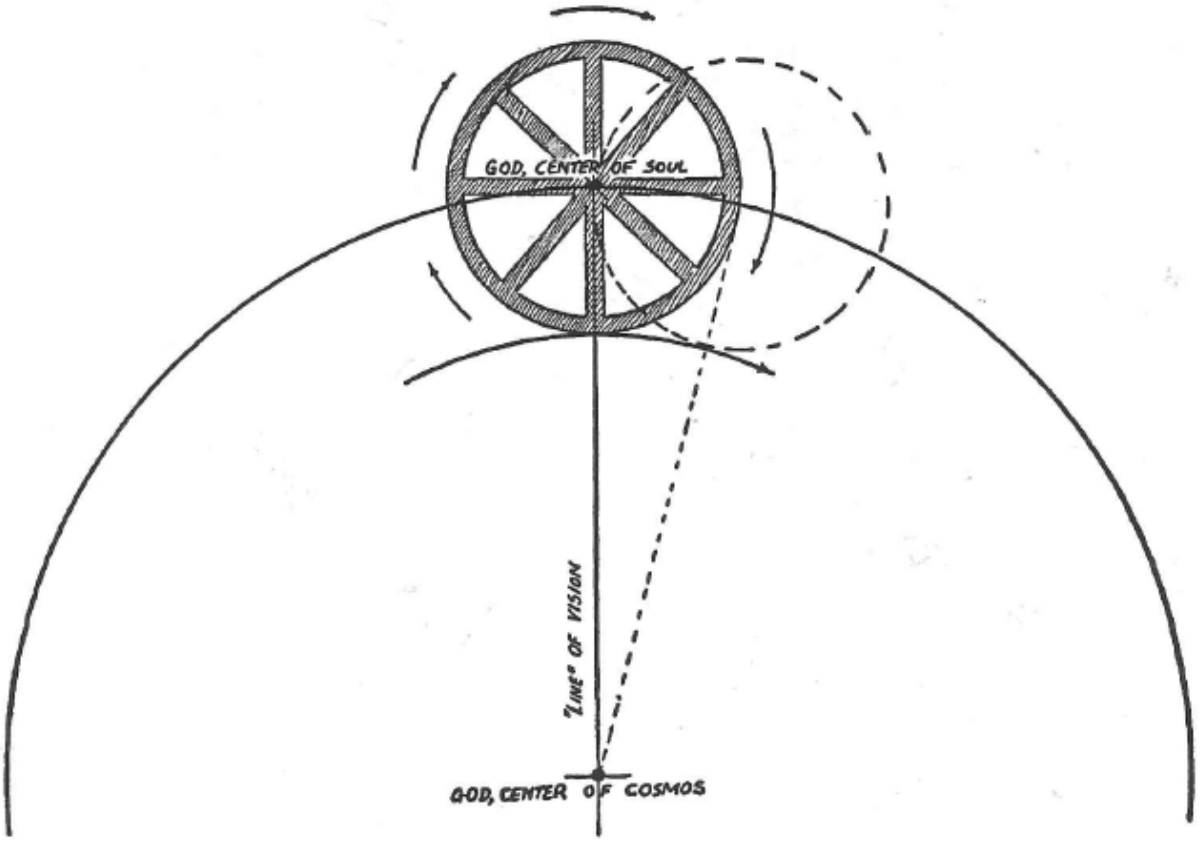
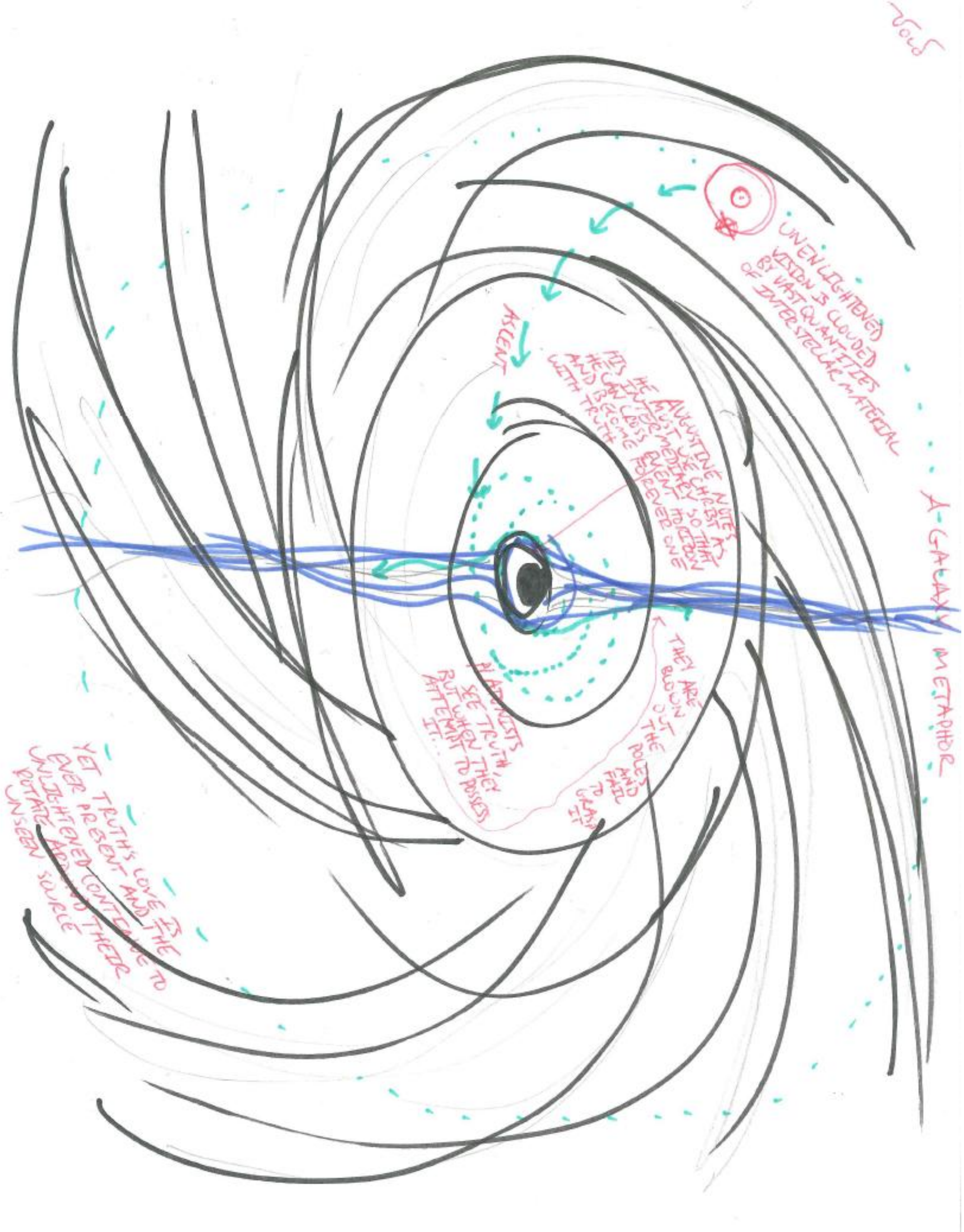


FIG. 1. *Motus rotabundus.* (Sketch by D. I. Grossvogel.)


A GALAXY METAPHOR
SOUL
UNENLIGHTENED VISION IS CLOUDED BY VAST QUANTITIES OF INTERSTELLAR MATERIAL
ASCENT
AUGUSTINE NOTES HE MUST USE CHRIST AS HIS INTERMEDIARY SO THAT HE CAN CROSS EVENT HORIZON AND BECOME FOREVER ONE WITH TRUTH
THEY ARE BLOWN OUT THE POLES AND FAIL TO GRASP IT
PLATONISTS SEE TRUTH, BUT WHEN THEY ATTEMPT TO POSSESS IT...
YET TRUTH'S LOVE IS EVER PRESENT AND THE UNLIGHTENED CONTINUE TO ROTATE AROUND THEIR UNSEEN SOURCE